

Analytical report

# The «Crimea scenario»: how the Russian Federation is destroying the Ukrainian identity of children in the occupied territories



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# CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
General situation in Crimea: 2014-2022	5
2022 and the invasion of the Russian Federation	7
Occupation of parts of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions	8
Methodology	10
Information used	10
Restrictions	10
<b>I. SCHOOL PROGRAM IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES</b>	<b>12</b>
Crimean scenario of destruction of Ukrainian education	13
Situation in Crimea as of 2022	15
Statistics	16
Propaganda	17
Languages of education	18
Teachers	19
Law «On Patriotic Education»	19
<b>Parts of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions and implementation of the Crimean scenario</b>	<b>19</b>
Transition to the Russian educational standards	20
Teachers	21
Language of education	22
Russian state symbols in Ukrainian schools	22
Historical memory	24
Replacement and re-training of teachers	25
Textbooks	27
Extracurricular activities	29
Summer camps and rest	30
Transfer of children	32
Children's and youth movements	33



<b>II. LEGITIMIZATION OF THE FULL-SCALE RUSSIAN INVASION AMONG CHILDREN</b>	<b>37</b>
A letter to a soldier	38
Specialized thematic lessons	39
The beginning of the full-scale invasion	39
Conversations about the important	40
Lessons of courage	41
Campaigns in support of the full-scale Russian invasion	42
Glorification of “heroes” of the so-called Special Military Operation	43
Commemorative plaques	44
Informal and cultural events	45
The idea of artificiality of the Ukrainian nation	46
<b>III. RECRUITMENT INTO THE ARMED FORCES OF THE AGGRESSOR STATE</b>	<b>47</b>
Cadet classes	48
Youth movements	49
Young Army	50
The Great Change	50
Movement of the First	51
Mandatory military training in schools	52
Memory of the World War II as an instrument of militarization	53
Summer camps and rest	56
Military-patriotic games	57
<b>IV. CULTURAL GENOCIDE</b>	<b>59</b>
<b><i>Conclusions</i></b>	<b>66</b>
<b><i>Violations</i></b>	<b>69</b>
<b><i>Recommendations</i></b>	<b>70</b>



# INTRODUCTION

February 24, 2023 marks one year since the moment of announcement by the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin of the so-called “Special Military Operation” (hereinafter - SMO) with the ostensible goal of “demilitarization” and “de-Nazification of Ukraine”.<sup>1</sup> In this way the Russian Federation continued its aggressive policy against Ukraine, which began in 2014 with the occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (hereinafter - Crimea) and establishment of control over separate parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions under the guise of the so-called “people’s republics”.

Since 2014, the occupation authorities of Crimea and the administration of the So-called Donetsk and Luhansk “People’s Republics” (which are actually controlled by the central power of the Russian Federation) have performed systematical destruction of Ukrainian education and raising sense of loyalty towards the Russian Federation in the territories controlled by them. The situation in the occupied parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions was similar to Crimea, but with key differences. Crimea was immediately “included” in the Russian Federation, and during all 9 years of occupation the top leadership of the Russian Federation emphasized the fact that Crimea belonged to the Russian Federation.<sup>2</sup> Conversely, the situation with the separate parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions was completely different – until 2022, the Russian Federation persistently denied any influence on the leadership of the so-called quasi-republics, which is why the legal regime in the given territories can be best characterized as a “juridical Wild West” – a mixture of the Ukrainian and the Russian legislation with a touch of creative rulemaking of the so-called republics. This also applies to the educational policy in the mentioned territories, where the main goal was also the destruction of the Ukrainian educational system, but this process took place under the “hybrid” scheme and was significantly different from the “Crimean scenario”, details of which will be revealed in the first section of this report.

The «Crimean scenario» of the destruction of Ukrainian education is currently being implemented in the Russian Federation-controlled territories of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions since 2022.<sup>3</sup> The experts of the CCE “Almenda” analyzed the situation with the use of education for militarization, destruction of Ukrainian identity and formation of the loyal attitude towards military actions and military crimes, committed by the Russian Federation in the occupied territories of Ukraine from February to December, 2022, which became the subject matter of this report.

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1 <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/67843>

2 <https://tass.ru/politika/12658387>

3 <https://crimea-news.com/society/2022/08/11/954311.html>





## General situation in Crimea: 2014-2022

Since February 27, 2014, the Russian Federation has exercised effective control over Crimea. On March 18, 2014, the Russian Federation announced the so-called “reunification” with Crimea and its inclusion in the list of the federal subjects of the Russian Federation, which was not recognized by Ukraine or the absolute majority of the civilized world.<sup>4</sup> Since 2014, all state and municipal structures on the peninsula are de-facto subordinate to the federal ministries and services of Russia and function in accordance with the Russian legislation. This also applies to the education field, for which the plan of the complete transfer to the Russian standards was announced on March 20, 2014, and the transition period was defined as three years for general educational system and up to five years for higher education.<sup>5</sup> In May 2014, Vladimir Putin signed the law on the integration of Crimea in the educational space of Russia.<sup>6</sup> In general, it was assumed that school, general, professional and higher education would be transferred to the Russian standards and corresponding programs in a short time starting from 2014, through re-training of all teachers of Crimean schools (about 20,000 pedagogues) and the provision of sets of the Russian textbooks to every school-child in Crimea and Sevastopol. As early as September 1, 2014, schools began teaching according to the Russian programs.<sup>7</sup>

In December 2014, the “Concept of Patriotic and Spiritual and Moral education of population in the Republic of Crimea” and numerous documents regarding its implementation (plans, events, programs) appeared. The document stipulates that the system of formal and informal education of Crimea should be aimed at the formation of children’s Russian identity and idea that participation in wars unleashed by the government is a “sacred duty of every citizen of Russia”. This narrative should be strengthened with specific actions, namely, real military training of children with the purpose of involving them in future military operations.<sup>8</sup>

In February 2019, at a meeting of the permanent council the Deputy Permanent Representative of Russia to OSCE Dmitry Balakin announced about the completion of the integration of Crimea into the general politic, legal, socio-economic space of Russia.<sup>9</sup> The Head of the State Duma, Vyacheslav Volodin stated that in 2019 99% of educational organizations of Crimea are “licensed, accredited, and conduct their activities in accordance with the educational standards” – referring to the standards of the Russian Federation.<sup>10</sup> The entire educational system in the occupied peninsula is divided into two parts – the entire occupied Crimea and separately – Sevastopol, which has the status of a city of federal importance. Management of the educational system in temporarily occupied Crimea is entrusted to the so-called “Ministry of Education and Science” headed by Lavryk Valentina Vasilyevna (before December 2019 – Natalia Goncharova), in occupied Sevastopol management is entrusted to the so-called “Department of Ed-

4 <https://www.dw.com/ru/anneksia-kryma/t-38977605>

5 <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/1061396>

6 <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20913>

7 [https://vercont.ru/stati\\_i\\_obzory/glava\\_minobrnauki\\_dmitriy\\_livanov\\_-\\_o\\_shkolnoy\\_forme\\_edinom\\_uc.html](https://vercont.ru/stati_i_obzory/glava_minobrnauki_dmitriy_livanov_-_o_shkolnoy_forme_edinom_uc.html)

8 [https://helsinki.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Osvita\\_02.pdf](https://helsinki.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Osvita_02.pdf)

9 <https://www.rbc.ru/rbcfreenews/5c7836289a7947d60751048b>

10 <http://duma.gov.ru/news/30059/>



ucation” of the city.<sup>11</sup> The important role is also played by the so-called “Commissioner for the Rights of the Child in the Republic of Crimea” Irina Klyueva, as well as the heads of the corresponding ministries and departments at the federal level.<sup>12</sup>

Militarization has become the main direction in the educational field, in the field of state policy regarding youth and children. Russia militarized education and work with children and youth with the help of various instruments, but mainly through the state educational system. In general, the state policy of the Russian Federation regarding militarization of residents of the occupied peninsula is systematic and large-scale, and it is aimed not only at young men, but also at children, starting from pre-school age.<sup>13</sup> The implementation of militarization in the field of general education is conducted through patriotic education, which is carried out both by educational institutions and through informal events, such as, for example, numerous children’s and youth organizations.

The seriousness and illegality of such a policy was reviewed at the highest level. That is, on December 7, 2020, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 75/29, which, in particular, condemns “the use of the education of children in Crimea in order to indoctrinate them to join the Russian military forces” and calls on Russia n to refrain from establishing educational institutions that provide combat training to Crimean children with the stated aim of training for military service in the Russian armed forces, establishing combat training courses at Crimean schools and to cease efforts to formally incorporate Crimean educational institutions into the “military-patriotic” education system of the Russian Federation.<sup>14</sup>

On December 7, 2021, the updated Resolution with similar wording regarding the militarization of Crimean education was adopted.<sup>15</sup>

However, not only militarization, but also the destruction of Ukrainian and the formation of Russian identity among children of the occupied Crimea has become one of the main directions of activity of the Russian Federation since the first days of occupation. One of the aspects of this process is the lack of an opportunity to study in the Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar languages.<sup>16</sup> Also, since 2014, a large number of thematic events, contests and projects, aimed at the formation of Russian identity have been held for schoolchildren and youth of Crimea.<sup>17</sup> The aspects of militarization and destruction of identity are closely related to each other, which is confirmed by the text of the “Strategies for the Development of Education in the Russian Federation for the Period Until 2025” (valid in the territory of Crimea since May 2015).<sup>18</sup> In particular, part 2 of Chapter III of this strategy states that “patriotic education and **the formation of Russian identity** involves ... the formation of children’s patriotism, sense of pride for their Fatherland, **readiness to defend the interests of the Fatherland**, responsi-

11 [https://helsinki.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Osvita\\_02.pdf](https://helsinki.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Osvita_02.pdf)

12 <https://docs.cntd.ru/document/413901883>

13 [https://ark.gp.gov.ua/ua/news.html?\\_m=publications&\\_c=view&\\_t=rec&id=314192](https://ark.gp.gov.ua/ua/news.html?_m=publications&_c=view&_t=rec&id=314192)

14 UNGA, Problem of the militarization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine, as well as parts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov (7 December 2020) A/RES/75/29

15 A/RES/76/70

16 <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/crimea-education-ukrainian-language/31274562.html>

17 [https://helsinki.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Osvita\\_02.pdf](https://helsinki.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Osvita_02.pdf)

18 <http://council.gov.ru/media/files/41d536d68ee9fec15756.pdf>



bility for the future of Russia, based on the development of the programs of patriotic education, in particular, military-patriotic education”.

In other words, in the understanding of the government of the Russian Federation, the Russian identity includes the readiness for the armed defense of the Russian Federation, and fulfillment of military duty should stem from a sense of love and pride for the Fatherland. In the context of Crimea, it should be noted, that propaganda of war has become a part of the informational legalization of occupation since 2014, and starting from 2022 – of the armed aggression against Ukraine as well, which is implemented through school programs, textbooks, educational events and means of forming historical memory.

## 2022 and the invasion of the Russian Federation

As of the beginning of the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation into Ukraine, militarization of children and youth in the occupied Crimea was already a part of the deliberate policy of colonization of the peninsula, changing the national identity of Ukrainian children, promotion of the cult of violence, weapons and war, and formation of the motivation to voluntarily serve in the armed forces of the Russian Federation.<sup>19</sup>

On February 24, 2022, the information about the suspension of education in 9 municipal units (Dzhankoi, Krasnoperekopsk, Armyansk, Kerch, districts of Dzhankoi, Krasnoperekopsk, Rozdolne, Chornomorske and Lenine) until Monday, February 28, 2022, was published on the official page of the so-called “Ministry of Education of Crimea”.<sup>20</sup> And on February 27, information about implementation of holidays in schools of Armyansk, Krasnoperekopsk, Dzhankoi as well as Krasnoperekopsk and Dzhankoi districts from February 28 to March 6, 2022, appeared.<sup>21</sup> Such actions were undoubtedly related to the military necessity: in particular, the use of the territory of Crimea as a bridgehead for invasion into Ukraine from the south.<sup>22</sup>

Tamila Tasheva, the permanent representative of the President of Ukraine in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, noted that the occupied peninsula plays special role in the seizure of southern region of Ukraine and attempts of Russia to gain a foothold there.

“ *In the conditions of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Crimea plays a special role as a bridgehead for attack. The peninsula can be considered as a resource base and a home front for Russian war machine and army. In fact, it is a bridgehead for the further occupation of territories. Russia has the same scenario for occupation, as if according to the guidelines: in Crimea, later – in Donbass, and now – in the south*”.<sup>23</sup>

19 <https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/M3-ykp.pdf>

20 <https://bit.ly/3HEWjKt>

21 <https://news.allcrimea.net/news/2022/2/26/shkoly-v-severnom-krymu-dosrochno-uidut-na-kanikuly-156444/>  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QJYN70y--HvBC2rJRngtuToso4LGfOD3/view?usp=sharing>

22 <https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/M3-ykp.pdf>

23 <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/novyny-pryazovya-viyna-pivden-ukrayini-stsenariyi-maybutnoho/31920887.html>





In 2022, in the occupied territories one can observe a trend of even greater deepening of a gap between the educational spaces of the Ukraine-controlled and occupied territories. Starting from 2022, the Russian Federation has withdrawn from the Bologna education system<sup>24</sup> and announced the integration of all components of education into a single complex. The Russian authorities continue to use textbooks for the formation of distorted interpretation of historical events.<sup>25</sup> In June 2022, the information about the inclusion of the topic “Recognition of the DPR and the LPR by Russia” into the Russian textbooks on History for 9<sup>th</sup> grade appeared.<sup>26</sup> The new unified textbook on History of Russia will be presented in January-February 2023, which will include sections on the so-called “SMO, Western sanctions and accession of four new regions in the Russian Federation”.<sup>27</sup> Such tendencies create new challenges for the further re-integration of these territories in the future.

## Occupation of parts of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions

On February 24, 2022, the Russian army crossed the Kherson region administrative border with the occupied Crimea and began the occupation of the region.<sup>28</sup> With the beginning of the full-scale invasion by the Russian Federation, the geography of the occupied territories expanded significantly.

At the beginning of March Russian troops occupied the only regional center – Kherson.<sup>29</sup> On February 26, 2022, the city of Berdyansk in the Zaporizhzhia region came under the control of the Russian Federation, after which, on March 1, 2022, the city of Melitopol was occupied as well. On March 4, 2022, Russian troops also besieged and seized the city of Enerhodar.<sup>30</sup>

On September 23-27, 2022, the so-called “referendums on accession in the Russian Federation”, which were not recognized by the world community, were held in the territories occupied by the Russian Federation.<sup>31</sup> On September 29, 2022, the Decrees of the President of the Russian Federation recognized the state independence and sovereignty of the Zaporizhzhia<sup>32</sup> and Kherson<sup>33</sup> regions, as well as the self-proclaimed “DPR”

24 <https://www.dw.com/ru/kommentarij-otkaz-ot-bolonskoj-sistemy-lishaet-molodezh-rf-budushhego/a-61940135>

25 <https://almenda.org/en/doslidzhennya-zmistu-shkilnykh-pidruchnykh-rosiyi/>

26 [https://edsoo.ru/Primernaya\\_rabochaya\\_programma\\_osnovnogo\\_obschego\\_obrazovaniya\\_uchebnogo\\_modulya\\_Vvedenie\\_v\\_Novejshuyu\\_istoriyu\\_Rossii\\_Proekt\\_.htm](https://edsoo.ru/Primernaya_rabochaya_programma_osnovnogo_obschego_obrazovaniya_uchebnogo_modulya_Vvedenie_v_Novejshuyu_istoriyu_Rossii_Proekt_.htm)  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HvNtwUzg3fJjw1ae4DZ\\_mX0XF6n3goV/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HvNtwUzg3fJjw1ae4DZ_mX0XF6n3goV/view?usp=sharing)

27 [https://t.me/hercon\\_ru/5274](https://t.me/hercon_ru/5274)

28 <https://www.dw.com/uk/roziiska-armiia-okupuvala-chastynu-khersonskoi-oblasti-ukrainy-khoda/a-60903338>

29 <https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/features-61409818>

30 <https://vikna.tv/video/ukrayina/visim-misyacziv-vijny-v-ukrayini-hronologiya-ta-najvazhlyvishi-podiyi/>

31 <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/novyny-pryazovya-referendумы-aneksyya-putyn/32056562.html>

32 <https://www.garant.ru/hotlaw/federal/1568845/>

33 <http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/Document/View/0001202209300002>



and “LPR”. On September 30, 2022, in Kremlin, the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin and the heads of the so-called DPR and LPR as well as occupation administrations of the Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions signed the treaties on the “accession in Russia”.<sup>34</sup> On October 12, 2022, the UN General Assembly approved the resolution, which condemns the attempt of annexation of the occupied territories of Ukraine by the Russian Federation.<sup>35</sup>

In November 2022, a significant event took place – the liberation of a part of the Kherson region including the city of Kherson. However, a part of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions are still occupied and processes of the destruction of Ukrainian identity and militarization of children in these territories are only gaining momentum.<sup>36</sup>

In 2021–2022 170,381 students studied and 496 educational institutions worked in Zaporizhzhia region, in Kherson region – 113,562 students and 384 educational institutions respectively.<sup>37</sup> With the beginning of a new phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war the educational process in Ukrainian schools was suspended.<sup>38</sup> Since the end of March, there has been information about the attempts to begin the educational process in institutions of complete general secondary education and in institutions of vocational (vocational and technical) education in the occupied territories with implementation of the standards of education of the aggressor state, starting from April 2022.<sup>39</sup>

As early as April 4, 2022, the information appeared that the studies had resumed in Melitopol in higher education institutions, colleges and vocational-technical schools,<sup>40</sup> students were often forced to return to full-time studying in the occupied city under fear of expulsion.<sup>41</sup> Since April 11, 2022, some kindergartens and schools began to resume their operations in Melitopol.<sup>42</sup> All this was happening under the pressure of the newly-appointed mayor of the city of Melitopol Galina Danilchenko and the “head of the city department of education” Elena Sharupova.

In general, the process of integration of the occupied territories into the Russian educational space follows the situation, which took place in the territories of the occu-

34 <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/69465>

35 United Nations General Assembly Resolution ES-11/4

36 <https://bit.ly/3OvHvjw> <https://bit.ly/3bhUuXV>

37 <https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/M3-ykp.pdf>

38 <https://bit.ly/3b9Z4Hz>

39 <https://www.mlt.gov.ua/?r=posts.client.view&id=1655%20>

40 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/148> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/112Uw04EgXa6oKflrVCawx5bUKidzjxZ9/view?usp=sharing>

41 <https://suspilne.media/223184-u-melitopoli-okupanti-planuut-rozpocati-navcalnij-proces-za-standartami-derzavi-agresora/> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/18XSqvR1Ksz3eKx1BQkYPIAG7Tfvq97MW/view?usp=sharing>

42 <https://rossaprimavera.ru/news/6b0bbd94> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LVvmunJFKfw062kw\\_RZ\\_m8Qb9K9gfHsq/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LVvmunJFKfw062kw_RZ_m8Qb9K9gfHsq/view?usp=sharing) <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/298> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wyjcDWwViOetNsekHVAhZpZRkHlzdXTH/view?usp=sharing> <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/249> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-uFxNYSCN4mXLpPpe-fX5ogJuY-WhHkk/view?usp=sharing> <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/230,%20%20https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KaWg9OHTM6NnoKhnOwTvcjo-byJo4vWP/view?usp=sharing,%20> <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/203> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/11o0gpi47y1cNTKvu8MFu02NXKENQccze/view?usp=sharing> <https://easaily.com/ru/news/2022/04/11/shkoly-i-detskije-sady-vozobnovlyayut-rabotu-v-melitopole>, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZzDnbBvguel3E71k83N6g2-Vbhe3GXJD/view?usp=sharing%20>



pied Crimea as well as Donetsk and Luhansk regions in 2014. This includes returning to the 5-point grading system, re-training of teachers, transition to the Russian language of education, replacement of Ukrainian textbooks with the Russian ones.<sup>43</sup> These tendencies will be reviewed in detail in the first section of this report.

## Methodology

Areas of research: militarization of children in the occupied territories, involvement of children into the actions, aimed at supporting the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, destruction of the Ukrainian identity, assimilation of population of the occupied territories, destruction of the Ukrainian system of education.

The information, represented in this report, is considered for the purpose of recording the crimes committed by the Russian Federation and fighting against disinformation spread by it.

This report includes the information from the following sections: analysis of school education in the occupied territories, justification of aggression of the Russian Federation, militarization of children as recruitment to the armed forces and cultural genocide.

## Information used

The monitoring was conducted on the basis of the information from:

- State authorities of Ukraine;
- Reports of public organizations;
- Open sources of the temporarily occupied territories;
- Publications by local media outlets of the temporarily occupied parts of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions, Autonomous republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol;
- Information published in social networks.

## Restrictions

During this research, the authors used only the sources available for them. Data, found in the social network “VKontakte” was used for writing this report. This is due to the fact that after the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation into the territory of Ukraine, most of the information from the representatives of occupation authorities was published exactly on this social network, which is why it is now actually the only possible source of access to obtain the necessary information.

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43 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/687> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Y8Yn1Kd5UKqWC4su1z3d\\_8lJCdrYmn\\_G/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Y8Yn1Kd5UKqWC4su1z3d_8lJCdrYmn_G/view?usp=sharing)





# SCHOOL PROGRAM IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES





## Crimean scenario of destruction of Ukrainian education

In the recently occupied territories of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions, the “Crimean scenario” of destruction of Ukrainian education is used, in which educational process is immediately integrated into the all-Russian system (in contrast to the temporarily occupied districts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, where “hybrid version” was implemented).<sup>44</sup>

Therefore, regarding the comparison between the years 2014 and 2022, the following should be noted:<sup>45</sup>

Crimea	Territories, temporarily occupied since 2022 <sup>46</sup>
Since 2014, educational institutions have completely switched to the Russian educational standards with the appropriate provision of educational materials	The switch to the Russian educational standards is conducted since the very beginning of the occupation: with a preparatory stage in summer and a full switch starting from September 2022.
By the beginning of 2023, there should be completely no teaching of subjects of the Ukrainian studies cycle, such as History of Ukraine, Literature, etc	Reduction, termination, or prohibition of teaching such subjects as Ukrainian Language and Literature, History of Ukraine.
There is no access to learning the Ukrainian language or it is less than 0,01 % of the total number of students.	Reduction of the hours of learning the Ukrainian language (or complete cancellation) and switch to the Russian language of education – since the very beginning of the occupation
Militarization of educational process	Militarization of educational process
Active introduction of the Russian patriotic youth movements since 2015: Young Army, The Great Change, Movement of the First (in context of which it is emphasized that the initiator of the establishment of the movement is a schoolgirl from Crimea) <sup>47</sup> etc.	Active implementation of the Russian patriotic youth movements (Young Army, Movement of the First) and establishment of the local ones (#YugMolodoy)

<sup>44</sup> <https://svidomi.in.ua/page/shkilna-prohrama-tymchasovo-okupovanykh-terytorii-vykhovannia-ditei-za-rosiiskymy-standartamy>

<sup>45</sup> <https://almenda.org/analytical-report-six-plus-grave-violations-committed-against-children/>

<sup>46</sup> [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/6-plus-seryoznykh-porushen-proty-ditey-9-misyatsiv\\_Almenda.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/6-plus-seryoznykh-porushen-proty-ditey-9-misyatsiv_Almenda.pdf)

<sup>47</sup> <https://sevoborona.site/s-pervogo-sezda-vserossijskogo-dvizhenija-detej-i-molodezhi-vernulis-shkolniki-sevastopolja/>





The “Crimean model” of destruction of Ukrainian education includes the following elements:

- Actual destruction of the Ukrainian language and culture;
- Replacement of the Ukrainian textbooks with the Russian ones;
- Prohibition of teaching subjects of Ukrainian studies cycle, in particular, History of Ukraine, distortion of the history of Ukraine and Crimean Tatars;
- Establishment of militarized classes at schools: the so-called “Cadet” and “Cosack” classes;
- Partial replacement of teachers who were in Crimea with the Russian teachers and active ideological “re-education” of teachers;
- Justification of the armed aggression through conducting the weekly lessons “Conversations about the important”

The programs of militarization, which is implemented by the occupation administrations, controlled by the Russian federation, are aimed at:

- Intimidation with external threats;
- Systematic formation of the enemy image of Ukraine, as well as “collective West and Europe”, which allegedly must be opposed with weapons in hands;
- Propaganda of the cult of violence, weapons, war;
- Teaching the basics of military training, handling weapons;
- Education of respect for power structures and the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation;
- Creation of motivation to voluntarily serve in the ranks of Russian army.

