

Analytical Report

THE YOUTH POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AS A TOOL FOR ERADICATING IDENTITY IN THE TEMPORARILY OCCUPIED TERRITORIES OF UKRAINE



Analytical Report: “The Youth Policy of the Russian Federation as a Tool for Eradicating Identity in the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine”

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I. Introduction

“The key to the country’s future and the continuity of its development lies in ensuring that young people have reliable life guidelines and consider our [Russian] traditional values truly their own,

said the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, on 26 February 2024.¹

In 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin described youth policy as a strategically important issue for the Russian government, stating that young Russians (including residents of occupied territories, as implied by Putin) would “determine Russia’s future development”.² However, as early as the 2000s, the Russian authorities began prioritising youth policy and actively engaging ideologically with Russian youth. According to Russian researchers, the authorities turned their focus to young people during the period when democratic processes, specifically the so-called “colour revolutions”, were taking place in Serbia, Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan. These were described as a “series of mass street protests that typically culminate in a change of the country’s political regime”, with youth being the primary driving force behind them.³ It is worth noting that “colour revolutions” are peaceful and non-violent in nature, with rallies and demonstrations serving as their main form of action.⁴

Such non-violent democratic processes took place, for example, in Georgia (2003, the Rose Revolution), Ukraine (2004, the Orange Revolution), and Kyrgyzstan (2005, the Tulip Revolution).⁵ It was during this period that the Russian regime recognised the potential threat posed by the younger generation, who might demand democratic change at a time when authoritarianism in Russia was already deepening.⁶

Therefore, to prevent “colour revolutions”, the Russian authorities decided, first and foremost, to eradicate “extremist ideas” (i.e., any form of dissent) among young people. Secondly, there was a push to promote more conservative spiritual, cultural, familial, and moral values that prioritise the welfare of the “Fatherland”⁷ over individual interests. This effort includes patriotic and civic education for young people, which effectively suppresses critical thinking and fosters “blind patriotism”.⁸ Thirdly, various cultural volunteer and charitable projects and programmes should be implemented. Attempts to solve this problem are also being made through the creation of patriotic youth organisations (e.g., “Young Army” (Russian: Yunarmi-

1 <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/20087409>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/sqVJM>

2 <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/16665365>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/Myd1j>

3 Medvedev Ivan. “Youth and ‘Colour Revolutions’: Trends of Interaction in Contemporary Society”. *Humanitarian Bulletin*, no. 6 (80), 2019, p. 7.

4 Petrenko V.V., Novak, Ye.Ya., “Colour Revolutions: Essence, Main Factors, and Distinctive Features”, 2023.

5 https://cejsh.icm.edu.pl/cejsh/element/bwmeta1.element.ojs-doi-10_33119_KSzPP_2016_4_6/c/994-871.pdf, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/OkOYI>

6 <https://newlinesinstitute.org/strategic-competition/the-youth-are-russias-future/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/WfTOR>

7 The terms “Motherland” and “Fatherland” are used interchangeably in Russian discourse

8 Blind patriotism is defined as an attachment to one’s country characterized by an unquestioning positive evaluation, unwavering loyalty, and an intolerance for criticism. Constructive patriotism is defined as an attachment to one’s country characterized by a willingness to support doubt and criticism of current group practices, aiming to bring about positive change. Source: Schatz, R.T., Staub, E. and Lavine, H. (1999), On the Varieties of National Attachment: Blind Versus Constructive Patriotism. *Political Psychology*, 20: 151-174.

ya), “Movement of the First”, etc.).⁹ Therefore, Russia seeks protection for its authoritarian regime precisely through the involvement of young people in patriotic mass youth associations and movements.¹⁰ Thus, the Russian authorities intend to increase the share of patriotic youth from 40 to 70 per cent by 2030 by promoting “traditional moral guidelines”.¹¹