The instruments of influence through the informal education in Crimea also include militarization through the children’s organizations: “Young Army”, “The Great Change”, “Movement of the First” etc., military-patriotic camps during the holidays and holding military-patriotic games. The same mechanisms are currently being implemented in the occupied territories of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions too.

In the “newly-occupied” territories, education has also become the focus of attention of the Russian authorities. Currently, in the occupied territories of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions, the occupiers are trying to implement the following Crimean scenario in order to impose the Russian identity.

- The educational process is being conducted in Russian;
- Ukrainian textbooks and books are being removed, and the Russian ones with a “politically correct” interpretation of history are being imported instead.
- The administration and teachers of educational institutions are being forced to switch to the Russian educational standards, using various methods, including intimidation, threats, and there are even several cases of abduction of principals and teachers, who did not agree to cooperate with the occupation authorities<sup>48</sup>.



The Crimean scenario of influencing the children's consciousness in the conditions of the full-scale invasion is reinforced with the fact that parents are being deprived of the right to Ukrainian distance education and the right to home education.<sup>49</sup> The active implementation of the "Crimean scenario" in the field of education and culture is openly stated by the representatives of the authorities of the Russian Federation, occupation authorities of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions and occupation authorities of Crimea, particularly the head of the so-called "State Council of Crimea" V. Konstantinov:

“ The arrangement of liberated territories mostly follows the Crimean model. Just as in case with Crimea, the President confirmed his confidence that everything was done correctly – in accordance with the will of the Crimeans, so the future of the liberated territories will depend on the choice of their residents. And even Ukraine, or rather to be said, what will be left of it, can go to EU, if only there is no threat for us in its territory”.<sup>50</sup>

The ultimate goal of the "Crimean scenario" of the destruction of education is to create "universal soldiers" and patriots of the Russian Federation from the Ukrainian children in the occupied territories, who will feel no connection with the Ukrainian state, will have no skills of critical thinking and will rebroadcast the Russian propaganda regarding the denial of existence of Ukrainians as an ethnicity. The work of the Russian Federation and the so-called administrations in the field of education in the occupied territories of Ukraine is based on these components.<sup>51</sup>

## Situation in Crimea as of 2022

Starting from February 24, 2022, the Russian Federation and the occupation authorities in Crimea persistently use the educational system for the formation of the loyal attitude of population towards the military actions that Russia is conducting on the territory of Ukraine. This includes the involvement of children of preschool and school age in the campaigns in support of the so-called "special military operation in Ukraine", and the holding of thematic events of propagandistic nature, aimed at the formation of the distorted understanding of historical and modern events on the territory of Ukraine etc.

On September 12, 2022, the Committee on Education of the State Duma of the Russian Federation supported the draft law regarding the introduction of the unified general education programs in schools (mandatory ones – the Russian Language, Literary Reading and The World Around Us in primary school; Russian Language, Literature, History, Social Studies, geography and Fundamentals of Life Safety – in secondary and high school), which are developed and approved by the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation.<sup>52</sup> The Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation also exercises control over the content of the textbooks and introduces the Federal Work Program of Education and the Federal Calendar Plan of Educational Work, which are obligatory for

49 <https://crimea.suspilne.media/ua/news/9483>

50 [https://vk.com/va.konstantinov?fbclid=IwAR0PEwEzY-U2Mx-ebLXJ6GIIHD3WMIBVMnK\\_DaqxKDKfjnhR6MkeQSD7lw&w=wall608829078\\_5343](https://vk.com/va.konstantinov?fbclid=IwAR0PEwEzY-U2Mx-ebLXJ6GIIHD3WMIBVMnK_DaqxKDKfjnhR6MkeQSD7lw&w=wall608829078_5343)  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fqD5YmoLC8JPjJBEbA-UGnL-tlWoMqS2/view?usp=sharing>

51 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Almenda\\_Universalnyi-soldat\\_lystopad\\_ukr.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Almenda_Universalnyi-soldat_lystopad_ukr.pdf)

52 <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/15729939>



execution. Such changes are the evidence of the increase of the state's control over education and its use to spread the pro-government narratives.<sup>53</sup>

In turn, Olga Kazakova, the head of Committee on Education of the State Duma noted that special attitude to the humanitarian subjects in the document is not accidental. In such way, those subjects that form “correct” children's values are “protected”.<sup>54</sup>

The influence of the government of the Russian Federation in the field of preschool education is increasing. In October 2022, the conference “Education of preschoolers on the basis of traditional spiritual and moral values” was held in Sevastopol, in which over 300 educators, methodologists, heads of preschool educational organizations, specialists and heads of educational authorities, practitioners and experts in the field of preschool education, childhood researchers from Sevastopol and Crimea. During the conference, the main attention was paid to the formation of patriotic feelings towards the Russian Federation among children of preschool age.<sup>55</sup> According to the Order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation, starting from November 24, 2022, children from the age of 4-5 should be taught the fundamentals of civility and patriotism: cultivate a respectful attitude towards the Fatherland, symbols of the country and memorable dates.<sup>56</sup>

In fact, the year 2022 became a new stage in the history of the militarization of Crimean education and the destruction of Ukrainian identity. As it was mentioned above, the pressure of the state in matters of the so-called patriotic education intensified, which already at the official level should begin since kindergarten, where children should be instilled with the correct “values”. In turn, these “values” are singled out by the state, which controls the contents of all educational programs (with special attention to humanitarian disciplines) and exerts pressure on teachers, who disagree with the pro-government narratives. The number of hours for teaching “correct” history is being increased and additional time for propagandistic lessons (so-called “Conversations about the important”) is being added. After all, in December 2022, a special law on patriotic education was adopted in Crimea, which can potentially become a powerful weapon of propaganda in the hands of the occupation administrations. All these factors turn Crimea into a real “Peninsula of unfreedom” – first and foremost for children and youth.

## ■ Statistics and languages of education

In 2022, the number of children who started studying in schools increased. While in the 2021-2022 academic year the number of students was 222,000, as of the beginning of 2022-2023 there are more than 230,000 of them. Only in Sevastopol the number of students increased to 53,500. In addition, according to the information, provided by the so-called “Minister of Education, Science and Youth of the Republic of

53 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Almenda\\_Universalnyi-soldat\\_veresen.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Almenda_Universalnyi-soldat_veresen.pdf)

54 <https://er.ru/activity/news/edinaya-rossiya-obespechit-vvedenie-edinogo-standarta-obrazovaniya-v-shkolah-po-vsej-strane>

55 [https://www.sevsu.ru/novosti/item/formirovanie\\_tsennostnykh\\_orientirov\\_u\\_detey\\_doshkolnogo\\_vozrasta\\_obsuzhdayut\\_na\\_konferentsii\\_v\\_sevg/](https://www.sevsu.ru/novosti/item/formirovanie_tsennostnykh_orientirov_u_detey_doshkolnogo_vozrasta_obsuzhdayut_na_konferentsii_v_sevg/)

56 <http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/Document/View/0001202212280044?index=4&rangeSize=1>



Crimea” Valentina Lavrik, in 2022, educational institutions in Crimea accepted children from the occupied territories of Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions.

It is also important to note that as a result of the occupation, the Ukrainian language was removed from the public space of the Crimean Peninsula, which primarily applies to media, cultural and educational institutions. The status of Ukrainian as one of the state languages (same as Crimean Tatar language) has a purely declarative nature, and the presence of one school with Ukrainian language of education in Feodosia does not provide the real opportunities for the inhabitants of the peninsula to receive education in their native language.

Regarding education in the Crimean Tatar language, the situation is as follows. Gulnara Muratova, the representative of the National Corpus of the Crimean Tatar Language, notes that after the occupation of Crimea in 2012, the Crimean Tatar language is taught at schools only as an optional subject and it is one of the last lessons, and parents are often forced to opt-out the subject. There are still a few schools teaching in the Crimean Tatar language, but only a few dozen students graduate from them each year. At the 21st session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Emine Dzharapova emphasized that “the Crimean Tatar language belongs to the languages that are seriously endangered and the Russian occupiers in Crimea are constantly restricting its use”.

However, the occupation administration of Crimea continues to imitate the activity regarding ensuring the rights to education in other “state languages” of Crimea. The so-called Deputy Minister of Education, Science and Youth Timur Asanov informed that in the period from 2016 to 2022, about 110 titles of educational and methodological literature on the Crimean Tatar language were purchased. He notes that there are currently 16 schools and 119 classes in Ukraine, which teach the Crimean Tatar language, where more than 8,000 schoolchildren study. It is currently not possible to verify this data.

## ■ Propaganda in the field of education: innovations

On August 17, 2022, Crimean Republican Institute of Postgraduate Pedagogical Education (CRIPPE) released recommendations on teaching history general educational institutions of Crimea in 2022-2023. According to the recommendations, for the 6<sup>th</sup> grade it is required to reduce the number of hours (4 hours) for studying the course “World History” and add these hours to the course “History of Russia”.

Also, according to the updated federal state standards of general secondary education, educational organization should provide up to 10 weekly classes of extracurricular activity. Within these 10 hours, the recommended part should contain: 1 hour: “Conversations about the important” – first lesson on Monday, in contrast, the variable part should contain: 2 hours “A complex of activities to meet social interests and needs” (as a part of the Russian movement of schoolchildren, Young Army, implementation of the project “Russia is a country of possibilities”).<sup>57</sup>

In addition, Sergey Aksyonov stated that the work on “patriotic education of children” is being intensified in schools and starting from the beginning of the 2022-2023



academic year, the Russian national anthem is being played and the Russian flag is being raised in schools before the start of the classes.<sup>58</sup> In such way the occupation authorities continue to destroy the Ukrainian identity of children in the occupied Crimea and impose the Russian identity on Ukrainian children.<sup>59</sup>

## ■ Teachers in Crimea: intensification of pressure

Teachers in the Crimean Peninsula are actively encouraged to integrate into the educational space of the Russian Federation, including participation in regional competitions and educational events. There were also cases of pressure on teachers (with further dismissal), who demonstrated the position, which differed from the all-Russian narrative. For example, a Geography teacher from Dzhankoi was forced to write a resignation letter after she told her students that there are no fascists and Nazis in Ukraine. After the dismissal she was summoned to the law enforcement agency “to have a conversation”. In September 2022, in Crimea, the teacher of Bilohirsk Technical School, who turned on the Ukrainian song “Bayraktar” for his students, was arrested for the demonstration of prohibited symbols (Part 1 of Article 20.3 of the Code of Administrative Offences of the Russian Federation) and dismissed. In October, the teacher was sent under the administrative arrest again under the same Article for posting the song “Chervona Kalyna” (Red Viburnum) in social network “VKontakte”. In February 2023 he was charged with the repeated discrediting of the Russian army (part 1 of Article 280.3 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation, new provisions) for his post in “VKontakte”, which describes the illegal aggressive actions of the Russian Federation in Donbass. In addition, teachers in Crimea are demanded to donate part of their salary to the Russian army, by filing a corresponding application to the school principal.

The Russian Federation continues the colonization of the peninsula by educators from the territory of Russia, who are active promoters of the idea of the “Russian world”. The “Zemsky Teacher” program continues to operate, according to which teachers from Russia move to the territory of the occupied Crimea in order to teach in the educational institutions. Teachers, participants of this program, who deliberately move to the occupied territory, are promoters of the Russian propagandistic narratives and they participate in destruction of the Ukrainian identity of children in the occupied territory. For example, as a part of this program, teachers from Voronezh, Bryansk, Chelyabinsk and Yekaterinburg came to teach in Sevastopol. This year, 31 new teachers, who came from different regions of Russia as a part of this program, started working in rural schools of Crimea. In November 2022, it became known about teachers from Tyumen region, who came to Crimea as a part of the program “Zemsky Teacher”.

This relocation of teachers leads to the cultural assimilation in the occupied territories and continues the tendencies, which started in 2014 after the occupation of Crimea and separate districts of Luhansk and Donetsk regions. In this way, the Russian Federation tries to cut off children from the Ukrainian educational environment, and such teachers become the instrument of violation of Articles 24, 94 of the Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

58 [https://vk.com/va.konstantinov?fbclid=IwAR0PEwEzY-U2Mx-ebLXJ6GIIHD3WMIBVMnK\\_DaqxKDKfjnIhR6MkeQSD7Iw&w=wall608829078\\_6933%20](https://vk.com/va.konstantinov?fbclid=IwAR0PEwEzY-U2Mx-ebLXJ6GIIHD3WMIBVMnK_DaqxKDKfjnIhR6MkeQSD7Iw&w=wall608829078_6933%20)

59 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Monitorynhovyy-zvit-Universalnyy-soldat\\_serpen\\_ukr-1.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Monitorynhovyy-zvit-Universalnyy-soldat_serpen_ukr-1.pdf)





## ■ Law “On Patriotic Education”

On December 19, 2022, the so-called “State Council” of Crimea approved the law “On Patriotic Education of Citizens in the Republic of Crimea”. The initiator and developer of the law was the so-called “Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Crimea” with the aim of “protecting our state from external and internal threats”.<sup>60</sup> According to the head of the so-called “State Council of Crimea” Vladimir Konstantinov, the document is aimed at building a modern system of patriotic education, which will contribute to the “ideological cohesion of citizens, ensuring national security and achieving the corresponding strategic goals of the Russian Federation”. He also emphasized that in addition to family, schools, universities, television, politicians and public movements should take part in this process.<sup>61</sup>

Patriotic education of citizens is understood as a “systematic and purposeful activity of state authorities of the Republic of Crimea, local self-government bodies of municipal units in the Republic of Crimea, institutions of civil society and family on the formation of citizens’ sense of loyalty to their Fatherland, readiness to fulfill the civic duty and constitutional responsibilities of protecting the interests of the Fatherland”.

According to this law, the main tasks of patriotic education of citizens are the formation and the affirmation of patriotic values and sense of loyalty to the duty of protecting “one’s Fatherland” [referring to the Russian Federation] in the public consciousness. It is also stipulated to educate the citizens in the spirit of respect for the Constitution of the Russian Federation and to form respect for the official state symbols of the Russian Federation, including the monuments of the “Fatherland”. One of the goals of such education is to strengthen the prestige of serving in the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, other Troops, military (special) formations and power structures.

Patriotic focus should also be strengthened in the work of the mass media during covering events and phenomena of social life in order to “prevent the manipulation of information, the distortion and falsification of the history of the Fatherland”. The law also stipulates the creation of conditions for the development of Cossacks and cadet movements, as well as contribution into the activity public associations and organizations of patriotic orientation.<sup>62</sup>

The provisions of this law clearly demonstrate that propaganda from the occupation administrations of Crimea will only intensify in the future, and it is already de-facto legalized in all aspects of Crimean children’s lives.

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60 <https://crimea-news.com/politics/2023/01/11/1009001.html>

61 [http://crimea.gov.ru/news/14\\_12\\_22](http://crimea.gov.ru/news/14_12_22)

62 <https://www.garant.ru/hotlaw/crimea/1593759/>



## ■ Parts of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions and implementation of the Crimean scenario

As of September 1, 2022, 91 schools<sup>63</sup> and 62 kindergartens<sup>64</sup> were opened in the occupied part of Kherson region, 164 schools – in the occupied part of Zaporizhzhia region.<sup>65</sup> As of November 2022, more than 65,000 students are studying remotely in 157 schools of Kherson region.<sup>66</sup>

According to Tatiana Kuzmich, the so-called “Deputy minister of Education of Kherson region”, as of December 2022, 64 institutions of general education are operating in the occupied part of Kherson region (Novotroitske, Kalanchak, Henichesk, Skadovsk, Chaplynka and Sirohozy municipal districts). In total, about 11,000 students study there.<sup>67</sup> The number of students changes every day: some continue studying, and some leave to the unoccupied part of Ukraine or the countries of Europe, Asia and America.

Children under the age of 14 can obtain the Russian passport separately, which is not only the instrument of assimilation, but also a legal ground of for the further service in the army of the Russian Federation.<sup>68</sup> In November 2022, in schools of Melitopol parents were announced that during the “Fundamentals of Life Safety” lessons, high school students will study basic military training. Students of 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades will be taught handling Kalashnikov assault rifle, providing first aid during the combat, will learn the principles of action of F-1 and RGD-5 grenades.<sup>69</sup> The initial military training course should be introduced in schools of the occupied part of Zaporizhzhia region starting from 2023.<sup>70</sup> In December 2022, Ukrainian intelligence reported about the new waves of mobilization in the Russian Federation, which may also affect the 17-year old young men in the occupied territories.<sup>71</sup> That is, the occupation administrations de-facto prepare Ukrainian children for serving in the armed forces of the aggressor state, contrary to the norms of international humanitarian law, which directly prohibit such actions.

In the occupied territories of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions, preparation to the 2022-2023 academic year included providing the educational institutions with the Russian textbooks, re-training teachers in accordance with the Russian programs, organizing the enrollment of children in schools, determining the pedagogical staff ready to continue or begin working in schools.<sup>72</sup> The process of transition to the Russian standards of education and the destruction of Ukrainian education includes a number of measures, which will be described in details below.

63 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/3103](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/3103)

64 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/1396](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/1396)

65 [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/19334](https://t.me/mod_russia/19334)

66 [https://hromadske.ua/posts/na-hersonshini-mozhut-rozirvati-dogovori-zivchitelyami-kolaborantami-mon?fbclid=IwAR0yKpiTx2EyjDSkBOTkPwcoVTX\\_Bb9nwAOA6lybr9USdtGnAwCyWDMJqUI](https://hromadske.ua/posts/na-hersonshini-mozhut-rozirvati-dogovori-zivchitelyami-kolaborantami-mon?fbclid=IwAR0yKpiTx2EyjDSkBOTkPwcoVTX_Bb9nwAOA6lybr9USdtGnAwCyWDMJqUI)

67 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/5207](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/5207)

68 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/3119](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/3119)

69 <https://t.me/riamelitopol/74422>

70 <https://t.me/riamelitopol/74858>

71 <https://t.me/riamelitopol/77296>

72 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Monitorynhovyy-zvit-Universalnyy-soldat\\_serpen\\_ukr-1.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Monitorynhovyy-zvit-Universalnyy-soldat_serpen_ukr-1.pdf)



## ■ Transition to the Russian educational standards

Vladimir Putin set the task to integrate Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions, as well as the so-called DPR and LPR into the scientific and educational space of the state, stating that “Russia needs to gain a foothold in the new territories not only in a military and political way, but also in the process of working with people, so that they understand the advantages of accession in the Russian Federation”.<sup>73</sup>

In December 2022, the so-called “administration of Kherson region” stated that in 2023, work on the integration of the region into the “unified social, political and legal space of the Russian Federation” will be intensified. Special attention will be paid to bringing the educational system to the unified Russian standards and raising the level of education in Kherson region and other “liberated” territories, as well as building a comprehensive system of support and protection of children.<sup>74</sup>

In general, the transition of education to the Russian standards was one of the main tasks for the occupiers in 2022.<sup>75</sup> In order to achieve this goal, the occupation authorities resorted to various methods, including intimidation, abduction, manipulation, encouragement and replacement of the heads of educational institutions with the ones, loyal to the Russian Federation. One of the methods of pressure was that specialists of educational institutions received letters, in which, with reference to the IV Geneva Convention and in order to “prevent the humanitarian catastrophe”, Kherson military-civilian administration demands the educators to ensure the educational process in the occupied territories, threatening them with sanctions in case of refusal.<sup>76</sup>

Another widespread method was replacement of administration of educational institutions with those loyal to the so-called “new government”. For example, the occupation authorities appointed Eduard Voloshchuk as pro-rector of Kherson State University,<sup>77</sup> in Kakhovka,<sup>78</sup> Berdyansk<sup>79</sup> and other cities replacements of school principals took place, and in Kherson, the process of selecting candidates for the positions of directors and head teachers of kindergartens.<sup>80</sup>

In June 2022, educational process was taking place in some of educational institutions in the occupied territories. The Minister of Education of the Russian Federation

73 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/2749](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/2749)

74 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Skadovsk/2284](https://t.me/VGA_Skadovsk/2284)

75 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Skadovsk/211](https://t.me/VGA_Skadovsk/211) <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eYwl4FDGW2tJeL0n0tCsS36ASBixHUX1/view?usp=sharing>

76 <https://texty.org.ua/articles/107110/vybir-v-osvityan-v-okupaciyi-nevelykyj-sisty-zaraz-za-nepokoru-abo-pislya-zvlnennya-za-koloboraciyu-rozpovid-uchytelya-z-hersonshyny/?src=main>  
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77 <https://suspilne.media/253624-okupacijna-vlada-priznacila-tak-zvanogo-prorektora-hersonskogo-derzavnogo-universitetu/>  
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78 [https://t.me/kherson\\_baza/557](https://t.me/kherson_baza/557)  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/14y2JhaYL1Bc8QWeOVJ9gv89tY\\_o7Ls8/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/14y2JhaYL1Bc8QWeOVJ9gv89tY_o7Ls8/view?usp=sharing)

79 <https://t.me/brdnews/7913> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/17\\_Ga05y2LKUr5CJygpA8NJWoZ8tYiqd1/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/17_Ga05y2LKUr5CJygpA8NJWoZ8tYiqd1/view?usp=sharing)

80 [https://tass.ru/obschestvo/14905865?utm\\_source=google.com&utm\\_medium=organic&utm\\_campaign=google.com&utm\\_referrer=google.com](https://tass.ru/obschestvo/14905865?utm_source=google.com&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=google.com&utm_referrer=google.com)



Sergey Kravtsov visited the city in order to transfer the educational system in Zaporizhzhia region to the Russian standards with the relevant pedagogical staff.<sup>81</sup> Starting from September 1, 2022, in Melitopol, education is performed in the Russian language, with the 5-point grading system (in contradistinction to the Ukrainian 12-point system).<sup>82</sup>

In the middle of June, the information began to appear that students who did not attend studies in spring need to come to school for testing, the results of which will be used to transfer to the next grade.<sup>83</sup> In Melitopol, graduates received school leaving certificates and medals of the Russian standard.<sup>84</sup> In order to receive documents of the Russian standard about the graduation from school, students of schools of the city of Berdyansk had to pass the multi-test and submit an application.<sup>85</sup> On June 29, 2022, the news appeared that Anzor Muzayev, the head of the Federal Service for Supervision in the Field of Education and Science, issued the first certificates of the Russian standard to the graduated of the secondary general education school No15.<sup>86</sup> In total, the Federal Service for Supervision in the Field of Education and Science delivered 20,000 certificate forms of the Russian standard to Melitopol, as well as the equipment for printing certificates.<sup>87</sup>

The situation in the Kherson region is different. On June 7, 2022, Tatiana Kuzhmich, the head of “Kherson Regional Department of Education”, controlled by the Russian Federation, stated that in 2022 Kherson graduates will receive certificates of the Ukrainian standard, and the next generations – of the Russian one: in this matter, it is planned to follow the experience of Crimea in 2014.<sup>88</sup> In November 2022, the information appeared that in 2023 graduates of educational institutions of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions, located in the territories occupied by the Russian Federation, will receive school leaving certificates with no exams.<sup>89</sup>

81 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/938>  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ckEh3h5juCb2dQbBCH-mep7Kzu4rsoyT/view?usp=sharing>  
<https://t.me/melitopoladmin/1038>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OL9w7WKKxYG4K80Bj4kDAZpi1GScYwjU/view?usp=sharing>

82 <https://regnum.ru/news/society/3613185.html>  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sANEjmmTS1nXmtxkG3lA8Gth9e1cvpdO/view?usp=sharing>

83 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/994>  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FpDx-4zXq6fYX6HjJ42BccBUCZhPB74k/view?usp=sharing>

84 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/931%20https://t.me/melitopoladmin/889>  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1f1GkN3brFZcY8Whtu-slUr56KSaFa4Sx/view?usp=sharing>

85 [https://t.me/glava\\_brd/66](https://t.me/glava_brd/66) <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SiqGrUZZ70NAyYwiWHGTnf2i5tYjIPOQ/view?usp=sharing>

86 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/1135>  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/12tM\\_70xRT1g4-kfnzGu3NwXTiYzKeEJu/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/12tM_70xRT1g4-kfnzGu3NwXTiYzKeEJu/view?usp=sharing)

87 <https://zp-news.ru/society/2022/06/29/6675.html>  
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88 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/611](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/611)  
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## ■ Language of education

In May 2022, the newly-appointed officials of the so-called “administrations of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions” announced the transition of education in schools and higher education institutions to the Russian language, with the possibility of forming Ukrainian classes at parents’ request.<sup>90</sup> At the same time, the processes, which took place in Crimea, where the possibility of studying in the Ukrainian language was also declared, give every reason to believe that citizens of Ukraine, who found themselves under the occupation, will de-facto have no opportunity to study in their native language.<sup>91</sup>

The educational institutions in the occupied Melitopol were actively used to form the Russian identity among Ukrainian children. In particular, on June 6, 2022, in the Gorky Library, children of the city were involved in the celebration of the Day of the Russian Writing, for the first time they wrote a dictation in the Russian language.<sup>92</sup> Starting from September 1, 2022, all schools will teach in the Russian language and according to the programs of the Russian Federation. At school’s decision as well as at parents’ and children’s request there will either be hours of lessons of the native language allocated for learning the Ukrainian language, or it will be taught as a special course. Such wording as “at parents’ request” was used in Crimea too, where parents were de-facto intimidated, summoned to FSS “to have a conversation” or their requests were simply ignored, and the study of the Ukrainian language did not take place.<sup>93</sup> However, considering the words of Anna Kuznetsova, the Deputy Chair of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, who in November 2022 noted the need to solve the problem of the “language barrier” for Ukrainian children from the occupied territories, who used to study in the Ukrainian language,<sup>94</sup> the process of transition of education to the Russian language is not easy for the occupiers. It is important to note that actions of the occupation administrations regarding the transition of education to the Russian language are not only a violation of international humanitarian law in terms of the administration of the occupied territories, but also directly affect children’s right to receive education in their native language.

## ■ Russian state symbols in Ukrainian schools

Also, Russian symbols were delivered to schools in the occupied territories, “so that educational institutions could hold solemn lines with raising or carrying the Rus-

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91 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/518](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/518) [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QT4h-xGtwNl4wxRyj9rRLPkt9T3q\\_a0A/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QT4h-xGtwNl4wxRyj9rRLPkt9T3q_a0A/view?usp=sharing)

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93 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Monitorynhovyy-zvit-Universalnyy-soldat\\_serpen\\_ukr-1.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Monitorynhovyy-zvit-Universalnyy-soldat_serpen_ukr-1.pdf)

94 [https://gorod24.online/simferopol/news/283698-v\\_gosdume\\_pomogut\\_hersonskim\\_shkolnikam\\_vospolnit\\_probел\\_v\\_obrazovanii.html](https://gorod24.online/simferopol/news/283698-v_gosdume_pomogut_hersonskim_shkolnikam_vospolnit_probел_v_obrazovanii.html)





sian flag, as well as conduct the cycle of classes Conversations About the Important”.<sup>95</sup> With the beginning of the 2022-2023 academic year, the Knowledge Day was held in schools with raising of the Russian flag.<sup>96</sup> A number of events took place in honor of the Day of the National Flag of the Russian Federation: an organized rally in Melitopol,<sup>97</sup> children’s quest in Henichesk<sup>98</sup>. In addition, video about “Love for Russia” was recorded with children in Zaporizhzhia region.<sup>99</sup>

The “United Russia” party sent school kits and backpacks with Russian symbols to children from the low-income families. According to the statement of the occupation administration of Kherson region, 5,000 first graders from Kherson region received the kits.<sup>100</sup>

Respect to other state symbols of the Russian Federation is also being cultivated. That is, students of Henichesk Medical College wrote a unified dictation on topic “Constitution”, timed to the day of adoption of the Constitution of the Russian Federation.<sup>101</sup> Also, on the Constitution Day of the Russian Federation, volunteers of the Young guard of “United Russia” held thematic lessons in schools of Melitopol, where they told schoolchildren about “the historical path, that the state and society had taken before the adoption of the Constitution, about the origins of the legal foundations of statehood and constitutionalism in the Russian Federation”.<sup>102</sup> The public movement “People’s Front” also sent 500 posters with the heraldry of the Russian Federation and 50 stationery kits to the so-called “Ministry of Labor and Social Policy of Kherson Region”.<sup>103</sup>

Under the patronage of the occupation administration of Melitopol and the “United Russia” party, in the Sports School №3, the open school karate championship was held, timed to bestowing the title “City of Military Glory” upon Mariupol. Absolutely all contestants received gifts from the “United Russia” party, and the winners were awarded medals, cups and diplomas according to the places they took, as well as sets of party’s paraphernalia – caps and t-shirts. Russian symbols, including the Russian flags, were also actively displayed at the event.<sup>104</sup>

The actions of the occupation administrations regarding the active use of the state symbols of the Russian Federation among Ukrainian children indicate the intention of mental normalization of occupation and association of such state symbols as “their own”.

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97 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/1996>

98 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/1127](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/1127)

99 [https://t.me/vmeste\\_rus\\_ZO/413](https://t.me/vmeste_rus_ZO/413)

100 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/3133](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/3133)

101 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/2917](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/2917)

102 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/3671>

103 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/3256](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/3256)

104 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/3501>



## ■ Historical memory

In May 2022, educational institutions of Melitopol held events, dedicated to the World War II, which repeated the all-Russian narrative in covering the events.<sup>105</sup> The events were held for children starting from kindergartens. In particular, on May 5, 2022, an open lesson was held for the pupils of the Melitopol Kindergarten No46 “Vinochok”, where children were told about “heroes from Melitopol who fought on the frontlines of the Great Patriotic War”. Children took part in the drawing competition, dedicated to the Victory Day, as well as in thematic lesson “Songs of the War Years”.<sup>106</sup> During the events, Russian symbols were actively used, including the St. George ribbon, prohibited in Ukraine.

In schools of Kherson region, additional hours of History lessons were introduced with the aim of “de-Nazification of history”.<sup>107</sup> De-facto, additional lessons are aimed at spreading the Russian propagandistic narratives among children.<sup>108</sup> Also, In September, the “Museum of National Education” was opened in Kherson region, in which “the exhibits form the line of tradition, upon perceiving which every resident of the region can feel unity with heroic ancestors”. For this museum, the so-called “Ministry of Education of Kherson Region” allocated almost 40,000 school textbooks with “visualized and correct presentation of historical facts” for the patriotic education.<sup>109</sup>

On the so-called “Heroes of Fatherland Day”, graffiti with the portrait of Vasiliy Kurasov, the hero of the Soviet Union, who performed a feat during the assault on Königsberg in 1945, was opened in Henichesk. This graffiti was opened “to strengthen the connection between the generations and the regions”.<sup>110</sup>

The Ministry of Youth Policy and Sports, together with the district department of education held “History lessons in museum” for several days, where Kherson schoolchildren were told about “heroic pages of history of their native land”, where the main emphasis was made on the “Great Patriotic War” (hereinafter – GPW) of 1941-1945.<sup>111</sup> The heroization of the GPW events is also done through art – for example, a free screening of the patriotic movie “Panfilov’s 28 Men” took place in Henichesk cinema “Russia”, which was attended by about 500 people,<sup>112</sup> including schoolchildren.<sup>113</sup> In other words, the occupation administrations are actively exploiting historical narratives, which are used by the Russian Federation for the purpose of distorting history and forming patriotism among its own citizens – which is absolutely unacceptable in the context of the occupied territories.

105 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/482> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JX57X2mYI4yKx6\\_xsOFZBJL34e8hc44D/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JX57X2mYI4yKx6_xsOFZBJL34e8hc44D/view?usp=sharing)

106 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/479> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CsFq0T4c-8A8i\\_mhIGH4NiLXP8ULyumN/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CsFq0T4c-8A8i_mhIGH4NiLXP8ULyumN/view)

107 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/3102](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/3102)

108 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Almenda\\_Universalnyi-soldat\\_veresen.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Almenda_Universalnyi-soldat_veresen.pdf)

109 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/3260](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/3260)

110 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/5270](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/5270)

111 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Skadovsk/2087](https://t.me/VGA_Skadovsk/2087)

112 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/2767](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/2767)

113 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/2766](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/2766)



## ■ Replacement and re-training of teachers

One of the key tasks for transforming educational system into the instrument of the Russian propaganda and destroying Ukrainian identity is the formation of a teaching staff loyal to the occupation authorities, which will be relay the Russian narratives to children.<sup>114</sup>

In April the statements appeared regarding re-training of teachers from the occupied Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Kharkiv, Luhansk and Donetsk regions of Ukraine in the occupied Crimea in accordance with the Russian standards.<sup>115</sup> This was announced by the head of the so-called “State Council of Crimea” Vladimir Konstantinov on his page in the social network “VKontakte”:

“Without a radical cleansing of this corrupted educational system, any de-Nazification of territory of the former Ukraine is simply not possible. However, we cannot be contented only with textbooks. We need honest, ideologically positive teachers ...we are willing to perform the re-training of teacher, and in case of need – to form our group of volunteer teachers. These persons will be our companions, will be restoring what was destroyed, not in the houses and on the streets, but in people’s souls.”<sup>116</sup>

In order to implement this task, at the end of May, principals, administration and pedagogues of schools in the occupied territories of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions were forcibly summoned to the meeting and were urged to prepare themselves for teaching according to the new program, go to Crimea for “upgrading their qualifications”.<sup>117</sup> Those, who did not agree, were threatened with dismissal.<sup>118</sup>

In particular, in the period from June 6 to June 8, 2022, teachers from Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions<sup>119</sup> took part in a seminar on the program of the festival “The Great Russian Word” in Crimea, during which training on methodology of teaching the Russian language and literature was held.<sup>120</sup> On June 23, 2022, 70 educators from the occupied territories of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions took part in the seminar

114 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Monitorynhovyy-zvit-Universalnyy-soldat\\_serpen\\_ukr-1.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Monitorynhovyy-zvit-Universalnyy-soldat_serpen_ukr-1.pdf)

115 <https://topcor.ru/25139-ukrainskie-uchitelja-s-osvobozhdennyh-territorij-projdu-perepodgotovku-v-rossii.html> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nF5AF1YLD\\_lu2oR5eVuUfHsrFccyOum/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nF5AF1YLD_lu2oR5eVuUfHsrFccyOum/view?usp=sharing)

116 <https://bit.ly/3zWpneH> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1W2KucbEbqsjDd17pMhSX-YFeY3z1l2Ev/view?usp=sharing>

117 <https://www.facebook.com/serge.danylov/posts/pfbid034gZtPSXxAFaw2gSc4ifCXPZEQRLePbxcKZcLDKd4TZZSdNuJVx4EnBwcZJMy2pXQl%20> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XvCho72VnFgZ1Noe5ChASRwVKtT33p2/view?usp=sharing> <https://t.me/UkraineMediaCenterKyiv/1257> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZCLNjtEFxedM9pROiCSAdQPi-4MN76lM/view?usp=sharing>

118 [https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=828176648138159&id=100028374940771](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=828176648138159&id=100028374940771) [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1K6e8FNTiP\\_BVklCsyCNzUpvJe5V2y6\\_J/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1K6e8FNTiP_BVklCsyCNzUpvJe5V2y6_J/view?usp=sharing)

119 [https://m.vk.com/wall608829078\\_4875](https://m.vk.com/wall608829078_4875) [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1O2Mf5DcURLUfdjimQv\\_bpNuNjy9IGvjh/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1O2Mf5DcURLUfdjimQv_bpNuNjy9IGvjh/view?usp=sharing)

120 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/563](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/563) <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pXuDbzTsNGUaDcyD74paO6yzdfIWAgFx/view?usp=sharing>



“Implementation of the state policy in the educational field. Experience of the Republic of Crimea”, dedicated to the transition to the Russian standards of education.<sup>121</sup> On June 27, 2022, the representatives of the so-called “Ministry of Education, Science and youth of the Republic of Crimea” and even trade unions of specialists of public education and science of the Russian Federation gave lectures to the participants of the seminar. Seminars for the heads of educational institutions of the occupied parts of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions were also held in Moscow region.<sup>122</sup> The “advanced training” courses for teachers from the occupied parts of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions in Yevpatoria were organized by the Academy of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation.<sup>123</sup>

At the same time, the number of teachers, who gave their agreement to undergo re-training according to the Russian programs turned out to be small. According to the information from Valentina Lavrik, the occupation “Minister of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea”, starting from August 17, the number of teachers from Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions, who underwent the re-training in Crimea, amounted to more than 500 persons, which is obviously not a sufficient number to completely transfer schools to the Russian programs.<sup>124</sup>

Therefore, the lack of teachers, willing to start working according to the Russian programs, became one of the major challenges for the occupiers. The information about the search for teachers appeared in various local groups throughout August, even in the last days of the month.<sup>125</sup> On August 31, 2022, the so-called “head of education of Kherson region” Mihail Rodikov informed that 80 % of pedagogical staff of schools is formed and on the condition “*if there will be a lack of teachers*”, they will be requested to come from Russia.<sup>126</sup> In September 2022, Alexander Bugayev, the First Deputy Minister of Education of the Russian Federation, and Mihail Rodikov, the so-called “Minister of Education of Kherson region”, congratulated pedagogical staff of Kherson region on the coming Teacher’s day, which, for the first time, is celebrated together with Russia – the teachers’ staff received certificates of honor and gratitude.<sup>127</sup>

There are known cases of the pressure on the educators from Kherson<sup>128</sup> and Zaporizhzhia regions and abduction of those, who refuse to collaborate with the occupation administration. Also, in Berdyansk, educators, who continued teaching according to the Ukrainian program, were arrested.<sup>129</sup>

121 <https://t.me/Aksenov82/1108> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uiolRUXckwnmzV3bp47x268fL8zocYW2/view?usp=sharing> [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/741](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/741) <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Gh5JSrSrznYhTIE1pgENctnKqN8JWcrg/view?usp=sharing> <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/1093> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vcOZ\\_1tNmLiyzqdYqa6wjJIXXW0XHXrb/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vcOZ_1tNmLiyzqdYqa6wjJIXXW0XHXrb/view?usp=sharing)

122 <https://t.me/riamelitopol/59988> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/19uoRsl-A8KF-vKXVszdo0OWrm8ipTT0T/view?usp=sharing>

123 <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:hpyW0Paov5cJ:https://vesti-k.ru/tv/2022/08/28/skolko-stoit-sobrat-rebenka-v-shkolu-v-2022-godu/&hl=uk&gl=il&s trip=1&vwsr=0>

124 <https://crimea.ria.ru/20220817/skolko-uchiteley-iz-khersona-i-zaporozhya-proshli-perepodgotovku-v-krymu-1124186861.html>

125 [https://t.me/zkdlife/6669%20,%20https://t.me/VGA\\_Skadovsk/844](https://t.me/zkdlife/6669%20,%20https://t.me/VGA_Skadovsk/844)

126 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/3074](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/3074)

127 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/1732](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/1732)

128 <https://t.me/c/1770284647/5161>

129 <https://t.me/brdVP/2262>



The relocation of teachers from Russia to the occupied territories of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions also took place<sup>130</sup> in order to teach Ukrainian children at schools and promote the transition to the Russian standards.<sup>131</sup> For example, in November 2022, a story about the teacher from Izhevsk, who came to Melitopol to teach Ukrainian children Russian language for the transition to the Russian educational standards, appeared on the Russian news.<sup>132</sup>

The Minister of Education of the Russian Federation Sergey Kravtsov stated that pedagogical universities of federal subordination will be created in the so-called Luhansk and Donetsk people's republics, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions, the minister announced this at the plenary session in the State Duma. He also said that by the 2022-2023 training of teachers of the Russian language, History and Social Studies were performed. Kravtsov believes that the main task is to teach children the course of "My History", in order to eliminate the "total ignorance of history and gaps and substitutions".<sup>133</sup>

Russian teachers deliberately come to the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine in order to introduce the ideas of the "Russian world". At the same time, Russia performs re-training of local teachers in order to spread the pro-Russian narratives among Ukrainian children. Both cases contain signs of illegal actions and should be investigated by the competent authorities with application of corresponding sanctions to the responsible persons.

## ■ Textbooks and books

One of the first steps of the occupation administrations of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions, same as during the occupation of Crimea, was removal of Ukrainian textbooks from schools. To justify its actions, the Russian Federation accused Ukrainian government of using History textbooks to prepare young people for war with Russia.<sup>134</sup> At the same time, in May 2022, the "United Russia" party announced about its readiness to deliver Russian textbooks to the "newly occupied" territories.<sup>135</sup> In this way, the occupation authorities was preparing for the beginning of the new academic year according to the Russian standards and thus using education with the purpose of propaganda of the Russian narratives and destruction of Ukrainian identity, following the example of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, and Crimea.

In the occupied territories, a total transformation of the cultural space was taking place. On September 6, 2022, with the support of the so-called "department of culture of Kherson region and trade union organizations", the opening of the regional universal scientific library named after O. Honchar took place. At the event, a short movie was

130 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/3050](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/3050)

131 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/1673](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/1673)

132 <https://t.me/riamelitopol/76475>

133 <https://www.vedomosti.ru/society/news/2022/11/20/951231-kravtsov>

134 <https://m.business-gazeta.ru/news/545146> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Qwr8lpDXNxwlnvMENDxo8NYYIRxpKZ34/view?usp=sharing>

135 [https://www.1tv.ru/news/2022-03-29/424996-andrey\\_turchak\\_prizval\\_kak\\_mozhno\\_skoree\\_dostavit\\_uchebniki\\_istorii\\_v\\_osvobozhdennye\\_rayony\\_donbassa](https://www.1tv.ru/news/2022-03-29/424996-andrey_turchak_prizval_kak_mozhno_skoree_dostavit_uchebniki_istorii_v_osvobozhdennye_rayony_donbassa) <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-LLdUn3qMCMj8xUWSnq9deLrRjRC7eGh/view?usp=sharing>





screened, which told about the “split” between Russia and Ukraine after 1991, and at the end there was a quiz on knowing history of Russia and Kherson.<sup>136</sup>

Libraries of the city received several thousand books: classic works of Russian literature, historical publications, military literature and books for children of school and elementary school age.<sup>137</sup> Historical books that, according to occupiers’ opinion, “spread the ideas of nationalism” began to be removed from the local libraries.<sup>138</sup> Instead of them it is planned to bring “proper” literature from Crimea to the libraries.<sup>139</sup> In addition, “proper” children’s literature for kindergartens was delivered to the occupied territories.<sup>140</sup> Through such literature as “Youth as long as war”, “Childhood in a soldier’s side cap”, “Everything for the victory”<sup>141</sup> the occupation authorities continue their policy of destroying children’s Ukrainian identity and creating a “universal Russian citizen”. Principals of general educational institutions of Skadovsk were presented with books about Russia, dedicated to the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the “Great Victory” in the GPW.<sup>142</sup> The representatives of the Republic of Adygea sent over 200 books as a gift to Henichesk public library, among which there were fiction books, historical literature, science fiction, a lot of books on local history, including books about the nature of the North-West Caucasus, culture and traditions of Adyghe. A lot of children’s literature was sent: Russian folk tales, novels and short stories by famous children’s writers. Some of the literature was provided by the regional branch of the “United Russia” party.<sup>143</sup>

On August 12, 2022, the Minister of Education of the Russian Federation announced that the issue with textbooks in the occupied territories has been completely resolved.<sup>144</sup> During the entire month of August, the occupation authorities were reporting about receiving the Russian textbooks. On August 26, 2022, the news was released, that textbooks from Russia were delivered to Kamianka-Dniprovska<sup>145</sup> and more than 600, 000 textbooks were delivered to Kherson region,<sup>146</sup> on August 27, a video news appeared that more than 66,000 books were brought to Melitopol for the beginning of the academic year,<sup>147</sup> and on August 29, the occupiers reported on the delivery of textbooks in Skadovsk.<sup>148</sup> All schools of the city of Berdyansk and Berdyansk district are supplied with the new textbooks for all grades.<sup>149</sup> Students of Henichesk Medical College were provided with more than 1,500 textbooks from the Ministry of Education of Kherson

136 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/3173](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/3173)

137 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/1015>  
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138 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/576>  
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139 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/576>  
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140 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/2195>

141 <https://t.me/riamelitopol/77708>

142 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Skadovsk/2058](https://t.me/VGA_Skadovsk/2058)

143 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/3218](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/3218)

144 [https://vk.com/minobrperm?w=wall-172799916\\_4021](https://vk.com/minobrperm?w=wall-172799916_4021)

145 <https://t.me/zkdlife/6621>

146 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/3027](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/3027)

147 <https://melitopol-news.ru/society/2022/08/27/7803.html>

148 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Skadovsk/915](https://t.me/VGA_Skadovsk/915)

149 [https://t.me/glava\\_brd/378](https://t.me/glava_brd/378)



region for the transition to studying according to the Russian standards.<sup>150</sup> That is, educational program in the occupied territories is completely integrated in the educational program of the Russian Federation,<sup>151</sup> and the transformation of the cultural space is currently underway.