Even though youth policy has been implemented since the early 2000s, Russian researchers note the “low level of historical literacy among youth” and see a significant threat in the “imposition of the Western way of life” and consumerist culture.¹² Additionally, according to various surveys, 40-45% of the participants in the protests in Russia during 2017-2018 were under 25 years old, with approximately two-thirds or more being under 30.¹³ As a result, since 2020, the Russian Federation has altered its political and legal strategy for managing youth policy, which the Russians themselves explain as a response to foreign attempts to influence the consciousness of young citizens. In light of these developments, the Russian government began placing even greater emphasis on issues related to youth policy development, youth organisations, and information security.¹⁴ At the same time, the issue of patriotic education for youth became part of Russia’s security agenda from 2021, when the updated national security strategy was adopted.¹⁵

“ Youth policy comprises a range of legislative, financial, economic, organisational, managerial, informational, analytical, human resources, scientific, and other measures implemented through inter-agency cooperation between federal bodies of state authority, state authorities of subjects of the Russian Federation, local self-government bodies, with the participation of civil society institutions, legal entities regardless of their organisational and legal forms, and citizens of the Russian Federation, including individual entrepreneurs. It aims to create conditions for the development of young people, their self-realization in various spheres of life, as well as civic-patriotic and spiritual-moral education of young citizens, with the goal of achieving sustainable social and economic development, global competitiveness, and national security of the Russian Federation.”¹⁶

In 2014, after the occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, and the start of military operations in Donetsk and Luhansk regions, additional resources were directed towards fostering patriotism and creating a mobilisation reserve, both in Russia and in the temporarily occupied territories (hereinafter referred to as TOT) among young Ukrainian citizens. Even in Russia’s National Policy Strategy, it is emphasised that the occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol triggered a significant surge in patriotism within Russia.¹⁷

9 Bubnova M. I., Medvedev M. A. Youth as the main force of colour revolutions // Scientific Statements. 2022. №4 (12). P. 29-33. URL: <https://nvjournal.ru/article/105-molodezh-kak-osnovnaya-sila-tsvetnikh-revoljuty>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/zrPze>

10 Merkulov P. A. Youth as the main resource of “colour revolutions” and the struggle for it // Vlast (Power). 2015. Vol. 23, No. 6. C. 63-66.

11 <https://politika.sevastopol.su/news/v-rossii-hotjat-uvelichit-chislo-patrioticheskoy-molodjzhi/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/LljJT>

12 <https://mollab.hse.ru/mirror/pubs/share/823942055.pdf>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/HuOGI>

13 https://thinktank.4freerussia.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Russian-Youth_web_eng-1.pdf, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/clr9x>

14 Kritskaya A. A., Melikyan A. G. Methodological aspects of the implementation of the state youth policy in Russia // State and Municipal Management. Uchenye zapiski (Academic Notes). 2024. № 2., P. 197-202.

15 <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/48502>, archive <https://archive.ph/g20dR>

16 https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_372649/c5051782233acca771e9adb35b47d3fb82c9ff1c/, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/ADotQ>

17 <http://pravo.gov.ru/proxy/ips/?docbody=&nd=102161949>, archive <https://archive.ph/UOMYu>

Significant funds were allocated to fuel this wave of patriotism. As analysed by the NGO “Centre for Civic Education ‘Almenda’”, between 2014 and 2018, the Russian Federation’s budget for youth policy ranged from 1.13 billion roubles (approximately USD 12.4 million) to 18.47 billion roubles (approximately USD 203 million). However, from 2021, a substantial increase was observed, with expenditures exceeding 34.3 billion roubles (over USD 377 million).¹⁸ As of 2024, over 56.1 billion roubles (more than USD 617 million) have been allocated, and for 2025, the Russian authorities have earmarked 66 billion roubles for youth policy.¹⁹ As noted by Tetiana Lychko, the increase in funding from 2021 is likely linked to preparations for the full-scale invasion of Ukraine and the need to “properly” shape young people’s perceptions to align with Kremlin decisions. This also explains the continued rise in funding during the years of active military aggression.²⁰

Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 led to the unlawful annexation of parts of Ukraine’s territory into the Russian Federation on 30 September 2022 (including areas of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson regions). As a result, part of Ukraine’s youth came under complete Russian control, and Russian legislation, including that related to youth policy, began to be enforced in the occupied territories. On these territories under Russian control, branches of Russian youth movements were swiftly established, along with the creation of local organisations.²¹ Youth policy in the so-called “new regions” has become a strategically significant topic in Russian discourse. According to Russian data, as of 1 February 2024, the occupied parts of Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson regions are home to over 5 million people, including more than 600,000 young people aged 18 to 29. One of Russia’s key objectives is to encourage these young people to actively participate in the development of their “new homeland”.²²