## ■ Extracurricular activities

Children in the occupied territories of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions are also actively involved in participating in the informal activities, which are aimed at the destruction of the Ukrainian identity. For example, the “Clean Streets” campaign involves overpainting of Ukrainian symbols on the city streets and replacing them with the Russian ones.<sup>152</sup>

Young people of Kherson are also encouraged to participate in the “Region for Youth” program, where they obtain access to the full map of opportunities in Russia: state support, grants, participation in educational and entertainment events, educational programs and other projects of the youth policy ecosystem.<sup>153</sup>

The “United Russia” party launched the “New Year Mail” campaign on the eve of the New Year, during which master classes for children of Zaporizhzhia region were held, where children drew New Year postcards and letters for the participants of the so-called special military operation. It was also possible to bring postcards drawn at home to the unified humanitarian headquarters of the party.<sup>154</sup> Children in the occupied territories of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions were involved in “Letter to a Soldier” campaign and in other similar activities, according to the program of which they had to write or draw the letters with words of support to servicemen of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. In particular, similar events took place on November 4, 2022, in Melitopol<sup>155</sup> and on November 21, 2022 at school No 1 in Skadovsk.<sup>156</sup>

In December 2022, the so-called administration of the city of Melitopol informed soldiers of the national guard of the Russian Federation personally congratulated students at the school No 8 with New Year holidays after students wrote “letters of support to the frontlines”.<sup>157</sup>

The so-called “Ministry of Youth Policy and Sports of Kherson Region” together with the so-called “Department of Education of Skadovsk Municipal District” started the implementation of the regional project “PROkino”, which will allow to form the “required patriotic worldview and spiritually-moral potential in the youth environment” through the prism of “domestic” (in this context - Russian) cinematography and documentary. In the city of Skadovsk, the first screening of the feature film “The Humpbacked Horse”

150 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/2746](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/2746)

151 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Monitorynhovyy-zvit-Universalnyy-soldat\\_serpen\\_ukr-1.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Monitorynhovyy-zvit-Universalnyy-soldat_serpen_ukr-1.pdf)

152 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Skadovsk/751](https://t.me/VGA_Skadovsk/751)

153 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/2772](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/2772)

154 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/3584>

155 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/3223>

156 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Skadovsk/1930](https://t.me/VGA_Skadovsk/1930)

157 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/3803>



with historical excursus by the representative of the “Ministry” was organized on the basis of the school №3.<sup>158</sup> By analogy with Crimea, extracurricular activities are also turning into the instrument of propaganda in the hands of the occupation administrations.

## ■ Summer camps and rest

One of the main instruments for replacing the identity remains the organization of “wellness holidays” for children in the occupied Crimea and on the territory of the Russian Federation. According to the reports of the occupation authorities, during the rest, children received socio-psychological and medical support, and special cultural events were organized for them.<sup>159</sup> The Government of the Russian Federation allocated additional funds for the implementation of this project: transfer, accommodation, meals are provided at the expense of the hosting party.<sup>160</sup> “7631 children visited Crimea, including “Artek”: 5643 – from the DPR, 894 – from the LPR, 249 – from Kherson region, 845 – from Zaporizhzhia region”, – said the so-called “Minister of Education of Crimea” Valentina Lavrik during the meeting of the presidium of Crimean parliament.<sup>161</sup> Vacation and wellness shifts took place in the occupied Crimea, Krasnodar Krai, Stavropol Krai, Rostov region, Kabardino-Balkaria<sup>162</sup> The occupation “Ministry of Labor and Social Policy” of Kherson region, “Ministry of Tourism” of Kherson region, “Ministry of Emergency Situations” of Kherson region,<sup>163</sup> “government” of Crimea as well as deputies of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, particularly Igor Kastiukevich,<sup>164</sup> and the head of Kabardino-Balkaria Kazbek Kokov<sup>165</sup> joined the organization of taking children on a so-called “rest”. The main transfer of children deep into the occupied territories, in particular to Crimea and Russia, was taking place under the guise of the autumn recreation during school holidays. In his address on the occasion of the Teacher’s Day, the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin said that education workers should think about how to organize rest in the “new” territories, which are currently restless and even dangerous.<sup>166</sup>

An important tendency of this summer in Crimea was the use of summer camps for the destruction of Ukrainian identity of children from the territories of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions occupied in 2022, as well as from the occupied territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Among the camp shifts, which were held in August, we can mention the shift in the “Gorizont” camp which was a part of the project “University shifts”. “University Shifts” is a unified educational program for children from the so-called “DPR” and “LPR”, as well as from the occupied parts of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions.<sup>167</sup> Children of age 14-17 from the occupied territories of Donetsk and Luhansk

158 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/5508](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/5508)

159 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/3201](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/3201)

160 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/3944](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/3944)

161 <https://crimea.ria.ru/20221108/pochti-8-tysyach-detey-iz-novykh-regionov-rf-otdokhnuli-v-krymu-v-etom-godu-1125279180.html>

162 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Skadovsk/1363](https://t.me/VGA_Skadovsk/1363)

163 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/3950](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/3950)

164 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/4154](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/4154)

165 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Skadovsk/1653](https://t.me/VGA_Skadovsk/1653)

166 <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/69519/videos>

167 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/3075](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/3075)



regions, Melitopol and Kherson became its participants. The Sevastopol State University held a general educational program “Historical heritage of the Russian Federation: The Hero City of Sevastopol” for participants of the camp shift.<sup>168</sup> Also, in August 2022, the shift “We are your children, Russia” took place in the camp “Izumrud”. 122 children from Melitopol and Enerhodar took place in it.<sup>169</sup> It was also reported about 500 schoolchildren from Melitopol, who rested at children’s wellness centers in the occupied Crimea, the program content of which, as it was mentioned above, is aimed at the forming children into patriots of the Russian Federation.<sup>170</sup> In August, a series of summer camp shifts took place, program of which was aimed at the destruction of children’s Ukrainian identity.<sup>171</sup>

In order to organize autumn shifts in camps and encourage parents to send their children away from active hostilities, autumn holidays in Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions were announced on different dates. For example, in the city of Kherson, Bilozerk, Beryslav, Kakhovka, Nova Kakhovka districts, school holidays were announced for the period from October 6, 2022 to October 21, 2022.<sup>172</sup> In Velyka Lepetykha, Henichesk, Kalanchak, Novotroitske, Skadovsk and Chaplynka districts – from October 12, 2022 to October 25, 2022.<sup>173</sup> Later, school holidays were extended until November 7, 2022 (with the exception of the city of Kherson, Oleshky, Beryslav, Hola Prystan, Bilozerk, Kakhovka, Nova Kakhovka, Velyka Lepetykha districts – in which the date of the start of studying was not announced).<sup>174</sup> In the occupied part of Zaporizhzhia region, school holidays were announced for the period from October 31, 2022 to November 14, 2022.<sup>175</sup>

There were also excursions to the Russian cities, located thousands of kilometers away from Ukraine, for children from the occupied territories. For example, children from Vasiliyevka district and Enerhodar were taken on an excursion to Veliky Novgorod.<sup>176</sup> In December 2022, as a part of the project “New Year with The Great Change”<sup>177</sup>, 240 children from Zaporizhzhia region and 30 children from Kherson region went to Moscow, who attended a performance in the State Kremlin Palace<sup>178</sup> and the immersive exposition “heroic part of the nation” in the Victory Museum.<sup>179</sup> The main goal of such excursions and travels to the Russian camps is to evoke patriotic feelings for the Russian Federation in Ukrainian children.

Russian and occupying officials repeatedly stated that during the cultural and educational camp shifts, a large cultural educational program, attendance of optional and educational classes is stipulated.<sup>180</sup> Representatives of children’s and youth move-

168 [https://vk.com/sevsu?w=wall-91182781\\_20003](https://vk.com/sevsu?w=wall-91182781_20003)

169 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_15465](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_15465)

170 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/859>

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oFfz-7GeFGEBOxvYLz\\_8o-X22PsRmN80/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oFfz-7GeFGEBOxvYLz_8o-X22PsRmN80/view?usp=sharing)

171 <https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Monitorynhovyy-zvit-Universalnyy-soldat-serpen-ukr-1.pdf>

172 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/3855](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/3855)

173 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Skadovsk/1464](https://t.me/VGA_Skadovsk/1464)

174 <https://hersonka.ru/news/118274>

175 <https://zp-news.ru/society/2022/10/30/52504.html>

176 <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/1663>

177 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/3115](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/3115)

178 [https://t.me/hercon\\_ru/5278](https://t.me/hercon_ru/5278)

179 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/5582](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/5582)

180 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/3944](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/3944)



ments of the Russian Federation, in particular Young Army, the Russian Movement of Schoolchildren and “The Great Change”, were also invited to children. The representatives of these movements visited camps in Yevpatoria, where children from Kherson region were accommodated, and held an interactive event for them in order to familiarize them with traditions and symbols of the Russian Federation.<sup>181</sup> In Sevastopol, excursions for children from Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions were organized with the aim of popularizing the history of Russia.<sup>182</sup> In other words, even recreation is used by the occupation administrations as an instrument for ideological influence on children and as an incentive for further relocation to the Russian Federation or to the previously occupied territories.

## ■ Transfer of children

The Office of the Ombudsman of Ukraine confirmed that 12,000 Ukrainian children, who were illegally transferred from the territories controlled by the Ukrainian government are staying in the Russian Federation.<sup>183</sup> Some of them were actually abducted, for example children from Oleshky orphanage were forcibly transferred to the city of Skadovsk, where, on the basis of the formed children’s rehabilitation center “Nadiia”, a new institution was created.<sup>184</sup> In November 2022, this center was visited by the famous commissioner for children’s rights in the Russian Federation Mariya Lvova-Belova, who is directly involved in the abduction of Ukrainian children and their transferring to the Russian federation and the occupied territories.<sup>185</sup> Children from the orphanages of Kherson region were also transferred deeper to the occupied territories and to the territory of the Russian Federation.<sup>186</sup> Among the transferred children, residents of the boarding schools, there are children with disabilities.<sup>187</sup> For example, about 50 children aged from 4 months to 4 years from the Kherson Regional Children’s Home, among which there are children with disabilities, were transferred to Crimea.<sup>188</sup>

The occupation authorities and the Russian government also encouraged the trips of parents along with their children deeper to the occupied territories and to the territory of the Russian Federation.<sup>189</sup> In particular, in the middle of October, videos with children who stayed in Crimea began to appear, in which they ask for their parents to come to them in Crimea on vacation.<sup>190</sup> In October 2022, the transferring of population through Crimea and then to the territory of the Russian Federation under the slogan of evacuation was ongoing. In Crimea, in the city of Dzhankoi, a temporary accommodation point was set up.<sup>191</sup> According to the information of the Russian mass media, about

181 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_17084](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_17084)

182 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Skadovsk/1683](https://t.me/VGA_Skadovsk/1683)

183 [https://lb.ua/society/2022/12/14/539162\\_ofis\\_ombudsmena\\_pidtverdiv.html](https://lb.ua/society/2022/12/14/539162_ofis_ombudsmena_pidtverdiv.html)

184 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/5090](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/5090)

185 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/2427](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/2427)

186 <https://www.1tv.ru/news/2022-10-11/439391-v-krasnodarskom-krae-vstretili-detey-iz-hersonskoy-oblasti>

187 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/4190](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/4190)

188 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/4381](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/4381)

189 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/3944](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/3944)

190 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/1870](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/1870)

191 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/4346](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/4346)





9,000 persons, including children, moved to Krasnodar Krai,<sup>192</sup> The transferred children began attending Russian schools.<sup>193</sup> In such way, the occupation administrations create conditions for changing the demographic composition of the occupied south of Ukraine and for the assimilation of the Ukrainian citizens into the Russian society.

## ■ Children's and youth movements

Another step to influence children's consciousness is the intensification of interactions between the young people from the occupied territories of Zaporizhzhia, Kherson, Luhansk, Donetsk regions and Crimean youth. On June 10, 2022, a telecast on the topic "Development of youth policy on the territories of DPR, LPR, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions" was held, during which the representatives of the Council of the Presidents of Students' Self-Government under the so-called Head of the Republic of Crimea and Youth Government of the Republic of Crimea discussed with children and young people the cooperation in the field of youth policy and students' self-government<sup>194</sup> The appointment of the persons loyal to the Russian Federation on the positions connected with youth development also indicate the importance of the influence on educational and youth policy.<sup>195</sup>

A regional branch of the "Young Guard of the United Russia" was opened in the city of Melitopol, Zaporizhzhia region. Yuliya Klimenko, the leader of the youth movement #YugMolodoy became the head of the organization in Zaporizhzhia region.<sup>196</sup> In Kherson region, the so-called "Cossacks movement" is being renewed, as defenders of "the Russian land". In particular, with the support of the so-called "Ministry of Youth Policy and Sports" of Kherson region, in December 2022, the representatives of the so-called "Cossacks" held a physical training in the Sports School of the city of Skadovsk.<sup>197</sup> That is, the actions of occupation administrations are aimed at involving as many children and young people in the occupied territories as possible in the youth movements, particularly as it already was happening in Crimea starting from 2015.

## ■ #YugMolodoy

The leader of the movement in Yuliya Klimenko, who has been actively collaborating with the Russian administrations since the beginning of the occupation. The #YugMolodoy movement and the "Volunteers for Russia" corps were providing residents of Zaporizhzhia region with the informational support, related to the holding of the so-called "referendum" in September 2022. Yuliya Klimenko was recently appointed head

192 <https://hersonka.ru/news/117858> <https://www.interfax-russia.ru/south-and-north-caucasus/main/kuban-uzhe-prinyala-bolee-9-tys-zhiteley-hersonskoy-oblasti-opershtab>

193 <https://www.interfax-russia.ru/south-and-north-caucasus/novosti-municipalitetov/deti-iz-hersona-i-zaporozhya-nachali-uchitsya-v-shkolah-anapy>

194 [https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165\\_3559](https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165_3559) <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1m7WXdYrNfHPswmBzKsX9QsFMd4TS8JvF/view?usp=sharing>

195 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Soldat\\_2-1.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Soldat_2-1.pdf)

196 [https://zp.tsargrad.tv/news/na-zaporozhe-otkryli-regionalnoe-otdelenie-molodaja-gvardija-edinoj-rossii\\_643686](https://zp.tsargrad.tv/news/na-zaporozhe-otkryli-regionalnoe-otdelenie-molodaja-gvardija-edinoj-rossii_643686)

197 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Skadovsk/2199](https://t.me/VGA_Skadovsk/2199)



of the Zaporizhzhia regional branch of the “Young Guard of the United Russia” for her “contribution to the volunteer movement”.<sup>198</sup> In December 2022 the regional branch of the movement was opened in Kherson region as well.<sup>199</sup> Members of the movement perform active propagandistic activity in the benefit of the occupation authorities of the Russian federation in these regions. That is, in the city of Skadovsk, under the auspices of the movement, a photoshoot for students at the school №1 was organized. Activists handed out ribbons, flags, T-shirts, thermal mugs in the colors of the Russian flag to all those willing, and they also set up flags near classrooms.<sup>200</sup> In addition, as a part of the “Paint the future” campaign, activists of Priazovsky youth movement #YugMolodoy continue overpainting the Ukrainian symbols on the streets of the occupied cities.<sup>201</sup>

## ■ Young Army

In November 2022, the opening of regional branches of the military-patriotic movement “Young Army” took place in the occupied Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions.<sup>202</sup> Without departing from the Soviet traditions to align the events with the anniversaries or holidays, the opening of regional branches took place on the eve of the Russian state holiday – the Day of National Unity. In Zaporizhzhia region, the branch was opened in the city of Melitopol, in Kherson region – in the city of Henichesk.

During the opening the regional branch in Henichesk, Serafim Ivanov, who was appointed head of Kherson regional headquarters of the “Young Army”, noted:

“ Here, in Henichesk, we held the founding conference of Kherson regional branch of the military patriotic movement “Young Army”. We met with the leadership of the Young Army, federal delegates, as well as with boys from the Donetsk People’s Republic. We will be engaged in the military-patriotic training of children in Kherson region [...]. Our key task is to prepare youth and children for adult life”.<sup>203</sup>

It is important to remind that in the rhetoric of the leaders of the Young Army movement, the main enemies are Nazis and fascists, and that is exactly how the Russian Federation refers to Ukrainians. In particular, opening the regional branch in Kherson region, the first deputy chief of the Main headquarters of the “Young army” Viktor Kaurov, stated:

“ The historical fact happened on the eve of the Day of National Unity. Peoples of Russia celebrate common victory – the liberation of Moscow from the Polish interventionists. This time it will be the same – we will defeat the neo-fascism together. Today, the new regions of the Russian Federation, with which we were friends, and “The Young Guard – Young Army” are gaining a new breath, in the unity with the great Russia, with the friendly family of the Young Army movement”.

198 <https://zp-news.ru/society/2022/10/13/47104.html>

199 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Skadovsk/2164](https://t.me/VGA_Skadovsk/2164)

200 <https://kherson-news.ru/society/2022/12/09/75567.html>

201 <https://www.югмолодой.пф/tpost/k2vb260jx1-aktivisti-yugmolodoi-prodolzhayut-perekr>

202 <https://kherson-news.ru/society/2022/11/01/60089.html>

203 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/4494?single](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/4494?single)



YOUNG ARMY actively introduces propagandistic narratives in the occupied territories. That is, at the Young Army New Year's party in Henichesk children listened to the works of war correspondents and poets to the sound of violin, accompanied with military newsreels.<sup>204</sup> Children were also shown the performance "Poems of war", with the support of the so-called "Ministry of Youth Policy and Sports of Kherson Region". During the performance, the works of war correspondents and poets – Anna Dolgar-yova, Semyon Pegov and others were performed to the accompaniment of violin.<sup>205</sup> YOUNG ARMY of Kherson region also held a New Year's concert for the "Grom-2" Special Forces, as a sign of gratitude for regular interaction with the members of Young Army in Kherson region.<sup>206</sup> In addition, the so-called "Ministry of Youth Policy and Sports" of Kherson region, along with Young Army, organized meeting of schoolchildren with the special unit of the Ministry of Internal Affairs "Grom-2". At the event, they discussed the essence of patriotism, shared knowledges on theory of handling weapons with children and conducted corresponding practical classes.<sup>207</sup>

The authors of the research currently have no verified information regarding the number of children, whom the occupation authorities managed to involve in participation in the Young Army movement. However, the very fact of opening of the regional branches in the occupied Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions indicates the seriousness of the intentions of the Russian Federation to militarize Ukrainian children, destroying their Ukrainian identity.<sup>208</sup>

## ■ The Movement of the First

A delegation from Kherson region (including 17 students of Henichesk Medical College)<sup>209</sup> took part in the Congress of the Russian movement of children and youth, which took part in Moscow in the period from December 17 to December 21, 2022.<sup>210</sup> Sergey Kravtsov, the Minister of Education of the Russian Federation, took part of the opening of the primary branches of the Russian movement of children and youth "The Movement of the First" in Kherson region. Among the first ones, The Russian branches appeared at school №1 and at the Medical College of the city of Henichesk.<sup>211</sup> The movement should unite all youth organizations of the Russian Federation and its opening in the occupied territories indicates the intensification of ideological work of the occupation administrations.

204 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/5659](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/5659)

205 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Skadovsk/2400](https://t.me/VGA_Skadovsk/2400)

206 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/5711](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/5711)

207 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/3096](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/3096)

208 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Almenda\\_Universalnyi-soldat\\_lystopad\\_ukr.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Almenda_Universalnyi-soldat_lystopad_ukr.pdf)

209 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/5490](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/5490)

210 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/3013](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/3013)

211 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/5465](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/5465)





II.

# LEGITIMIZATION OF THE FULL-SCALE RUSSIAN INVASION AMONG CHILDREN







Since the very beginning of the full-scale aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, children in the territory of the occupied Crimea are under the strong ideological influence, which aims to legitimize the war against Ukraine. Since February 24, 2022, the active promotion of the narrative, which presents Ukraine as a “fascists state” and an ideological enemy of the Russian Federation, is taking place in all forms of education in Crimea, including through the constant references to the World War II and a comparison to the modern times. Moreover, the so-called “Special Military Operation” becomes another powerful instrument in the context of militarization of Crimean children: through the ideological lessons “Conversations about the important”, where it is constantly being emphasized on the “duty of defending the Fatherland (i.e. the Russian Federation)”, encouragement to take part in campaigns in support of hostilities against Ukraine, where militaristic symbols “Z” and “V” are being demonstrated. It is also important to highlight the events that glorify the “heroes” of the so-called “Special Military Operation”: this includes writing letters to the frontlines (by analogy with the World War II), inviting the “veterans” of the war against Ukraine to schools for the so-called “lessons of courage”, memorializing their “feats” by installing the commemorative plaques and the so-called “hero’s desks”. All these tendencies are described in details in this chapter of the report.

## A letter to a soldier and “lessons of courage”

“A letter to a soldier” campaign has been actively taking place in schools of the occupied Crimea since the very beginning of the full-scale invasion. The name of the campaign refers to the times of the World War II when it was customary to write letters to the frontlines with for victory and a speedy return. That is, in the period from March 1 to April 15, 2022, the All-Russian military patriotic movement of children and youth “YOUNG ARMY” held the all-Russian campaign “A letter to a soldier, in which children from different cities of Crimea were involved.<sup>212</sup> At the end of May, information appeared in Telegram channels, that Russian soldiers, who take part in the war in Ukraine, received letters from Crimean children.<sup>213</sup> In some of letters it was mentioned that they were written by students of 1<sup>st</sup> grades. At the same time, the stylistics of letters gives rise to doubts that they were really written by the first graders.

Participants of the 10<sup>th</sup> shift of the camp “Artek” – school of the new opportunities” also wrote letters to the “frontlines to Russian soldiers, fighting in the territory of Ukraine.<sup>214</sup> Soldiers, who received their letters also began to be invited to children in order to encourage children to take more active part in the campaign. In particular, in school No 43 of Sevastopol, where, starting from spring, schoolchildren are involved in the monthly letter-writing campaign at the school line-up, during which the flag of the

212 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PPzD9FeMRSdd5gWYZVs16l4SADXjnXHO/view?usp=sharing>

213 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/253](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/253) <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1T9d6JaDsk5dkmjRRFkZFJ-Xf1ZSc4L84/view?usp=sharing> <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/609> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RtGOyptMmdjw9X\\_3f1sJHsVJqZzKq51Y/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RtGOyptMmdjw9X_3f1sJHsVJqZzKq51Y/view?usp=sharing) <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/636> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xz20PDjeLvE7mH6kQrkNkvqhPX8zDhat/view?usp=sharing> <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/614> <https://t.me/melitopoladmin/691> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-LGN0T8iu6PHSSrs53L0w16h5zIrVgHO/view?usp=sharing>

214 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_16899](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_16899)



Russian Federation is being raised and Russian national anthem sounds, a soldier of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, participant of the Russian-Ukrainian war Renat Kovalevsky was invited. While being in a combat zone, he received a letter from the student of 4<sup>th</sup> grade of school No 43 and during the event, the thanked children for the letters they wrote.<sup>215</sup> On December 6, 2022, as a part of a campaign “Frontline postcard”, schoolchildren and students of Sevastopol sent about 3,000 frontline postcards with the New Year’s wishes and greetings to servicemen, who perform combat missions.<sup>216</sup>

Also, “Lessons of courage” are held in the schools of the peninsula as a part of the campaign “A letter to a soldier”. During these lessons, children are told about the feats of the Soviet soldiers, they analyze the chronology of military events on the territory of Russia until the present day, and it is in these lessons that children are involved in writing letters to soldiers of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. On October 17, 2022, Dmitriy Polkovnikov, the head of the Crimean Patriot Center, spoke at a lesson of courage at Simferopol school No28. Later, during his interview with the Crimea 24 channel he noted: *“We need to broadcast the propaganda of our lifestyle, our ideas to the whole world, not only to the masses of our teenagers”*.<sup>217</sup>

Lessons of courage, dedicated to the 81<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the beginning of the Siege of Leningrad, were held for students of the State Budgetary Educational Institution of the Republic of Crimea “Livadiya sanatorium boarding school” and for students of Yalta Medical College by the specialists of the Zonal Center “Yuzhniy” of the State Budgetary Educational Institution for Additional Education of the Republic of Crimea “Crimean Patriot Center”.<sup>218</sup> Also, lessons of courage in Crimean educational institutions were held in honor of the all-Russian campaign “A letter to a soldier”, where children were told about the feats of the Soviet soldiers and the chronology of military events on the territory of Russia until the present day.<sup>219</sup> “A letter to a soldier” is a vivid example of how even the youngest children are being used for legitimization of the armed aggression against Ukraine, and how, through historical myths about the “military valor” of the armed forces of the Russian Federation, a myth about the “liberating nature” of the Russian-Ukrainian war is created.

## Specialized thematic lessons

### ■ The beginning of the full-scale invasion

On March 1-2, 2022, all Crimean schools were to conduct lessons on History and Social Studies “My country” in accordance with the developed methodological recommendations<sup>220</sup>. The lessons should have been organized for students of 7-11 grades. The goal, specified in the recommendations was: “to form youth’s adequate position

215 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_17337](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_17337)

216 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_17813](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_17813)

217 <https://crimea24tv.ru/content/v-krimskikh-shkolakh-provodyat-uroki-muzhe/>

218 <https://www.krympatriotcentr.ru/%d1%83%d1%80%d0%be%d0%ba-%d0%bc%d1%83%d0%b6%d0%b5%d1%81%d1%82%d0%b2%d0%b0.html>

219 <https://gorod24.online/simferopol/news/273020-v-kryimskih-shkolah-provodyat-uroki-mujestva-v-ramkah-aktsii-pismo-soldatu.html>

220 [https://histrf.ru/storage/app/public/files/special/scenery\\_my\\_country\\_students.pdf](https://histrf.ru/storage/app/public/files/special/scenery_my_country_students.pdf)  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/15o-bwfdI9BFBu\\_sc-1iyFlzZbSSsGxhd/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/15o-bwfdI9BFBu_sc-1iyFlzZbSSsGxhd/view?usp=sharing)



on the issue of conducting a special peacekeeping operation aimed at the defense of Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics by the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, based on the reliable facts and documents".<sup>221</sup>

In the process of implementing this order, on March 1, a history lesson was held for cadets and members of the Young Army in Simferopol Academic Gymnasium, which was conducted by the so-called "Deputy Chairman of the State Council of the Republic of Crimea" Vladimir Bobkov. During the speech, he noted that "it is not the war against Ukraine, but a special peacekeeping operation, the purpose of which is to restrain the nationalists, who oppress the Russian-speaking population".<sup>222</sup>

On March 3, 2022, the all-Russian on-line lesson "Defender of peace took place"<sup>223</sup>. The main emphasis was placed in such a way as to prove that Ukraine allegedly has been waging a war against own civilian population since 2014. During the lesson, the presenters justify the invasion of the Russian Federation into Ukraine, call the military actions, that Russia has resorted to in the territory of Ukraine, "coercion of peace" and accuse NATO of starting and supporting this war. In total, more than 5,000,000 schoolchildren watched the broadcast of the open lesson, among them there were also schoolchildren from Crimea.<sup>224</sup>

Before September 1, 2022, an order was issued for Crimean schools to necessarily hold class hours on the following topics: for students of 1-4 grades – "Heroes of the special operation"; for students of 5-7 grades – "Friends and enemies of the Russian Federation"; for students of 8-9 grades – "LPR, DPR. Crimea, Kherson are Russia"; for students of 10-11 grades – "There is such a profession – to defend the Fatherland! Advantages of contract service in the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation". The topics of such class hours is not only the element of propagandistic support for the military actions in the territory of Ukraine and setting Ukrainian children against Ukraine, but also includes the signs of recruitment in the armed forces of the occupier state.<sup>225</sup>

## ■ Conversations about the important

The weekly lessons of "Conversations about the important" are a return to the Soviet traditions of holding the "political information" lessons and also have a purely propagandistic nature. Methodological materials for organizing the cycle of weekly classes, which contain lesson script, methodological recommendations for its conducting, interactive visual content, are developed on a federal level. A special page has been created for teachers in order to prepare for these lessons.<sup>226</sup>

221 <https://zona.media/article/2022/02/28/propaganda-lessons>  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WQAamMDsuvaQ-NEaF3LLktuTfPefCj9A/view?usp=sharing>

222 <https://www.krympatriotcentr.ru/urok-patriotizma-tsel-voennoj-operatsii-v-ukraine.html%20>  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1X1rbK-AWV3631YmSwrvvVL2w6RSOSz40/view?usp=sharing>

223 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vJ3ZdDk08LspQH6mIMSauYBq4QEUXM3y/view?usp=sharing>  
[https://youtu.be/H\\_YzidMnIlo](https://youtu.be/H_YzidMnIlo)

224 <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/13956837>

225 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Monitorynhovyy-zvit-Universalnyy-soldat\\_serpen\\_ukr-1.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Monitorynhovyy-zvit-Universalnyy-soldat_serpen_ukr-1.pdf)

226 <https://razgovor.edsoo.ru/>



During the lessons, children are not only imposed the Russian identity, but also have a narrative of supporting the war against Ukraine, started by the Russian Federation in 2014, spread in their consciousness. According to the statement of Sergey Aksyonov, as a part of these lessons, children's meeting with Russian soldiers, who took part in the war against Ukraine, is planned. *“As a part of the program “Conversations about the important”, these lessons will also touch upon the topic of patriotism, development of the state and of our Republic, education of a citizen”.*<sup>227</sup>

In educational organizations of Sevastopol, a lesson from the cycle “Conversations about the important” on the topic “Our country - Russia” was held, where the awakening of interest in the study of national history and culture, the education of civility and patriotism, the formation and specification of the concept of “Fatherland”, understanding of one's own attitude to it became the main topics for discussion.<sup>228</sup> At the lesson for the Teacher's Day in the Russian Federation (on October 3, 2022), a significant block was devoted to the so-called “referendums”, which were held by the occupation administrations of the occupied parts of Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk and Luhansk regions and subsequent attempts of the Russia Federation to annex these territories. A teacher had to tell children about the “liberating” nature of such actions and the “restoration of historical justice”.<sup>229</sup> The “accession” of these territories in the Russian Federation is also mentioned in the lesson for the Constitution Day on December 12, 2022.<sup>230</sup> During this lesson, children in schools of Sevastopol were told about the national flag, coat of arms and anthem of Russia.<sup>231</sup>

Great attention is also paid to the “feats” of participants of the so-called “Special Military Operation”: that is, “heroes of the Special Military Operation” are noted in methodological materials for the lesson on the occasion of the “Hero of the Fatherland Day” on December 9, 2022.<sup>232</sup> The main goal is: to form the students' idea of a feat and heroism, which is demonstrated by people of various professions; to cultivate a positive attitude to such values, as duty and service to the Fatherland, patriotism; to contribute to the preservation of the historical memory and the connection of generations. During the lessons, the following questions were discussed in every class: «Who is a hero?», «What is heroism?», «What heroes do we know?», «Can each of us be a hero?» and other.<sup>233</sup>

The topics of the duty to protect the “Fatherland” (that is, the Russian Federation) in the historical context were mentioned in the lessons for the Day of the Elderly, in September, 2022 (as the examples of the “feat” of the older generations during the Great Patriotic War).<sup>234</sup> Clergymen are also being involved in lessons of the cycle “Conversations about the important”: for example, the priests of Sevastopol Deanery told schoolchildren from Sevastopol about the history of the state holiday “Day of National Unity” and the historical past of Russia.<sup>235</sup>

227 [https://crimea.ria.ru/20220831/v-postradavshem-iz-za-diversii-sele-mayskoe-v-krymu-lineyki-proyduy-pozzhe-1124360853.html?rcmd\\_alg=collaboration2&rcmd\\_id=1124362769](https://crimea.ria.ru/20220831/v-postradavshem-iz-za-diversii-sele-mayskoe-v-krymu-lineyki-proyduy-pozzhe-1124360853.html?rcmd_alg=collaboration2&rcmd_id=1124362769)

228 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_16481](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_16481)

229 <https://razgovor-cdn.edsoo.ru/media/file/teachersday-dop.pdf>

230 <https://razgovor-cdn.edsoo.ru/media/file/constitution-1011-script.pdf>

231 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_17732](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_17732)

232 <https://razgovor-cdn.edsoo.ru/media/file/heroes-811-script.pdf>

233 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_17971](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_17971)

234 <https://infourok.ru/den-pozhilyh-lyudej-razgovory-o-vazhnom-26-sentyabrya-10-11-klass-6232918.html>

235 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_17461](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_17461)



On December 26, 2022, a lesson on the topic “New Year. Family values and traditions” was held.<sup>236</sup> In the city of Balaklava, at the school №30, named after the Hero of the Soviet Union Gerasim Rubtsov, a line-up was held with the solemn carrying of the state flag of the Russian Federation and the flag of the Hero City of Sevastopol, performance of the national anthems of Russia and Sevastopol. At the “Conversations about the important”, lesson children said that they dream of visiting the “Hero City of Volgograd” and the local politician promised to help them, so that children could see the main monument of the memorial complex on the Mamayev Kurgan – “The Motherland is calling!”<sup>237</sup> According to the information from the Russian sources,<sup>238</sup> de-facto parents have no possibility to opt-out their children of attending these propagandistic lessons – skipping lessons is followed by the threats from school and municipal administrations, which means that children are actually defenseless against the new form of propaganda.

## Campaigns in support of the full-scale Russian invasion

On March 1, 2022, a post<sup>239</sup> in support of the so-called “special operation” appeared on the official page of the Ministry of Education of Crimea, in which the hashtags #СвоихНеБросаем (#WeDontLeaveOurPeopleBehind) #Мыедины (#WeAreUnited) #Времяпомогать (#TimeToHelp) #КрымЗаПутинаZOZZ (#CrimeaSupportsPutinZOZZ) were used for the first time. And on March 9, 2022, the Crimean Patriot Center invited Crimeans to take part in the online campaign and demonstrate their “support to Russian soldiers, who participate in the special operation in Ukraine”. During the publication of posts in social networks in the context of the campaign, its organizers called for the use of hashtags #ЗаРоссию (#SupportRussia), #ЗаНаших (#SupportOurPeople), #ЗаПутина (#SupportPutin), #СвоихНеБросаем (#WeDontLeaveOurPeopleBehind).<sup>240</sup>

Cadet classes and members of the Young Army of Crimea took active part in the campaign. For example, cadets of the Novoandriyivka school from elementary to senior classes took photos with a hashtag #СвоихНеБросаем (#WeDontLeaveOurPeopleBehind).<sup>241</sup> Similar photos were taken by the Young Army detachment and volunteer eco-detachment “Battalion” in Zhemchuzhyna school of Nyzhnyohirsk district, as well as by the creative association “Battalion” of the Center for Children’s and Youth Creativity of Nyzhnyohirsk district.<sup>242</sup> Orphans were also involved in the “We Don’t Leave Our People Behind” campaign. In particular, as a part of the campaign, the Russian Guard employees held a lesson of courage, a competition of creative works and a flashmob “For

236 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_18017](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_18017)

237 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_18019](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_18019)

238 <https://ovd.news/express-news/2022/09/17/roditeli-shkolnikov-v-peterburge-rasskazali-ob-ugrozah-iz-za-otkaza>

239 [https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165\\_2948](https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165_2948)

240 <https://www.krympatriotcentr.ru/krymchane-mogut-prinyat-uchastie-v-onlajn-aktsii-v-podderzhku-rossijskogo-soldata.html> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vvM8yQh\\_sXd2BNna3NJQqWskjMtKOlo/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vvM8yQh_sXd2BNna3NJQqWskjMtKOlo/view?usp=sharing)

241 <https://www.krympatriotcentr.ru/svoihnebrosaem.html> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1H2WX2KcZOdzVwG8P82kDjuLWqRiPu0c/view?usp=sharing>

242 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WCR2So2p4WVvRoamBldrgl73zxp-NwHx/view?usp=sharing>





the peace!”. During the event, children wrote letters with words of support to Russian soldiers, who currently participate in the so-called “special operation” and sent them their drawings.<sup>243</sup> During all the events, children are encouraged for the active use of the symbol Z. In 2022, this symbol was also used during the events for the anniversary of occupation of the peninsula.<sup>244</sup>

In August 2022, campaigns in support of military actions of the Russian Federation in Ukraine were ongoing. The so-called “Ministry of Education, Science and Youth of Crimea” published the information about launching the project “Everything for the victory!” with the following aim: “Supporting soldiers and residents of Donetsk and Luhansk regions”. As a part of the project, things needed for military units are collected.<sup>245</sup> Also, as a part of campaigns “We don’t leave our people behind”<sup>246</sup> and “Give warmth to a soldier”<sup>247</sup> humanitarian aid for Russian servicemen participating in the so-called Special Military Operation is being collected. Another campaign was launched in Crimea – “Children of Crimea – for children of Donbass”. As a part of this campaign, Crimean children of a school age collected humanitarian aid for children of the so-called “LDPR” and wrote letters of support for them.<sup>248</sup> Students in schools were also weaving nets camouflage for soldiers of the so-called Special Military Operation.<sup>249</sup> Crimean children are also actively involved in creation of propagandistic content: that is, the CTB channel actively broadcasted a with fifth-grader from the school №60, dressed in the uniform of the “Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Russian Federation” reciting a poem in support of participants of the so-called Special Military Operation during the campaign “To our Victory!”.<sup>250</sup> In other words, children in Crimea are being actively involved in supporting of the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which aims to “normalize” the so-called Special Military Operation in their minds.

## Glorification of “heroes” of the so-called Special Military Operation

During the entire spring, children were persistently being convinced of the “liberating” nature of the so-called “special operation” of the Russian Federation and the “heroism” of Russian soldiers, involved in the war in Ukraine. Just as before, the Russian Federation pays considerable attention to the heroization of the war and soldiers fighting in the modern Russian-Ukrainian war. On May 27, 2022, at a meeting of the Crimean League of Activists of the High School Students’ Council and the members of the Youth Self-Government of the Republic of Crimea, Sergey Aksyonov supported the

243 [https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165\\_3204](https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165_3204) [https://drive.google.com/file/d/128mEMGpXoF3GG\\_QU4ORi7HTJdMzv5nnG/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/128mEMGpXoF3GG_QU4ORi7HTJdMzv5nnG/view?usp=sharing)

244 <https://bit.ly/3OakhzQ> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1--HpZoQO4owtDQhZ3OkwyqkIF6SXFj9M/view?usp=sharing>

245 <http://eit46.ru/index.php/novosti/1482-vsjo-dlya-pobedy>

246 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_17871](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_17871)

247 [https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165\\_4216](https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165_4216)

248 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ig1sFCj2w84tkyHziUILAKvcZLZkKIJb/view?usp=sharing>

249 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_17851](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_17851)

250 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_17911](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_17911)



initiative to hold the meetings of schoolchildren with participants of the so-called “special military operation” and, in general, with Crimeans, who have been awarded the title of Hero of Russia and Hero of the Soviet Union.<sup>251</sup> This decision indicates that the use of education as the instrument for the formation of support for the actions of Russia against Ukraine will not only continue, but will also gain momentum.

The so-called head of Crimea Survey Aksyonov supported the initiative regarding assigning the names of the participants of the “special operation” to schools.<sup>252</sup> Currently, 138 schools in Crimea bear the names of the participants of the “Great Patriotic War, Heroes of Russia, meritorious people, Crimeans”. By the end of 2022, it was planned to rename another 27 schools in honor of the so-called “heroes” (including heroes of the so-called Special Military Operation).<sup>253</sup>

In November 2022, meetings with servicemen of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and the leaders of the paramilitary children’s organizations took place in Crimea under the project “Conversations on Equals”.<sup>254</sup> These meetings are also aimed at the formation of the heroic image of servicemen of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, participants of the Russian-Ukrainian war. In particular, on November 18, 2022, students of the city of Yevpatoria had a meeting with Survey Gavrilchuk, the head of the regional headquarters of the All-Russian Military-Patriotic Public Movement “Young Army” of the so-called “Republic of Crimea”. During the meeting he told schoolchildren about his military experience, about the spiritual and moral education, about patriotism, about the so-called “feats and heroism” of soldiers of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation in Ukraine. In addition, during the meeting, considerable attention was paid to the interpretation of the tasks and goals of the so-called “special military operation”.<sup>255</sup> It is important to note that during these meetings, special attention is paid to preparing young people to “serving to the Fatherland” (in this context, the Fatherland refers to the Russian Federation).<sup>256</sup>

It is necessary to mention the ten-hour marathon “Knowledge about Heroes”, which took place on November 3, 2022 and contained graphic novels about the heroes of the so-called “special military operation”. The marathon itself physically took place in Moscow and Saratov with an on-line broadcast. On the webpages of educational institutions in the occupied Crimea children were actively invited to join watching the marathon.<sup>257</sup>

In addition, one of the school museums has a stand with photos of “heroes” of the so-called Special Military Operation,<sup>258</sup> and special “hero’s desks” dedicated to participants of the so-called special operation are being installed in schools.<sup>259</sup> The aim of

251 [https://vk.com/aksenovrk?w=wall535871340\\_341632](https://vk.com/aksenovrk?w=wall535871340_341632) [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FnXXFexPYUwUmyQqYufRe5sl\\_7KCSTb2/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FnXXFexPYUwUmyQqYufRe5sl_7KCSTb2/view?usp=sharing)

252 <https://www.c-inform.info/news/id/104153>

253 <https://crimea.ria.ru/20221209/chetvert-shkol-kryma-nosyat-imena-geroev---aksenov-1125783138.html>

254 <https://tinyurl.com/22qlq5mw>

255 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Almenda\\_Universalnyi-soldat\\_lystopad\\_ukr.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Almenda_Universalnyi-soldat_lystopad_ukr.pdf)

256 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Almenda\\_Universalnyi-soldat\\_lystopad\\_ukr.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Almenda_Universalnyi-soldat_lystopad_ukr.pdf)

257 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_17425](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_17425)

258 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_16997&z=video-208034377\\_456239602%2F9c3a4d44a1fb33333d%2Fpl\\_post\\_-208034377\\_861](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_16997&z=video-208034377_456239602%2F9c3a4d44a1fb33333d%2Fpl_post_-208034377_861)

259 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_17843](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_17843)



such campaigns is to form children's respect for participants of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

## ■ Commemorative plaques

Just like before, the Russian federation pays considerable attention to heroization of the war and the servicemen fighting in the modern Russian-Ukrainian war. This is also reflected in the opening of commemorative plaques and the so-called “hero's desks”<sup>260</sup> in schools, dedicated to the servicemen of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, who died after the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation into the territory of Ukraine. In particular, commemorative plaques were opened in the school of the village Kukushkino in Rozdolne district,<sup>261</sup> in Simferopol gymnasium №1 named after Igor Kurchatov,<sup>262</sup> on the facades of two Kerch schools – 26<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>,<sup>263</sup> in Simferopol,<sup>264</sup> in Armyansk College of Chemical Industry<sup>265</sup> and in Simferopol Technical College of Railway Transport and Industry.<sup>266</sup> Commemorative plaques on educational institutions should spread and legitimize the narratives about the “heroic” nature of the so-called Special Military Operation (by analogy with the World War II) – but is also an attempt of the Russian Federation to prematurely declare itself the “winning country” in the Russian-Ukrainian war.<sup>267</sup>

## Informal and cultural events

With the aim of forming a false historical narrative and manipulating the consciousness of children, on April 19, 2022, the exhibition “Ordinary Nazism” was opened, which, according to the description, “contains over 200 exhibits related to the atrocities of Ukrainian nationalists during the World War II, materials from state archives and collections of museums of Russia and Donetsk, and the main part of the exhibition is about the mass crimes and terror of modern neo-Nazis against residents of Ukraine in 2014-2022. There are also Ukrainian textbooks, with the help of which blasphemous nationalistic ideas have been instilled among children in Ukraine for a long time”.<sup>268</sup> On the same day, the opening of the first All-Russian historical school forum “Strength in Truth” took place.<sup>269</sup>

260 <https://vesti92.ru/2022/12/11/sevastopol-prisoedinilsja-k-akcii-parta-geroja.html>

261 <https://gorod24.online/simferopol/news/282223-v-odnoy-iz-shkol-razdolnenskogo-rayona-otkryli-memorialnuyu-dosku-v-chest-geroya-svo.html>

262 <https://crimea.ria.ru/20221215/v-simferopole-uvekovechili-imya-pogibshhego-geroya-rossii-1125907158.html>

263 <https://crimea.ria.ru/20221209/v-kerchi-otkryli-memorialnye-doski-v-pamyat-o-geroyakh-svo--foto-1125782191.html>

264 <https://crimea.ria.ru/20221206/pogibshemu-boytsu-svo-otkryli-pamyatnuyu-dosku-v-rodnoy-shkole-v-krymu-1125723122.html>

265 [https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165\\_4243](https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165_4243)

266 [https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165\\_4225](https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165_4225)

267 <https://doxa.team/articles/school-memorials>

268 <https://bit.ly/3NaqUkr> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hPHjAla03xsdbvZ4fDDmjveKohkBGUwx/view?usp=sharing>

269 <https://bit.ly/3HEXRUN> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1N\\_w7J1EKRvet8X7so0bZm00v4dKnAOk7/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1N_w7J1EKRvet8X7so0bZm00v4dKnAOk7/view?usp=sharing)



During June, a number of events aimed at the formation of children's "Russian patriotic consciousness" took place. Among them there were: "Windows of Russia", "Memorial Candle", "Minute of Silence", "Garden of Memory" etc.<sup>270</sup> Russian culture, in particular cinematography, is also actively used for destroying Ukrainian identity. For example, on June 10, 2022, the All-Russian youth film screening, dedicated to celebration of the Russia Day, was hosted by the program of the Association of students' patriotic clubs "I am Proud".<sup>271</sup> The goal set by the organizers of the event was the patriotic education of youth through the demonstration of domestic feature films. A war-themed movie was chosen for screening.