The Russian authorities are allocating significant resources to achieve this objective. In 2023 alone, youth in the occupied areas of Donetsk region received approximately 29 million roubles from the Russian government to implement their ideas. Through winning the Presidential Grants Fund competition, eight projects by non-profit organisations in occupied Luhansk were funded with a total of over 13.5 million roubles. Nearly 4 million roubles were allocated for social projects led by students in the occupied parts of Zaporizhzhia region, while 2 million roubles were granted to non-profit organisations in Russian-controlled areas of Kherson region.²³ Under the comprehensive youth policy development programme “Region for the Young”, more than 276 million roubles have been allocated for 2025 to create opportunities for youth self-realisation and establish eight modern youth spaces. Of this amount, over 80 million roubles will go to occupied Luhansk, more than 88 million roubles to Donetsk, over 38 million roubles to Zaporizhzhia, and more than 69 million roubles to Kherson region.²⁴

In June 2024, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Chernyshenko stated that the “new regions” have been fully integrated into Russia’s youth policy system. He highlighted that, through the “Region for the Young” programme, over 336 million roubles were allocated in

18 <https://almenda.org/en/finansuvannya-molodizhnoi-politiki-v-rosii/>

19 <https://dobro.press/news/66-mlrd-na-molodyozhnuyu-politiku-zalozheny-v-byudzheth-na-2025-god>, archive <https://archive.fo/wip/g7Mr0>

20 <https://almenda.org/en/finansuvannya-molodizhnoi-politiki-v-rosii/>

21 Read more in the material by the NGO “CCE ‘Almenda’” at the following link: <https://almenda.org/en/molodizhni-ruxi-yak-instrument-indoktrinacii-i-militarizacii-na-okupovanix-teritoriyax/>

22 <https://repost.press/news/molodezhnaya-politika-v-novyh-regionah>, archive <https://archive.ph/ezfYy>

23 <https://repost.press/news/molodezhnaya-politika-v-novyh-regionah>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/ezfYy>

24 <https://lugansk.bezformata.com/listnews/poluchit-bolee-80-mln-rub/137011653/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/YHyBe>

2024 to comprehensively enhance youth policy.²⁵ This indicates that the pressure on Ukrainian youth is only set to intensify.

Key concepts

According to Federal Law No. 489-FZ “On Youth Policy in the Russian Federation” dated 30 December 2020, youth is defined as a socio-demographic group comprising individuals aged 14 to 35 years inclusive who hold Russian Federation citizenship. As of 1 January 2023, the youth population of the Russian Federation was 37.9 million people (25.9% of the total population), compared to 38.3 million people (26.3% of the total population) on 1 January 2022.²⁶

The draft report by Russia’s Ministry of Education on the state of youth in the Russian Federation for 2021–2022 proposes the concept of a youth life cycle divided into four stages: 14–18 years, 19–24 years, 25–29 years, and 30–35 years. The key target groups for projects within the ecosystem of Russian youth policy are: senior school pupils (14–17 years), young people aged 18–24 years, a significant proportion of whom are students at higher education institutions or colleges, youth at the start of their careers (25–29 years), and “young adults” (30–35 years).²⁷

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Chernyshenko, who oversees youth policy, emphasises that between the ages of 14 and 17, a system of beliefs is formed, which has “a decisive impact on the development of moral, spiritual, and social behaviour”. From 18 to 24, there is “consolidation of skills for prosocial behaviour, civic engagement, self-development, and leading an active lifestyle, which are maintained throughout a person’s life and determine their standard of living and adaptability to change”. By the age of 25 to 35, an individual becomes the main “driver of the country’s socio-economic competitiveness”.²⁸

Therefore, we want to highlight the use of youth policy as a tool for Russification, indoctrination, and militarisation of individuals aged 14 to 24, that is, those attending secondary and higher education institutions fully controlled by the Russian occupation authorities, where the process of developing the skills mentioned by the Russian Deputy Prime Minister is still ongoing. This means there is still an opportunity to influence them from the outside.

Legal qualifications

At the international level, there is no specific document addressing the rights of youth. Nevertheless, all human rights documents apply to young people, including the core guarantees established by United Nations instruments.²⁹ The term “young people” is mentioned in Article 10 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which requires special protective measures and assistance for all children and adolescents without any discrimination. Youth are also explicitly referenced in the general comments of the Committee concerning: the right to housing (No. 7), the right to education (No. 13), the right to the

25 https://dzen.ru/a/Zn7-7Ue3egJ_OvGK?ysclid=m3fsbr6nb7893259937, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/7iXlE>

26 <http://surl.li/evopaz>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/zqucq>

27 <https://mollab.hse.ru/mirror/pubs/share/823942055.pdf>, archive <https://archive.ph/HuOGI>

28 <https://xn--m1acd.xn--p1ai/novye-gorizonty-dlya-molodezhi-ot-chernyshenko/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/KdViL>

29 <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g18/193/07/pdf/g1819307.pdf>, archive <https://archive.ph/pOKTg>

highest attainable standard of health (No. 14), the right to work (No. 18), non-discrimination in economic, social, and cultural rights (No. 20), the right of everyone to participate in cultural life (No. 21), the right to sexual and reproductive health (No. 22), and the right to just and favourable conditions of work (No. 23). One of the key approaches to advancing youth rights is their integration into existing mechanisms, using these mechanisms for reporting and monitoring purposes.³⁰

In the United Nations system, youth is recognised as one of the key actors in peacebuilding. For instance, Resolution 2037 (XX) of the General Assembly, adopted on 7 December 1965, proclaimed the “Declaration on the Promotion Among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect, and Understanding Between Peoples.” All means of education, training, and information intended for young people should promote the development of ideals of peace, humanity, freedom, and international solidarity among them, as well as all other ideals that serve to preserve and maintain peace, foster international understanding, and encourage cooperation.³¹

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, in providing clarification regarding adolescence, emphasises the importance of a human-rights-based approach for adolescents (individuals aged 14 to 18). This approach includes recognising and respecting adolescents’ dignity and freedom of choice, empowering them with rights and opportunities, encouraging active participation in their own lives, promoting optimal health, well-being, and development, and committing to uphold, protect, and realise their rights without discrimination. Secondary education curricula should be designed to prepare adolescents for active participation in society, foster respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, promote civic engagement, and equip them for a responsible life in a free society.³²

Regarding the older age group of youth, it is worth noting that Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights addresses both secondary and higher education.³³ Education should:

- Be directed towards the full development of the human person and the recognition of their dignity, and it should strengthen respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- Enable everyone to become a useful participant in a free society;
- Promote understanding, tolerance, and friendship among all nations, racial, ethnic, and religious groups, while supporting the work of the United Nations in maintaining peace.³⁴

Thus, the implementation of youth policies in higher education institutions that contradict the principles of Article 13 of the Covenant can be considered a violation of the right to education. This particularly applies to the incorporation of militaristic elements in educational activities, which not only fail to promote “understanding, tolerance, and friendship among all nations” but also actively prepare youth to participate in Russia’s aggressive wars. Russian

30 <https://tools.youthforum.org/youth-rights-info-tool/the-united-nations-and-youth-rights/>, archive <https://archive.ph/Ax54y>

31 <https://documents.un.org/doc/resolution/gen/nr0/218/00/pdf/nr021800.pdf>, archive <https://archive.ph/oL5Sz>

32 <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g16/404/44/pdf/g1640444.pdf>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/tSrUG>

33 https://www.right-to-education.org/sites/right-to-education.org/files/resource-attachments/CESCR_General_Comment_13_en.pdf, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/VN6lq>

34 <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-economic-social-and-cultural-rights>

youth policy blatantly disregards Ukrainian cultural identity and instead fosters the assimilation of population in the TOT of Ukraine, imposing Russian identity. Such actions are in direct contradiction to the principle of the “full development of the human personality”.