The replacement of the Ukrainian identity with the Russian one is also performed through extracurricular activities. For example, in the territory of the occupied peninsula, various contests are organized, which are aimed at forming patriotic feelings and associating oneself with the Russian federation, such as, for example, the contest of photography and video works on the topic "Why I love Russia".<sup>272</sup>

Another method, used by Russia is encouraging students to visit cultural institutions in order to form young people's desire to associate themselves with Russian culture and Russian nation. For this purpose, the Russian authorities issue a "Pushkin Card" to young people of age 14-22, which has a balance of 5,000 Rubles that can be spent on tickets to museum, theater, cinema (only for Russian movies), exhibition, philharmonic and visits to other cultural institutions. It is important to mention that the list of institutions and cultural events, where money from these cards can be spent, is determined by the Russian Federation.<sup>273</sup>

Currently, the actions of the occupation administrations indicate that not only formal education, but also purely cultural events are used to promote narratives, beneficial to the Russian Federation and to impose the Russian identity on Crimean children.

## The idea of artificiality of the Ukrainian nation

In the rhetoric of the occupation and the Russian governments, the promotion of a thesis about the artificiality of the Ukrainian nation and "Ukrainians as a part of the Russian nation" intensified. This idea is being persistently spread in public space by the high-ranking officials of the Russian Federation and the occupation authorities of Crimea. This interpretation of history and perception of Ukraine as an artificial state, and Ukrainians as a fictitious ethnicity that "must return to its own roots" – that is, to the Russian Federation, is openly instilled in children by the Russian and the occupation authorities through the educational system.<sup>274</sup>

270 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Soldat\\_2-1.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Soldat_2-1.pdf)

271 [https://vk.com/sevsu?w=wall-91182781\\_19480](https://vk.com/sevsu?w=wall-91182781_19480)  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gEZ5jH0x1VDyAu0JhV0kPwoPhbZu4EUA/view?usp=sharing>

272 [https://vk.com/vernadskycfu?w=wall-169244143\\_9866](https://vk.com/vernadskycfu?w=wall-169244143_9866)

273 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Almenda\\_Universalnyi-soldat-veresen.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Almenda_Universalnyi-soldat-veresen.pdf)

274 [https://vk.com/va.konstantinov?w=wall608829078\\_4572](https://vk.com/va.konstantinov?w=wall608829078_4572) [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1C9ZBjnzWPP\\_QOvuRqHTm-IMPVhVpnyWSd/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1C9ZBjnzWPP_QOvuRqHTm-IMPVhVpnyWSd/view?usp=sharing)





# RECRUITMENT INTO THE ARMED FORCES OF THE AGGRESSOR STATE







Since 2014, the occupation administration of the Russian Federation in Crimea has been actively encouraging people to serve in the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, but in 2022, with the beginning of the new phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war, it has only intensified and already has all signs of the open recruitment. The opening of specialized classes at the power structures of the Russian Federation, the active establishment of youth movements, including the openly militaristic Young Army, introduction of mandatory military training, are aimed at not only at mentally preparing Crimean children for serving in the Russian army, but also at giving them required practical skills. The narratives about “children-heroes” of the times of the “Great Patriotic War” of 1941–1945 are actively used and the parallels are drawn between their “feat in the battle against fascists” and modern war against Ukraine – in such way not only children’s association that “Ukraine=fascism” appears, but the readiness to defend their own “Fatherland” should be formed. In a playful way (particularly during the thematic shifts in children’s summer camps) children are also taught the normalization of violence and handling weapons. All these aspects were recorded during the monitoring in 2022.

## Cadet classes

The direct transformation of school education in the occupied Crimea into a militarized one was performed through the mechanisms of the so-called “cadet training”. Cadet classes were being opened in schools, enrollment to which takes place from the first grade. As of 2022, there are 128 cadet classes in Crimea, in which about 3,000 schoolchildren study.<sup>275</sup> In Simferopol, 50 cadet classes were opened, in which 1311 children study.<sup>276</sup> Cadet classes are opened and patronized by various institutions – from the Ministry of Internal Affairs<sup>277</sup> to the Ministry of Emergency Situations.<sup>278</sup> The Police, the FSS,<sup>279</sup> the Investigative Committee<sup>280</sup> and other institutions have their own classes. For example, in Simferopol school No 28 there is a cadet class under the patronage of the occupation “Ministry of Internal Affairs in Crimea”,<sup>281</sup> and on the basis of the school-lyceum No3 there is a cadet class of the Investigative Committee of Russia.<sup>282</sup>

In addition to cadet classes, the Crimean occupation authorities also opened Cossacks classes. For example, in September 2016, on the bases of Simferopol gymnasium No10 the first Cossacks class on the occupied peninsula was opened, in which 36 “young Cossacks” studied.<sup>283</sup> <sup>284</sup> On October 24, 2022, in Simferopol, 36 first-graders

275 <https://www.crimea.kp.ru/online/news/4802830/>

276 <https://www.crimea9.ru/ru/news/20220512/23982.html>

277 <https://sevastopol.bezformata.com/listnews/organah-ucheniki-kadetskikh-klassev/102658485/>

278 <https://taurica.net/232001-Iz-shkol-nikov-v-kadety-92-uchenika-nadeli-special-nuyu-formu-MChS-Rossii.html>

279 <https://e-zdravnitsa.ru/index.php?area=1&p=news&newsid=22775>

280 <https://taurica.net/286943-V-odnoiy-iz-simferopol-skih-shkol-otkrylsya-kadetskiy-klass-Sledkoma.html>  
<https://simfschool3.ru/?p=11440#more-11440>

281 <https://simferopol.bezformata.com/listnews/poyavilsya-noviy-kadetskiy-klass/98612003/>

282 <https://bit.ly/3ObReMa>

283 <http://gymnasium10simf.ru>

284 <https://www.crimea.kp.ru/daily/26594/3610271/>



of Lyceum No3, named after Makarenko, were initiated into cadets – for the first time first-graders took the oath and became pupils of the Main Directorate of the Investigative Committee.<sup>285</sup>

As of October 2022, there 7 cadet classes in schools of the peninsula, headed by the Main Directorate of the Investigative Committee of Russia for Crimea and Sevastopol. On October 13, 2022, the cadet corps of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation was opened in Sevastopol. There are 137 cadets studying in the corps: 98 boys and 39 girls, among whom more than half children (54 people) are orphans and children left without parental care. Three of these children are from the territory of Donetsk and Luhansk Regions. There are also children, whose parents were injured during the Russian-Ukrainian war.<sup>286</sup> That is, from the first grade children are being prepared to participate in war, and power structures of the Russian Federation play a significant role in the education of Crimean children.

## Youth movements

In October 2022, in Sevastopol, the first meeting of the All-Russian movement of children and youth was held with the participation of Mihail Rozvozhayev (the representative of the occupation administration, the so-called “governor” of Sevastopol). According to the data presented at the meeting, as of October, 25,000 children were covered by the All-Russian movement of children and youth, the movement includes the representatives of the Russian movement of schoolchildren, “Young Army” and “The Great Change”.<sup>287</sup>

In addition to the Young Army, “Crimean Patriot Center” is also actively involved in the militarization of Crimea.<sup>288</sup> The work of “Crimean Patriot Center” in the direction of militarization of children and youth united the “efforts” of the Public Chamber of the Republic of Crimea, “People’s Militia of the Republic of Crimea”, “Simferopol City Union of Veterans of War, Labor and Military Service”, Crimean Regional Branch of DOSAAF (Voluntary Society for Assistance to the Russian Army, Aviation and Navy), Military Commissariat of the Republic of Crimea.<sup>289</sup> On October 28, 2022, festive events, dedicated to the birthday of the Russian movement of schoolchildren were held.<sup>290</sup>

There is also close cooperation with occupation administrations of the occupied South of Ukraine. That is, the agreement of Crimean Patriot Center with the so-called “military-state administration of Kalanchak district of the Kherson region” was signed”.<sup>291</sup>

285 <https://crimea24tv.ru/content/v-simferopole-posvyatili-v-kadeti-perv/>

286 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_17143](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_17143)

287 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_17121](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_17121)

288 <https://bit.ly/3QNPNpd>

289 [https://helsinki.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Osvita\\_02.pdf](https://helsinki.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Osvita_02.pdf)

290 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_17391](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_17391)

291 <https://www.krympatriotcentr.ru/%d0%bf%d0%be%d0%b4%d0%bf%d0%b8%d1%81%d0%b0%d0%bd%d0%b8%d0%b5-%d1%81%d0%be%d0%b3%d0%bb%d0%b0%d1%88%d0%b5%d0%bd%d0%b8%d1%8f-%d1%81-%d0%b2%d0%be%d0%b5%d0%bd%d0%bd%d0%be-%d0%b3%d0%be%d1%81%d1%83%d0%b4.html>



Among the most odious youth movements, we can mention Young Army, “The Great Change” and the so-called “Movement of the First”.

## ■ Young Army

The All-Russian socio-patriotic movement “Young Army” was created in 2016, on the initiative of the Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation Sergey Shoigu. Under the patronage of this organization, military trainings (with the use of real weapons and military machines), camps and meetings are held, an advertising campaign is actively conducted, a weekly newspaper and magazine are published, volunteer and public activities are carried out.

The Crimean branch of the “Young Army” was created with the help of the so-called Ministry of Education. In June 2016 (almost two months before the registration), the occupiers already created the regional branch of the “Young Army” in the annexed territory, and since September 1, 2012, the active activity of the organization began on the entire territory of the temporarily occupied Crimea. The first admission to the ranks of the “Young Army” took place with great pompousness and support of the entire occupation leadership.<sup>292</sup>

The percentage of children, who joined the militarized children’s organization in the occupied Crimea is the largest, and the network of its branches is the most developed here. On the basis of schools, detachments of the Young Army movement were created, children were taught handling weapons, military-patriotic competitions were held, in which children of age 8-18 took part, and other kinds of events, which were organized by members of the Young Army, in particular – the “Conscript Day” campaign. The “Mentoring” program operates as part of the Young Army,<sup>293</sup> through which orphans and persons under care are actually forcibly recruited to the ranks of the movement. By the end of 2024 it is planned to enlist every tenth schoolchild in Crimea to the ranks of the “Young Army”.<sup>294</sup> Members of the Young Army are involved in various events, including the Victory Day march on May 9<sup>295</sup> and the Pioneer Day march on May 19.<sup>296</sup>

There are also known cases of death of the Young Army leaders during the so-called Special Military Operations. For example, in September 2022, the adviser to the principal of educational work of the Sevastopol school No59 Alexander Cheremnov died, who was the member of Sevastopol regional headquarters of the Young Army, where he worked with children who found themselves in socially dangerous situation. In 2022 he signed a contract for military service in the 810<sup>th</sup> Marine Brigade of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation and served in the territory of the so-called “DPR”<sup>297</sup>.

292 [https://helsinki.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Osvita\\_02.pdf](https://helsinki.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Osvita_02.pdf)

293 <https://yunarmy.ru/projects/yunarmiya-nastavnichestvo/>

294 <https://gazeta-chi.ru/obshestvo/do-konca-2024-goda-v-ryady-yunarmii-planiruetsya-prinyat-10%20>

295 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qX4JqgKLpvGwAJlyEBqJKXTqVyXSL4SA/view?usp=sharing>

296 <https://ru.krymr.com/a/news-sevastopol-pionery-100-let/31858103.html%20>  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PzW4TJUK7sJGPENclB1x-xqhrDtvRxI0/view?usp=sharing>

297 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_16545](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_16545)



## ■ The Great Change

A noticeable step towards even greater militarization and unification of children's identity to match the "all-Russian" one was the initiative to start the All-Russian movement of children and youth "The Great Change". The new structure will be created on the basis of the existing Russian movement of schoolchildren "Young Army" and a number of regional organizations.<sup>298</sup>

It is symbolic that the draft law regarding the creation of the movement was submitted to the State Duma on May 19, 2022, on the day of 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of creation of the All-Union Pioneer Organization named after V. Lenin. The movement was created "for comprehensive development and self-realization of children and youth; preparation of children and youth for a full life in society, including the formation of their worldview based on traditional Russian spiritual and moral values, traditions of peoples of the Russian federation, achievements of Russian and world culture, as well as the development of socially significant and creative activity in them, high moral qualities, love and respect for the Fatherland, hard work, legal culture, caring attitude to nature and environment, sense of personal responsibility for one's own fate and the fate of the Fatherland to current and future generations".<sup>299</sup> Children from the age of 6 can become members of this movement. The creation of the movement actually aims to renew the Soviet movement of pioneers. Sergey Aksyonov also stated about the "heredity" in his speech.<sup>300</sup>

## ■ Movement of the First

In April 2022, Diana Krasovskaya, a student of Sevastopol Engineering School addressed to the president of the Russian Federation with a proposal to create a movement, which will unite children of Russia.<sup>301</sup> On July 14, 2022 Putin signed the Federal law № 261-FZ «On the Russian movement of children and youth». <sup>302</sup> On December 18-19, 2022, the first congress of the Russian movement of children and youth took place in Moscow, which united delegates from all regions of Russia, including the Russia-occupied territories.<sup>303</sup> On December 20, 2022, the very first branch of the Russian movement of children and youth "movement of the First" appeared at the organizational meeting at the Secondary Education School of the Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution "International Children's Center "Artek". As it is stated, participation in the organization is voluntary. Now it unites all youth organizations and movements of the country, including "Young Army", "The Great Change", "Russian movement of schoolchildren".<sup>304</sup>

298 [https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165\\_3472](https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165_3472) [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VONpXbN79x2YYk6VTcfbuX\\_Xro5Jfv51/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VONpXbN79x2YYk6VTcfbuX_Xro5Jfv51/view?usp=sharing)

299 [https://sozd.duma.gov.ru/bill/126384-8#bh\\_histras](https://sozd.duma.gov.ru/bill/126384-8#bh_histras) <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HSPHg745xh8HW-X7w2IE8ib7s73iVf5j/view?usp=sharing>

300 <https://bit.ly/3Ou1Q93> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wK4bkLAJNXhrswSozWRBBIz9j-1amYzr/view?usp=sharing>

301 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_18041](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_18041)

302 <https://www.garant.ru/products/ipo/prime/doc/404892173/>

303 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_18041](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_18041)

304 <https://будьвдвижении.пф/#block-chronology>



Areas of work, plans and goals: participation in cultural life, volunteering, preservation of historical memory, healthy lifestyle, development of ecological projects, protection of nature, development of tourism in Russia. The mission of the “Movement of the First” has a focus on the collective strategy: “To be with Russia, to be human, to be together, to be in the movement, to be the first”. Particular importance is attached to the values, which must be protected by the members of the organization – cultural, moral, historical and spiritual. Among them, there are “Life and dignity”, “Patriotism”, “Goodness and justice”, “Creative work”, “Strong family” and others.<sup>305</sup>

The Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration Sergey Kirienko made a speech at the first congress of the youth organization: *“Today, patriotism is not just a word, it should be verified not only with words, but also with actions”*.<sup>306</sup> In other words, “Movement of the First” is the largest movement of children and youth in the modern Russia and it now functions in the occupied territories as well.

## Mandatory military training in schools

On April 5, 2022, a meeting was held in the so-called “Ministry of Education, Science and Youth of the Republic of Crimea” regarding the organization of training sessions with students of general educational institutions and professional educational organizations of the Republic of Crimea in 2022. The main attention was paid to learning the basics of military service.<sup>307</sup>

In October, the news appeared that a mandatory module on basic military training was planned to be added to the school curriculum of the subject “Fundamentals of Life Safety”. The module “Elements of basic military training” was placed in a chapter, where the content of the study subject “Fundamentals of Life Safety” is outlined. The document states that students should master the following thematic units of the study module: “Marching drill and military salute. Formations and their management. Marching drill. Executing military salute on the spot and in motion. Infantry weapons and rules of handling. Kalashnikov assault rifle (AK-74). Basics and rules of shooting. Design and principle of operation of hand grenades. Fragmentation hand grenade F-1 (defensive). Fragmentation hand grenade RGD-5”. The module also includes studying the actions in the modern combined-arms battle, familiarization with the composition and the armament of the motorized rifle unit on the infantry fighting vehicle, engineering equipment for a soldier’s position, and techniques of movement in battle while conducting actions on foot.

In addition, schoolchildren are expected to familiarize themselves with means of personal protection and first aid in battle, with various methods of removing the injured from the battlefield, with facilities for the protection of personnel.<sup>308</sup> According to Sergey Mironov, the leader of “A Just Russia – For Truth” party: *“With the start of the special military operation, this issue became particularly acute. Even a large number of volunteers have no necessary experience to participate in combat actions. The intro-*

305 <https://rg.ru/2022/12/20/dvizhenie-pervyh-chem-budet-zanimatsia-novaia-organizaciia-kakie-cennosti-ispoveduet-i-kak-k-nej-prisoedinitisia.html>

306 [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/5425](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/5425)

307 <https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/M3-ykp.pdf>

308 <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/16190685>





*duction of such subject in schools will allow to organize a reminiscent preparation of citizens for a possible confrontation with the enemy».*<sup>309</sup>

In November 2022, the Minister of Education of the Russian Federation Sergey Kravtsov stated that preparations for the introduction of the course are already at the final stage.<sup>310</sup> At the same time, the occupation authorities of Crimea decided not to wait for the next academic year, and already on November 10, 2022, by the order of the so-called “head of the Republic of Crimea” Sergey Aksyonov, the “plan of the key measures for the organization of teaching citizens basic knowledges in the field of defense and preparation training in basics of military service in Crimea for 2022-2023 academic year was approved.”<sup>311</sup>

The document envisages constant work on the preparation of methodological materials, the creation of educational centers, the training of teachers in this discipline, the organization of military-patriotic work with schoolchildren and campaigning work on attracting young men to military universities of the country, sports competitions, holding “Conscript days”, educational excursions etc. In addition, during the period of spring and summer, it is planned to hold training sessions for students on the basis of military units, with classes in shooting, military drill, tactics, physical training, radiation, chemical and biological protection, military medical training, fundamentals of life safety. It can be concluded that no Ukrainian child in Crimea will be able to avoid preparation for military service in educational institutions of the occupied Crimea.

## Memory of the World War II as an instrument of militarization

In 2022, the so-called head of the Crimean “State Council” mentioned the thesis about the Crimean war of 1853-1856 as a “Zero World War”, when “the collective West” – Great Britain, France, Turkey, the Italian Sardinian Kingdom – engaged in “confrontation with Russia” for the first time. Konstantinov stressed that today “the events of that confrontation of Russia and West are especially relevant”,<sup>312</sup> because the strategic goal of the united West is “to make Russia a second-rate state”.<sup>313</sup> However, the main narrative is using the events of the World War II as the instrument of children’s militarization.

Since the end of April, the key focus of the activities was on the events of the World War II (in the version “Great Patriotic War”, relevant in modern Russia). This in-

309 <https://iz.ru/1421943/natalia-bashlykova/vse-v-kurse-minoborony-podderzhalo-vvedenie-voennoi-podgotovki-v-shkolakh>

310 <https://crimea.ria.ru/20221109/kurs-po-nachalnoy-voennoy-podgotovke-vvedut-v-shkolakh-rossii-v-2023-godu-1125292982.html>

311 <https://crimea.ria.ru/20221110/pravila-voennoy-podgotovki-v-shkoly-kryma-vozvrashchayutsya-zarnitsy-1125313663.html>

312 [https://vk.com/va.konstantinov?fbclid=IwAR0PEwEzY-U2Mx-ebLXJ6GIIHD3WMIBVMnK\\_DaqxKDKfjnlhR6MkeQSD7lw&w=wall608829078\\_7081](https://vk.com/va.konstantinov?fbclid=IwAR0PEwEzY-U2Mx-ebLXJ6GIIHD3WMIBVMnK_DaqxKDKfjnlhR6MkeQSD7lw&w=wall608829078_7081)

313 [https://vk.com/va.konstantinov?fbclid=IwAR0PEwEzY-U2Mx-ebLXJ6GIIHD3WMIBVMnK\\_DaqxKDKfjnlhR6MkeQSD7lw&w=wall608829078\\_7110](https://vk.com/va.konstantinov?fbclid=IwAR0PEwEzY-U2Mx-ebLXJ6GIIHD3WMIBVMnK_DaqxKDKfjnlhR6MkeQSD7lw&w=wall608829078_7110)



cludes such campaigns as “Red Rose”,<sup>314</sup> “Ribbon of Saint George”,<sup>315</sup> “Immortal Regiment”,<sup>316</sup> “Old Songs About the Main”,<sup>317</sup> “Windows of Victory”<sup>318</sup>, the contest “We are the descendants of the Great Victory”<sup>319</sup>, as well as various events at the schools’ level. For example, in Sevastopol school No15, exhibitions “Heroes of the Russian land”, “Little heroes of the Great War”, an exhibition of historical photo reconstructions “Connection of times. 77 years of the Great Victory” were held.<sup>320</sup>

Despite the fact that all events were allegedly dedicated to the memory of the events of the World War II, they use the symbols Z and V, and draw parallels between the victory over the Nazis in the World War II and the fight against the “Nazis” in the modern Ukraine.<sup>321</sup> On May 9, children (from the young school age) are already traditionally being dressed in military uniform and involved in parades.<sup>322</sup> Special projects are being implemented, which heroize and popularize military service, among which there is “Generations Memory Watch – Post No 1”. As a part of the project, pupils of military-patriotic clubs and cadet classes “keep the Honorable Guard” near the objects of cultural heritage.<sup>323</sup>

In camps, thematic militaristic shifts are held. On May 13, 2022, the Young Army shift was opened in Children’s Recreation Camp “Alye Parusa”, in which 276 pupils of the Young Army took part.<sup>324</sup> During 21 days, participants worked in profile clubs on military, history of the Fatherland, tourist training, tactics and strategies of military actions on the examples of the operations of the Great Patriotic War and the modern conflicts. Young soldiers mastered the intricacies of the modern firearms and acquired safety skills.<sup>325</sup>

314 [https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165\\_3435](https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165_3435) <https://drive.google.com/file/d/15B9KlmpyxvmVndaFfQliB471VKgewT/view?usp=sharing>

315 <http://chernomorskoe-rk.ru/v-chernomorskom-rajone-startovala-akciya-georgievskaya-lentochka/>

316 <http://eit46.ru/index.php/novosti/1411-starye-pesni-o-glavnom> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/14wOUxwFxOLpNQ5WaTAC1qQ7-DhMjbo6M/view?usp=sharing>

317 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/14wOUxwFxOLpNQ5WaTAC1qQ7-DhMjbo6M/view?usp=sharing> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XcT3wmVHA-W9YTctth8A6adlJiVKon7rn/view?usp=sharing>

318 <http://eit46.ru/index.php/novosti/1411-starye-pesni-o-glavnom> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/14wOUxwFxOLpNQ5WaTAC1qQ7-DhMjbo6M/view?usp=sharing> <http://www.admbal.ru/activity/aktsiya-okna-pobedy/> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1A-DMbWtH00FEeMEZvFIL05r4ZU6dwp\\_b/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1A-DMbWtH00FEeMEZvFIL05r4ZU6dwp_b/view?usp=sharing)

319 <https://crimea-news.com/society/2022/05/06/920552.html,%20> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nzTIPgwdunNbbRCjSPsotngUU3pdyDY8D/view?usp=sharing%20>

320 [https://vk.com/wall-534175\\_6903](https://vk.com/wall-534175_6903) [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HySWAeXIAMsLnF7jZuDW9sho5FC\\_06Px/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HySWAeXIAMsLnF7jZuDW9sho5FC_06Px/view?usp=sharing)

321 [https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165\\_3485](https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165_3485) <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HExsEI3PsWrl1P-mDrxQgS0799Wnt9Ag/view?usp=sharing>

322 [https://vk.com/sag.gimnazy?w=wall-116283193\\_1263](https://vk.com/sag.gimnazy?w=wall-116283193_1263) [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CNzxPCqfCAjmmqYg8DeLCO2j1mCwU\\_5R/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CNzxPCqfCAjmmqYg8DeLCO2j1mCwU_5R/view?usp=sharing)

323 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PzW4TJUK7sJGPENclB1x-xqhrDtvRxI0/view?usp=sharing> [https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165\\_3462](https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165_3462) [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-N\\_2phXiEdooou6bWW\\_3uiW\\_SrngTf0eq/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-N_2phXiEdooou6bWW_3uiW_SrngTf0eq/view?usp=sharing) [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-N\\_2phXiEdooou6bWW\\_3uiW\\_SrngTf0eq/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-N_2phXiEdooou6bWW_3uiW_SrngTf0eq/view?usp=sharing) [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gtg9\\_QYdA5HwmQRbivmb99P2skDpA94y/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gtg9_QYdA5HwmQRbivmb99P2skDpA94y/view?usp=sharing)

324 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mpouDGo-YJc5dgpYUsBssdQ7uxYGodxt/view?usp=sharing>

325 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mpouDGo-YJc5dgpYUsBssdQ7uxYGodxt/view?usp=sharing>



Concurrently, the scientific occupation administrations continue working on re-writing history and using it for propaganda of the Russian narratives. The active militarization of the peninsula with focus in the support of the war that Russia conducts in Ukraine continues. In particular, on June 15, 2022, the organization Crimean Patriot Center demonstrated a poster, which compares the Soviet soldiers of the World War II period, Russian soldiers of the Russian-Ukrainian war and members of the Young Army.<sup>326</sup>

On July 7, 2022, a legal quest “300 days on the guard of the Law” and the historical reconstruction of the Nuremberg trial took place in the camp “Yantarny” of the International Children’s center “Artek”.<sup>327</sup> The events were dedicated to the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of the Prosecutor’s Office of the Russian Federation.<sup>328</sup> In November 2022, an open lesson in the form of a court hearing, dedicated to the beginning of the Nuremberg trial, was held in Simferopol Municipal Budgetary Educational Institution “School-lyceum” No 3 named after Anton Makarenko. Lessons in the form of a court hearing are held in more than 300 educational institutions of Crimea.<sup>329</sup> During the reconstructions of the Nuremberg trial, main attention was paid to the condemnation of Nazi ideology. For the context, it is important to note that the Russian propaganda refers to Ukrainians as Nazis, and all the events, which are aimed at the condemnation of Nazi ideology in the Russian Federation and in the territories occupied by it, have a goal to form and strengthen hostile attitude of children and youth in these territories to the population of the territories, controlled by the Ukrainian government.<sup>330</sup>

Children are encouraged to participate in the activities, aimed at the formation of the attitude to war as to heroic event worthy to be proud of. Particularly, Crimeans are being invited to take part in the project “Heroes are alive” and talk about the feats of their family members, who took part in the World War II.<sup>331</sup> Apart from that, in September 2022, the annual campaign “Dictation of Victory” took place – a historical dictation on the topic of events of the World War II for the purpose of “patriotic education of young people”.<sup>332</sup>

On October 28, 2022, under the program of the events dedicated to the 81<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the beginning of the defense of Sevastopol of 1941-1942, a city memorial hour with a solemn laying of flowers to the Memorial war was held in memory of the

326 <http://tinyurl.com/2bgn8v5x> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/16o5-VJ0Axc0ESs7MbgLo8TjRJ2JDEli7/view?usp=sharing>

327 <https://simferopol.bezformata.com/listnews/pravovoy-kvest-i-rekonstruktsiya/107289972/> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220816125639/https://simferopol.bezformata.com/listnews/pravovoy-kvest-i-rekonstruktsiya/107289972/> <https://artek.org/press-centr/news/v-arteke-proshla-istoricheskaya-rekonstruktsiya/> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220816125927/https://artek.org/press-centr/news/v-arteke-proshla-istoricheskaya-rekonstruktsiya/>

328 <https://artek.org/press-centr/news/na-strazhe-zakona-artekovcy-proshli-kvest-posvyashenny-k-300-letiyu-prokuratury-rf/> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220816130222/https://artek.org/press-centr/news/na-strazhe-zakona-artekovcy-proshli-kvest-posvyashenny-k-300-letiyu-prokuratury-rf/>

329 [https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165\\_4117](https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165_4117)

330 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Моніторинговий-звіт-Універсальний-солдат\\_1-31-липня.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Моніторинговий-звіт-Універсальний-солдат_1-31-липня.pdf)

331 [https://vk.com/va.konstantinov?fbclid=IwAR0PEwEzY-U2Mx-ebLXJ6GIIHD3WMIBVMnK\\_DaqxKDKfjnhR6MkeQSD7lw&w=wall608829078\\_6987](https://vk.com/va.konstantinov?fbclid=IwAR0PEwEzY-U2Mx-ebLXJ6GIIHD3WMIBVMnK_DaqxKDKfjnhR6MkeQSD7lw&w=wall608829078_6987)

332 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_16297](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_16297)



second defense of Sevastopol. Schoolchildren and Young Soldiers of the city took place in the ceremony. During the event, the Acting Head of the Department of Education and Science of Sevastopol Larisa Sulima stated:

“ At all times, patriotic education was important, because the kind of generation we will educate depends on it. Apparently, it is no coincidence that Sevastopol used to be called patriotic capital of Russia, everything here is filled with heroism and the struggle for every inch of the Russian land. Today, our children – the great-grandchildren of the victorious nation – must preserve the historical memory, be the grateful descendants and the decent defenders of the Fatherland”.<sup>333</sup>

Thus, the parallels with the World War II are being actively used both to justify the aggression against Ukraine as well as for the glorification of war and its normalization among children and youth. The so-called “Deputy head of the State Council of the Republic of Crimea” Vladimir Bobkov said that regular visits to the places of military glory and the memorial complexes as a part of studying history at school should “help” children to dive deeper into the root causes of the events, which took place in the years of the Great Patriotic War and master the material better.<sup>334</sup>

## Summer camps and rest

Already traditionally the Russian authorities along with the occupation administration continue using summer camps for to form the Russian identity in children of the occupied Crimea. According to the information from the so-called “Ministry of Education of Crimea”, it was planned that during the summer of 2022, only in children’s centers “Artek”, “Orlyatko”, “Okean” and “Zmina” about 5,000,000 persons will rest, including children from the occupied Donetsk and Luhansk regions.<sup>335</sup>

In general, Crimean summer camps were actively used for the assimilation of children from the other occupied territories of Ukraine, particularly from Donetsk and Luhansk regions, including through the special cultural and patriotic programs.<sup>336</sup> In July 2022, shifts of the “Yunarmiyets” (Young Soldier) were held<sup>337</sup>, in which children from both – occupied territories and Russia participated. The purpose of such activities is to speed up the assimilation of Ukrainian children. In addition, there was a military-historical camp “Country of heroes” where children were taught the rules of handling weapons, games that simulate military situations were organized, and great attention was paid to the cultivation of the “true patriot of Russia” ready to defend the Russian federation with weapons in hands.<sup>338</sup>

333 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_17392](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_17392)

334 <https://crimea.ria.ru/20221115/chto-pomozhet-shkolnikam-v-izuchenii-i-usvoenii-istorii-rossii--mnenie-1125379335.html>

335 [https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165\\_3519](https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165_3519) <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uUyALMuI8wYcyRdRHgWWFRCQdrTf0PHw/view?usp=sharing>

336 [https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165\\_3512](https://vk.com/monmrk?w=wall-148027165_3512) <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1usaCCwaiqxDyEg-x8u-Oidna3ldgn86S/view?usp=sharing>

337 [https://vk.com/orlyonok\\_yunarmeez](https://vk.com/orlyonok_yunarmeez) [https://web.archive.org/web/20220816132726/https://vk.com/orlyonok\\_yunarmeez](https://web.archive.org/web/20220816132726/https://vk.com/orlyonok_yunarmeez)

338 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Моніторинговий-звіт-Універсальний-солдат\\_1-31-липня.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Моніторинговий-звіт-Універсальний-солдат_1-31-липня.pdf)



During the shift in the “Laspi” camp, the program “School of the future commanders” prepared by the Young Army was implemented.<sup>339</sup> Children attended profile classes on drill and physical training, protection against weapons of mass destruction, shooting with an air rifle, throwing a dummy grenade, first aid fundamentals, Kalashnikov assault rifle disassembly and assembly, loading of magazine with dummy rounds.

In the period from July 18 to August 1, 2022, field military exercise was held on the territory of Belyaus split in Chornomorske district. Students of cadet classes and cadets from the so-called DPR took place in the exercise. Children underwent fire, tactical, military-medical, tourist training, carried out patrol service. In addition, the exercise participants watched military-patriotic films on a daily basis.<sup>340</sup> Viewing such films strongly affects the consciousness of children in the context of the romanticization of war.<sup>341</sup>

## Military-patriotic games

Military-patriotic games, such as “Victory”,<sup>342</sup> “Zarnitsa”, a military-patriotic tournament “In memory of heroes of the Fatherland”,<sup>343</sup> military-patriotic game “51<sup>st</sup> Army Cup”<sup>344</sup> and others<sup>345</sup> remain a special direction of teaching children the basics of military service. The contents of the games are similar to each other and often contain parallels with the World War II, in order to plant the “ideologically correct” associations and narratives in children’s heads in a playful form.

For example, in accordance with the program of the municipal stage of the all-Russian military-sports game “Victory”, which was held at the end of May, on the basis of the Chornomorske Secondary school No1 named after Nikolay Kudrya, participants had 4 stages of competition: a “War pages of the history of the Fatherland” quest (a 30-minute test on knowing the history of Russia); contests – “Presentation card” (creative presentation on the topic “What does it mean – being a patriot of one’s own country?”) and “Well-built in formation, strong in battle” (the competition determined the best teams that perform drill techniques), a “Militarized relay” competition (a relay, in which participants competed in speed, endurance, confidence in their strength,

339 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_14981](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_14981) [https://web.archive.org/web/20220816160220/https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_14981](https://web.archive.org/web/20220816160220/https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_14981)

340 [https://vk.com/yunarmy\\_region82?w=wall-214017257\\_78](https://vk.com/yunarmy_region82?w=wall-214017257_78) [https://web.archive.org/web/20220816134352/https://vk.com/yunarmy\\_region82?w=wall-214017257\\_78](https://web.archive.org/web/20220816134352/https://vk.com/yunarmy_region82?w=wall-214017257_78)

341 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Моніторинговий-звіт-Універсальний-солдат\\_1-31-липня.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Моніторинговий-звіт-Універсальний-солдат_1-31-липня.pdf)

342 <https://yunarmy.ru/projects/vserossiyskaya-voenno-sportivnaya-igra-pobeda/>,%20<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1z-3rMESELeqBlztIVJbRmU-ULvpNhvcG/view?usp=sharing>  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1z-3rMESELeqBlztIVJbRmU-ULvpNhvcG/view?usp=sharing>  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-iS9kLf8s\\_iF-VuV43XxqD-GD2uPnNGF/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-iS9kLf8s_iF-VuV43XxqD-GD2uPnNGF/view?usp=sharing)

343 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1COdY64Ihumil7QTTw0AHChAL3o9BTXSY/view?usp=sharing> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/17qnmyYc\\_EYtk0iQKY86FnZAP289VDZXY/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/17qnmyYc_EYtk0iQKY86FnZAP289VDZXY/view?usp=sharing)

344 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qUwGkralycmV7tzzHGx8m0ufEF5Jq8EE/view?usp=sharing> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1COdY64Ihumil7QTTw0AHChAL3o9BTXSY/view?usp=sharing>

345 [https://vk.com/sevschool15?w=wall-534175\\_6938](https://vk.com/sevschool15?w=wall-534175_6938) <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qUwGkralycmV7tzzHGx8m0ufEF5Jq8EE/view?usp=sharing>





courage and determination). The organizers of the “Victory” game are the Ministry of Defense of Russia, the Ministry of Education of Russia, the All-Russian Military-Patriotic Public Movement “Young Army” and the Russian movement of schoolchildren.<sup>346</sup>

From June 20 to June 25, 2022, military-patriotic exercises “Young Defender of the Fatherland”<sup>347</sup> took place on the base of the “Zavodskoe” airfield, where children were taught basics of military service for the purpose of raising citizens of Russia.<sup>348</sup> The “Cossacks’ games” on bullet shooting, orienteering, marching and firing training were organized by the so-called “Ministry of Education, Science and Youth of the Republic of Crimea”, State Budgetary Educational Institution for Additional Education “Crimean Patriot Center”, “Crimean District Cossacks Society”.<sup>349</sup>

On September 20, 2022, the finals of the military-patriotic game “Frontier” started in Sevastopol, where teams competed in marching and singing contest, assembled and disassembled the Kalashnikov assault rifle, took part in military-historical contest (on knowing the history of Russia). The team from a kindergarten No 889 also participated in the finals.<sup>350</sup> The “Frontier” game is designed to “educate future defenders of the Fatherland”, and during the last event, children honored Russian soldiers who died during the so-called “special operation”.<sup>351</sup>

Some military-patriotic games are also designed to distort the history of the indigenous peoples of Crimea. That is, on December 6, 2022, a Conscript Day militarized relay race “Autumn – 2022” was held, where the main trophy was a bust of a “hero of the Russian Federation (posthumously)” Alime Abdenanova – a Crimean Tatar, who died in Crimea in 1943<sup>352</sup>

346 <https://crimea-news.com/society/2022/05/22/925460.html>, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pY0tRJqpkWdnPTmHlpFh2PMqky-3YQBH/view?usp=sharing%20>

347 <http://tinyurl.com/2eanassd> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1\\_YFjvjFAi5AYdfFTragidcODgiwP9r6O/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_YFjvjFAi5AYdfFTragidcODgiwP9r6O/view?usp=sharing)

348 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Soldat\\_2-1.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Soldat_2-1.pdf)

349 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Monitorynhovyy-zvit-Universalnyy-soldat\\_serpen\\_ukr-1.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Monitorynhovyy-zvit-Universalnyy-soldat_serpen_ukr-1.pdf)

350 [https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250\\_16812](https://vk.com/sevobrazovanie?w=wall-177557250_16812)

351 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Almenda\\_Universalnyi-soldat\\_veresen.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Almenda_Universalnyi-soldat_veresen.pdf)

352 <https://www.krympatriotcentr.ru/%d0%b2%d0%be%d0%b5%d0%bd%d0%b8%d0%b7%d0%b8%d1%80%d0%be%d0%b2%d0%b0%d0%bd%d0%bd%d0%b0%d1%8f-%d1%8d%d1%81%d1%82%d0%b0%d1%84%d0%b5%d1%82%d0%b0-%d0%ba%d0%be-%d0%b4%d0%bd%d1%8e-%d0%bf%d1%80%d0%b8%d0%b7.html>

**IV.**

# **CULTURAL GENOCIDE AND INDOCTRINATION**





## Cultural genocide – history and present times

According to the definition of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (hereinafter – the Convention), genocide is considered to be the actions aimed at the destruction of any national, ethnic, racial or religious group. “Destruction” mostly refers to physical or biological annihilation in various ways (killing, infliction of bodily harm, preventing the birth of children etc.), as well as forcible transfer of children from one ethnic group to another.<sup>353</sup>

However, in the early version of the Convention text, Raphael Lemkin, the author of the notion of “genocide”, defined genocide as the “coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves”. The objectives of such a plan may be dissolution of political and social institutions, culture, language, national feelings, religion and economical existence of national groups, as well as wiping up personal security, freedom, health, dignity and even lives of people who belong to such groups.<sup>354</sup> That is, the ultimate goal is precisely the extinction of groups as such, not necessarily only in physical or biological aspect.<sup>355</sup> In the concept of “genocide” Lemkin also included the cultural aspect – as a form of social annihilation, aimed at the identity of the group, systematic attacks against the group of people and their cultural identity, aimed at the elements that distinguish specific group from the others, not necessarily related to the physical existence of the group.

In general, the first draft of the Convention included the concept of the cultural genocide through social annihilation with various practices, such as forced transfer of children, expulsion, prohibition of the use of the national language, systematic destruction of books and cultural objects. Nevertheless, the final version of the Convention excluded the element of “absorption” as such, and it currently includes only the small part of Lemkin’s original idea, which is partially preserved in the context of the forced transfer of children from one group to another (Article 2, paragraph e).<sup>356</sup> In the original draft of the notion of “genocide” “the forcible transfer of children to another group” was the first in the category “destruction of the specific characteristics of a group”, included in cultural genocide.<sup>357</sup> But even after the adoption of the Convention, Lemkin expressed regret that the relevant provisions were not preserved in the 1948 Convention.<sup>358</sup>

A well-known international criminal law specialist William Shabas points out that although the term “cultural genocide” was excluded from the text of the Convention, the presence of “forcible transfer of children from one group to another” in the Article 2(e) is the indicator of the fact that the creators of the Convention agreed for an exception

353 <https://ti-ukraine.org/news/shho-take-genotsyd-pravovyj-vymir/>

354 Lemkin, Axis Rule, 79.

355 Lemkin, R., . Schabas, W. and Power, S., 2008. Axis Rule In Occupied Europe: Laws Of Occupation, Analysis Of Government, Proposals For Redress. Second Edition. Lawbook Exchange, Ltd, p. 79.

356 R. Lemkin, Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analysis of Government, Proposals for Redress (1944), at 79–95; <https://academic.oup.com/ejil/article/29/2/373/5057075>

357 UN document, E/447.

358 <https://www.getty.edu/publications/occasional-papers-2/2/>



regarding the recognition of acts of destruction of identity as genocide.<sup>359</sup> The provision on the genocidal nature of such actions is based on the assumption that children, who have been forcibly moved to another group, are unable to grow as a part of their own group of origin and thus are alienated from their cultural identity. Which means that language, traditions and culture of their group become or remain alien to children<sup>360</sup> and the actual destruction of children's identity takes place. Also, children, transferred in this way, forcibly acquire features of a new group, which corresponds to the first concept of genocide, developed by Lemkin (destruction of the original culture and forcible instillation of the second culture with the aim of absorption of a group as such).

With regard to the Ukrainian context, it should be noted that the occupation of a part of Ukraine (particularly Crimea, parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions) has clearly demonstrated, that since 2014 the occupation authorities systematically and purposefully cultivated "Russian identity" in Ukrainian children. This pattern is clearly demonstrated through the "Crimean scenario" of the destruction of education, described in the first chapter of this report, which is currently being implemented in the occupied territories of Zaporizhzhia and Luhansk regions - according to Vladimir Putin, education should show people "the advantages of the accession to the Russian Federation".<sup>361</sup> Since the first days of the occupation, through the implementation of Russian educational standards in Crimea (which was described in details in Chapter I of this report) and programs of patriotic education in accordance with the Russian legislation, the Russian Federation has been destroying all cultural connections between the Ukrainian citizens in the occupied territories and Ukraine. As it was mentioned above, it primarily concerns the Ukrainian language:

- as of 2019, no schools with Ukrainian language of education remained in Crimea<sup>362</sup>
- only 0.1 % of Crimeans study Ukrainian at schools<sup>363</sup>
- removal of Ukrainian language from public life and media space (including through blocking the access to the Ukrainian resources)<sup>364</sup>
- withdrawal and destruction of Ukrainian books.<sup>365</sup>

Cultural relations between Crimeans and Ukrainians from the territories controlled by the Ukrainian government are also destroyed by Russification of education – transition to the Russian educational standards, inability to study Ukrainian language in schools and lack of subjects of the Ukrainian study cycle, which subsequently makes

359 <https://legal.un.org/avl/ha/cppcg/cppcg.html>

360 The UN Genocide Convention: A Commentary (Oxford University Press) <<https://opil-ouplaw-com.ludwig.lub.lu.se/display/10.1093/law/9780199570218.001.0001/law-9780199570218>>

361 [https://t.me/Genichesk\\_ru/2749](https://t.me/Genichesk_ru/2749)

362 <https://crimeahrg.org/ru/v-krymu-ne-ostalos-ni-odnoj-shkoly-s-ukrainskim-yazykom-obucheniya/>

363 <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/crimea-education-ukrainian-language/31274562.html>

364 <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/crimea-russia-blocks-ukrainian-sites/31336156.html>

365 <https://www.rbc.ua/ukr/news/krymu-unichtozhayut-knigi-krymskotatarskom-1433228631.html>





the admission in Ukrainian Higher Education Institutions impossible.<sup>366</sup> The same steps are currently being implemented in the “newly-occupied” territories, where in order to Russify Ukrainian children, teachers from the Russian Federation are invited,<sup>367</sup> Ukrainian books are withdrawn<sup>368</sup> and cultural space is being completely Russianized, actively imposing “traditional Russian values”<sup>369</sup> among which there are specifically “patriotism, serving to the Fatherland and being responsible for its fate”.<sup>370</sup> In the case of the Russian Federation, patriotism and civil responsibility are inextricably linked with militarism and serving in the armed forces of the Russian Federation, which aims to educate not only mental affiliation with the Russian Federation, but also motivation to fulfill one’s “civic duty” through military service.

There is also an active propaganda, aimed at distorting the perception of Ukraine as the artificial state and even more – as a hostile “fascist state”, for example in school textbooks,<sup>371</sup> in a number of formal and informal events that correlate the fight against the fascists in 1940-s with the current war against Ukraine and during the lessons of the “Conversations about the Important” cycle.<sup>372</sup> Such a distortion also applies to the Ukrainian language – as stated in one of the Russian resources, for Crimeans the Ukrainian language should be associated with war and Ukraine as “the country of the victorious fascism”<sup>373</sup> – this term was also used in 2022 in the Crimean media resources.<sup>374</sup> In the appeal of the State Duma of the Russian Federation on the anniversary of the so-called “reunification with Crimea”, Ukraine was called “a stepmother”, which is taking revenge on the residents of Crimea and “Nazi government” of which is committing “genocide of the Russian-speaking population in Donbass” – from which residents of Crimea were “saved” by the government of the Russian Federation in 2014.<sup>375</sup> That is, the aggressive rhetoric of the Russian Federation is aimed at termination of any connection of residents of Crimea and Ukraine.

Weekly “Conversations about the important” implement the conventional Russian narratives among the residents of the occupied Ukrainian territories. This includes the narrative about the “establishment of historical justice” in the context of the occupation of Ukrainian territories,<sup>376</sup> about the need to serve in the armed forces of the Russian Federation, with the simultaneous praising of heroes of the so-called “Special Military Operation” – which is in fact the war against Ukraine,<sup>377</sup> as well as the promotion of

366 <https://www.prostir.ua/?news=dyskryminatsiya-movna-sytuatsiya-v-krymu-pislya-7-rokiv-okupatsiji>

367 <https://zp-news.ru/society/2022/10/25/51057.html>

368 <https://telegraf.com.ua/kultura/2023-01-04/5774264-voni-nas-realno-boyatsya-okupanti-viluchayut-z-ukrainskikh-bibliotek-navit-dityachi-knizhki>

369 <https://www.vedomosti.ru/politics/characters/2023/01/09/958263-kazhdii-kto-imel-opit-pionera-s-nostalgiei>

370 [https://tsargrad.tv/shows/azbuka-tradicionnyh-cennostej-serija-iii-patriotizm-grazhdanstvennost-sluzhenie-otechestvu\\_710048](https://tsargrad.tv/shows/azbuka-tradicionnyh-cennostej-serija-iii-patriotizm-grazhdanstvennost-sluzhenie-otechestvu_710048)

371 <https://almenda.org/en/doslidzhennya-zmistu-shkilnykh-pidruchnykiv-rosiyi/>

372 [https://histrf.ru/storage/app/public/files/special/beseda\\_o\\_vajnom\\_9\\_11\\_classes.pdf](https://histrf.ru/storage/app/public/files/special/beseda_o_vajnom_9_11_classes.pdf)

373 <https://dzen.ru/media/pokrymu/ukrainskii-iazuk-v-krymu-esce-jiv-611a0d8874a4fa16872df42e>

374 <https://crimea-news.com/society/2022/08/22/958209.html>

375 <http://duma.gov.ru/news/53738/>

376 <https://razgovor-cdn.edsoo.ru/media/file/teachersday-dop.pdf>

377 <https://razgovor-cdn.edsoo.ru/media/file/fathersday-1011-script.pdf>





“traditional values”. The “Conversations about the important” also praise the ideas of “serving the Fatherland with the reference to “feats of children-heroes of the Soviet Union”, which is an additional mental instrument of militarization.<sup>378</sup>

The Russian Federation also takes a number of measures, aimed at the cultivation of loyalty to the Russian authorities and affiliation with the Russian nation. Among there are the aforementioned military-patriotic games “Frontier”, “Zarnitsa” and other, which in a favorable for a child form should prepare for the fulfillment of the “sacred duty of the citizen of the Russian Federation” – namely the service in the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. We can also mention the cultivation of respect for the state symbols of the Russian Federation at the “Conversations about the important”<sup>379</sup> and during the weekly raising of the Russian Flag and listening to the national anthem of the Russian Federation before the lessons (which is relevant in the context of Crimea as well as the occupied parts of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions). Meetings with servicemen of the armed forces of the Russian Federation, including those who took or take part in war against Ukraine also aim to evoke patriotic feelings, as it happens in Crimea during the so-called “lessons of courage”. This policy of the Russian Federation clearly demonstrates that the concept proposed by Lemkin is confirmed in the present, but still remains a “perfect crime” due to the imperfection of the final definition of “genocide” in the current Convention. Unfortunately, the concept of the cultural genocide remains a controversial issue in the doctrine of international criminal law.

Instead, the destruction of the identity and affiliation with particular group is criminalized within the framework of “transferring of children to another group”. In general, it is understood that child transfer should be physical – for example, the abduction of children during the armed conflict is one of six grave violations identified and condemned by the UN Security Council. This violation includes illicit transfers, capture, detention, retention, abduction or violent enforced disappearance of a child temporarily or permanently for the purpose of exploitation of a child in any form, including indoctrination.

## Indoctrination

Indoctrination is mentioned in the clarifications to the violation of “abduction of children”,<sup>380</sup> but at the moment no criteria for its definition or examples of criminal proceedings have been found. In order to define this concept, it is required to refer to the doctrine of international law and to specialists, who have actively studied this phenomenon. Tom Nachtigal defines indoctrination as “teaching with the intention of instilling certain beliefs and propositions among pupils, by disregarding evidence, reasoning, and logic in the teaching process”.<sup>381</sup> Indoctrination can be characterized as “the process of repeating an idea or belief to someone until they accept it without criticism or question”.<sup>382</sup> According to Ivan A. Snook “one indoctrinates when one intends to get students to hold beliefs regardless of the evidence”.<sup>383</sup>

378 <https://razgovor-cdn.edsoo.ru/media/file/unityday-1011-script.pdf>

379 <https://razgovor-cdn.edsoo.ru/media/file/constitution-1011-script.pdf>

380 <https://s3.savethechildren.it/public/files/uploads/pubblicazioni/war-children.pdf>

381 <https://jij.org/news/indoctrination-lasting-effects-on-children-and-conflicts/>

382 Cambridge Dictionary <<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/indoctrination>>

383 IA Snook, *Indoctrination and Education*. (1972) pp. 106-107



Indoctrination is closely related to education. For example, in “Save the Children” report it is noted that during the armed conflict, schools and teachers can become a part of targets of indoctrination, as repressive regimes often see education as a threat to their power or as an instrument of indoctrination. The authors also point out that children are more susceptible to indoctrination and propaganda.<sup>384</sup> The authors of the report “Care and Protection of Children (CPC) Learning Network Columbia University” also mention indoctrination among the possible methods of offenses against education.<sup>385</sup> The UN Human Rights Council qualifies the ideological education of children in madrasahs of Pakistan and Afghanistan as indoctrination which is an offense against the right to education.<sup>386</sup>

From an ideological point of view, children “demonstrate loyalty fairly quickly and are easy to indoctrinate, since they have fewer preconceived notions and beliefs that recruiters would need to disprove or change”.<sup>387</sup> In this way, these vulnerable “clean boards” are very malleable subjects. Moreover, unlike adults who may have the opposite worldviews and may rely on their “previous life” experience to resist the indoctrination, children indoctrinated or even born in the extremist environment, are “pure” embodiment and bearers of the ideology of a group,<sup>388</sup> who will be loyal defenders of this ideology for future generations.<sup>389</sup> That is why, the indoctrination of children by extremists groups creates new challenges regarding their protection and psycho-social rehabilitation and integration.<sup>390</sup>

Although the transfer of children from one group to another same as the abduction of children are mostly considered from purely physical point of view – a child must be forcibly transferred in physical space, the results of such actions have inevitable consequences for the well-being of children, for the immediate preservation of their identity and the observance of the guaranteed rights and freedoms. One of such illegal offenses is the indoctrination, i.e. the imposition of specific beliefs and dogmas while making their critical understanding impossible.

In the context of the Russian occupation, indoctrination is manifested in various aspects – in upbringing Ukrainian children to become “ideological citizens of Russia” ready to “consciously” and “willingly” defend the Russian Federation with weapons in their arms, which was described in the context of recruitment (Chapter II); in imposing the idea of artificiality of the Ukrainian nation and associating modern Ukraine with Nazi Germany – as the instrument for legitimization of the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine (Chapter III). The definition of indoctrination also includes

384 <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000155578>

385 [http://www.cpcnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/CPC\\_Field-Scan-CAC\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.cpcnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/CPC_Field-Scan-CAC_FINAL.pdf)

386 <https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/human-rights-council-expresses-concern-over-indoctrination-of-children-in-pakistan-afghanistan-madrasas20220619184334/>

387 Noman Benotman and Nikita Malik, *The Children of Islamic State*, (London: Quilliam Foundation, March 2016), 14, original emphasis.

388 NCTV and AVID, *The Children of ISIS: The Indoctrination of Minors in ISIS-Held Territory*, (The Hague: National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism (NCTV) and General Intelligence and Security Service (AVID), Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, Government of the Netherlands, 26 April 2017), 5

389 <https://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Cubs-in-the-Lions-Den-Indoctrination-and-Recruitment-of-Children-Within-Islamic-State-Territory.pdf>

390 [https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/A\\_HRC\\_28\\_54.pdf](https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/A_HRC_28_54.pdf)



the “Conversations about the important” mentioned above, from ideological pressure of which children cannot be protected even by their parents – due to the threats from the state.<sup>391</sup> In addition, through the participation in militaristic organizations, military-patriotic games and the introduction of mandatory military training in schools (Chapter III), children are not only being ideologically prepared for the war of the side of the Russian Federation, but also given required practical skills – actually turning Ukrainian children into “universal soldiers”.

The imposition of the narratives beneficial for the state is also carried out through the Russian textbooks on various subjects: “Fundamentals of Life Safety”, “Social Studies”, “Geography”, “The World Around Us”, “Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics”, as well as optional ones: “Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia”, “World Artistic Culture”. In the study, released by the CCE “Almenda” in partnership with the “Regional Human Rights Centre” “School Education: Hidden Weapon of the Russian Federation Against Ukraine”, the content of textbooks used by Russia in the occupied territories of Ukraine was analyzed. The authors of the study emphasize that within the school curriculum, constant imposition of narratives about the romanticization of the Russian army, “feats” of Russian servicemen with simultaneous propaganda of service in the Russian army takes place as a part of the school educational process organized in the occupied territories. In the conditions of limited access to alternative sources of information and educational courses, this results in the formation of children’s worldview, in which they allegedly should fulfil the “duty” of serving in the Russian army, which is presented as purely high moral activity, including in the conditions of war without demonstrating its horrors such as death and destruction.<sup>392</sup>

That is, the Russian educational policy in the occupied territories has all signs of indoctrination, which allows to “transfer” a child, whose psyche and worldview are still in the process of formation, from one group to another without any physical influence. Besides, in addition to the imposition of the narratives beneficial to the state, through educational system and informal activities a real preparation of Ukrainian for fighting against Ukraine of the side of Russia takes place – both mentally and physically. Considering the illegal practices of the Russian Federation in the occupied territories of Ukraine, we believe that the time has come for the crime of indoctrination to receive due attention from the competent international bodies – namely, the UN Committee on the Rights of a Child, UNESCO and the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Also, the indoctrination carried out in Ukrainian territories by the occupation administrations of the Russian Federation should receive due attention from international justice and become a starting point for supplementing the mechanisms of protecting children against the illegal influences both during the armed conflicts and in peaceful time.

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391 <https://ovd.news/express-news/2022/09/17/roditeli-shkolnikov-v-peterburge-rasskazali-ob-ugrozah-iz-za-otkaza>

392 <https://almenda.org/en/doslidzhennya-zmistu-shkilnykh-pidruchnykh-rosiyi/>



# CONCLUSIONS

## Crimea

Nine years of the Crimean occupation clearly demonstrate how the Russian federation managed to build the educational system, which completely eradicates Ukrainian identity of Crimean children and at the same time imposes the Russian narratives.

Currently, children of the occupied peninsula are completely cut off from the Ukrainian cultural space – due to impossibility of learning the Ukrainian language, the removal of Ukrainian content from public access (media resources, books etc.) and the complete demonization of everything Ukrainian. Instead, Crimean children from kindergarten age should grow up as “citizens of the Russian Federation”, with feeling of love and pride for “their own” Fatherland, and education becomes the main weapon in instilling of the Russian ideology. In this way, on the peninsula, new generations of Ukrainians are growing up, who do not associate themselves with Ukraine and have no connections with it (neither linguistic, nor cultural) and are ready to fulfill their “sacred duty of defense of the Fatherland” with weapons in their hands – primarily against the ideological enemies of the Russian Federation, the main of which the Russian propaganda calls Ukraine.

The invasion of 2022 emphasized the harmfulness of such narratives even more, because right since February 24, 2022, education in Crimea (both formal and informal) became a powerful weapon in the context of justification of the armed aggression of the Russian federation among the residents of Crimea. A number of propagandistic activities took place, aimed at the support of the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine: thematic lessons, during which the sacred duty of “Defense of the Fatherland” is glorified (to which “heroes of the so-called Special Military Operation” are invited), glorification of “heroes” of the so-called Special Military Operation in educational institutions through creation of the commemorative plaques and “hero’s desks”, holding campaigns in support of the Russian army (including collecting humanitarian aid for soldiers and writing letters of support to the frontlines). All these actions are aimed at both normalization of war in minds of children and creation of image of Ukraine as an enemy – for which parallels with the events of the World War II are actively used.

Simultaneously with the glorification of the so-called “Special Military Operation”, there is a process of recruiting children into the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, which began since the moment of the occupation of Crimea in 2014 and the adoption of corresponding normative acts on patriotic education by the occupation administration. It is noteworthy that in the minds of the Russian government and Russian propaganda, patriotism of a true “Russian citizen” is inextricably connected with the duty to protect the Fatherland – therefore as “true Russian citizens”, children of Crimea must fulfill this “sacred duty”. That is why Russia actively created specialized cadet and Cossack classes with militaristic focus, encouraged children to join the ranks of the Young Army,



where children were taught handling weapons and prepared for military service. In 2022, militarism in Russian schools and schools controlled by the Russian Federation has acquired new dimensions – with the introduction of mandatory basic military training, propagandistic lessons “Conversations about the important” and the invitation of “heroes” of the so-called Special Military Operation to schools.

Extracurricular and recreational activities are also fully controlled by the government of the Russian Federation and the occupation administrations subordinated to it. That is, summer camps and military-patriotic activities in Crimea are also actively used to promote the beneficial narratives among children and youth. In other words, all spheres of Crimean children’s education are completely poisoned by the Russian narratives, and in conditions of the absence of available alternative sources and the control of children’s consciousness by the administration, it is de-facto impossible to preserve one’s own identity and protect oneself from Russian indoctrination.

## Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions

In the “newly occupied” territories of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions, the Russian Federation immediately began to implement the “Crimean scenario. This applies to the withdrawal of Ukrainian language from public life and the rearrangement of education in accordance with the Russian standards, as well as the attempts to chance children’s loyalty through formal and informal education.

The propaganda machine of the Russian Federation is actively trying to eradicate everything Ukrainian from the occupied South by spreading the state symbols of the Russian Federation in educational institutions, creating the regional branches of patriotic organizations (such as the Young Army and the Young Guard of the United Russia) and the newly created propaganda centers (such as #YugMolodoy) as well as supplying schools with Russian textbooks. Teachers are actively enticed to collaboration with the occupation administrations, sometimes through threatening, and those willing to collaborate are sent to Russian and the occupied Crimea for re-training. Ukrainian identity of children from the South is also being destroyed by relocating them to the territory of the occupied Crimea and to Russia – sometimes under the pretext of “rest” in camps, where children are given special “patriotic” lessons, or purposefully prepared to study according to the Russian standards. Excursion trips of children from Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions are aimed at instilling patriotic feelings towards the so-called “new Fatherland”. Some children, including orphans and children with disabilities who were in specialized boarding schools, were de-facto abducted and transferred to the occupied Crimea and Russia, fate of many of them remains unknown.

All these actions are supported by the active propaganda directed against Ukraine, and by preventing access to Ukrainian distance education. The militarization of education with the promotion of idea of prestige of service in the Russian army, the introduction of mandatory military training and the use of allusions to the World War II in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war is also gaining momentum – in both formal and informal spheres.

In the long-term perspective, the actions of the Russian Federation regarding the destruction of Ukrainian identity and the indoctrination of Ukrainian children in the spirit





of Russian patriotism – as those who consider Ukraine to be a hostile state, against which one should defend oneself, with weapons in hands – will create numerous challenges in the process of re-integration of citizens of Ukraine after the de-occupation of Crimea and South. It is currently difficult to give even an approximate assessment to the consequences of the illegal actions of the Russian Federation in the territory of Ukraine, but it is extremely important to give a legal assessment and to take this experience into account for the sake of reforming and improving the protection of children's rights during the armed conflict and especially during the occupation. Unfortunately, currently the international system of justice has no adequate instruments to influence states and officials who commit crimes against children's identity, however, the example of Crimea and the occupied South clearly demonstrates the harmfulness of such actions. Now is the time to put an end to the impunity of actions of the Russian Federation and bring all involved persons to justice.



# VIOLATIONS

Considering the processed information, the following violations of obligations from the international treaties arise, to which the Russian federation is a party and compliance with which in the occupied territories should be guaranteed by the occupier state:

- The right to education – Article 26 of the General Declaration of Human Rights, Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- The prohibition of propaganda for war – Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
- Protection of children in conditions of war – Articles 38, 39 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- Prohibition to the occupier state to enlist children in formations or organizations subordinate to it – Article 50 of the Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (IV Geneva Convention).

We also consider it necessary to emphasize that the practices of the Russian Federation regarding the destruction of Ukrainian identity and the imposition of the Russian identity during the occupation require a change in the approach to determining the grave violations against children during the armed conflicts, namely expanding them. The system of protection of children's rights during the armed conflicts must consider not only the matter of personal and physical inviolability, but also the matter of preservation of one's own identity – because sometimes the occupier state does not even need to physically annihilate the population, it may simply create such conditions in which preserving one's own identity and affiliation with certain national group becomes simply impossible, and sometimes even deadly dangerous. Such a policy leads to changing one group of population to another one with a different mindset, with minimal physical losses.<sup>393</sup>

Children's minds become a perfect basis for committing this crime, because the loss (and sometimes the actual impossibility of acquiring) of person's identity, which is still at the stage of being formed, is much easier and more imperceptible, but no less dangerous. Having analyzed the practices of the Russian Federation in the occupied territories, which aim to impose the civic identity of the Russian Federation on children, which include cultivation of respect and pride for the occupier state, but also provide the skills required to fulfill the civic duty of serving in the Russian army, we consider it necessary to use specifically the term "indoctrination" – as described in Chapter IV of this report.

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393 <https://almenda.org/analytical-report-six-plus-grave-violations-committed-against-children/>



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## To international institutions:

- 1 To states and to international institutions of justice: investigate the violations of the right to education, identify the culprits and bring them to justice;
- 2 To international organizations and to governments of democratic countries: introduce personal sanctions against the heads of organizations “Crimean Patriot Center”, DOSAAF Russia (Volunteer Society for Cooperation with the Army, Aviation, and Fleet), “Young Army” and All-Russian Movement of children and youth “The Great Change”, as well as against the leaders of the educational field, who implement militarization and destroy Ukrainian identity;
- 3 To governments of countries and to international organizations: support national institutions and civil society organizations, which document crimes against children and provide assistance to victims; provide resources and strengthen their potential;
- 4 To international and regional organizations, including the UN International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, UNHCR, IOM and the Council of Europe: intensify monitoring and investigation regarding the forcible transfer of Ukrainian citizens, particularly children, to the Russian Federation;
- 5 To United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization: consider the possibility of depriving the Russian Federation of the status of a UNESCO member state;
- 6 To UN Secretary-General: include the issue of limiting the right to education, in particular the issue of militarization and interference with educational process (educational materials etc.) in the occupied territories of Ukraine, in the Annual Report “Children and Armed Conflict” and the Annual Report of the Special representative of the Secretary-General for children and armed conflict;
- 7 To Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe: initiate the creation within the framework of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and/or the Council of Europe of the position of the Special Rapporteur on the matters of violent changes to demographic composition of population and eradication of Ukrainian identity in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.



## To Ukrainian public institutions:

- 1 To the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine: intensify cooperation with non-governmental and humanitarian organizations in the process of making decisions regarding children and ensuring their rights at all levels;
- 2 To the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine: intensify the informational campaigns regarding elucidation of the exercise of right to education in the conditions of war, especially in the occupied territories and abroad; develop a mechanism for receiving Ukrainian secondary education by children from the occupied regions of Ukraine (in the beginning – access to education through the online platforms, and subsequently – creation of schools with the possibility of residence);
- 3 To the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and to the Ministry of Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories: develop and implement a number of measures aimed at relocation and support of children from the occupied territories to study in Ukrainian higher education institutions;
- 4 To the Ministry of Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories: introduce programs of socio-psychological adaptation of children from temporarily occupied territories in institutions of comprehensive general secondary education and institutions of higher education;
- 5 To the Mission of the President of Ukraine in AR of Crimea: continue to monitor and document the facts of violation of human rights, war crimes and crimes against humanity in the occupied Crimea, and publish them in regular reports on the situation with human rights in Ukraine;
- 6 To the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights: facilitate the inclusion of the information regarding the situation with education in the occupied territories of Ukraine in the Annual UNESCO report on education.

## To the Government of the Russian Federation:

immediately stop the armed aggression against Ukraine, including the active hostilities, indiscriminate shelling and other illegal practices of warfare. The Russian Federation must leave all temporarily occupied territories and unquestionably recognize Ukrainian state sovereignty within the state borders of Ukraine, determined as of 1991.

In regard to the educational policy in the temporarily occupied territories, we remind the government of the Russian Federation, that even during the war, the powers of the temporary occupation administrations are limited by the prescriptions of international humanitarian law and international human rights law. In accordance with the mentioned principles, the government of the Russian Federation must:

- 1 In pursuance of Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Articles 29, 38, 39 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child – eradicate the policy of militarization of education from the school programs of educational institutions, located in the territories occupied by Russia;



- 2 In pursuance of Article 50 of the Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Population in Time of War (IV Geneva Convention) – stop encouraging Ukrainian children from the occupied territories to serve in the military formations of the Russian Federation;
- 3 Stop the practice of transferring Ukrainian children to the territory of the Russian Federation and immediately return all illegally transferred children to Ukraine;
- 4 Stop preventing Ukrainian children in the territories occupied by the Russian Federation from receiving Ukrainian education and provide a real opportunity to receive such education.