However, as this report will demonstrate, Russian youth policy, while implemented within secondary and higher education institutions, extends far beyond their scope.

First and foremost, Russia, as an occupying power, is limited in its authority to apply its domestic legislation within the occupied territories of Ukraine. It is obligated to respect the existing laws and, as far as possible, maintain the institutions that were functioning prior to the occupation.³⁵ Therefore, the very act of imposing Russian legislation on youth policy, as well as the establishment of Russia-controlled organisations – such as “ministries of youth policy” – in the occupied territories, aimed at promoting “Russian patriotism”, can be regarded as a violation of Article 43 of the Hague Convention.³⁶

One of the objectives of Russian youth policy is to prepare young people for service in the Russian army and to increase motivation for joining the armed forces of the Russian Federation. As a result of forced passportisation in the TOT, young Ukrainian citizens are subjected to compulsory conscription into the Russian army.³⁷ It is important to recall that the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War prohibits the conscription of individuals into the armed forces of the occupying power, as well as any propaganda promoting voluntary enlistment (Article 51).³⁸

Russia’s policy of altering the demographic composition of the occupied territories, including encouraging Russian citizens to move to these areas and work within the occupying authorities (such as the case of the “Ministry of Youth Policy” in occupied Kherson region), can be classified as a violation of the fundamental principle of occupation as a temporary regime, which does not permit significant changes. This Russian policy may be considered a violation of Article 49 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, which prohibits the occupying power from transferring its own civilian population into the territory it occupies. Furthermore, the mass relocation of Russians to the TOT and the deportation of Ukrainians from these areas could likely be regarded as a war crime under Article 8 (2)(a)(vii) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and as a crime against humanity under Article 7 (1)(d).

Methodology

Areas of study: youth policy of the Russian Federation in the occupied territories of Ukraine, aimed at Russification, indoctrination, and militarisation of children and youth, involving them in actions supporting Russia’s military aggression against Ukraine, the eradication of Ukrainian identity, and the assimilation of the population in the occupied territories. The information presented in this report is intended to document the crimes of the Russian Federation and combat the disinformation it spreads.

35 <https://zmina.info/articles/yak-rosiya-porushuye-pravo-na-osvitu-pid-chas-okupacziyi-kvalifikacziya-za-mizhn-arodnym-pravom/>

36 [IHL Treaties - Hague Convention \(IV\) on War on Land and its Annexed Regulations, 1907](#)

37 Yale HRL, Forced passportization in Russia-occupied areas of Ukraine, 2023.

38 https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Youth-movements-as-the-instrument-of-indoctrination-and-militarization_Almenda.pdf

The report includes information from the following sections: an overview of youth policy in the Russian Federation, an overview of youth policy in the occupied territories of Ukraine, and a coverage of the main actors implementing Russian youth policy in the occupied territories of Ukraine.

Sources of Information Used

The monitoring is based on information gained from:

- state authorities of Ukraine;
- reports of civil society organisations;
- open sources of the temporarily occupied territories;
- Russian sources;
- publications of local media in the temporarily occupied parts of the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol;
- information published in social media.

The report includes information on the youth policy of the Russian Federation in the TOT of Ukraine gathered from 30 September 2022 to 15 November 2024.

Limitations

In the course of this study, the authors used only sources available to them. The data found on the Vkontakte social network, as well as from Russian sources, were used to prepare the report. This is due to the fact that after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, most of the information from the occupation authorities was published on this social network, so it is now virtually the only possible source to obtain the necessary information.

The main focus of the study is the youth policy of Russia in the occupied territories of Ukraine since 30 September 2022, the day when certain parts of the Zaporizhzhia, Kherson, Luhansk, and Donetsk regions were formally “incorporated” into the federal subjects of the Russian Federation.³⁹ While the attempt to annex these territories is illegal and does not grant Russia sovereignty over them,⁴⁰ following the signing of the annexation treaty by Vladimir Putin on 30 September 2022, Russian legislation began to be applied in these areas. In the context of territories that had been occupied by Russia prior to this period (certain parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, as well as the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol), events up to 30 September 2022 are presented in a condensed form.

39 <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/09/30/statement-by-the-members-of-the-european-council/>, archive <https://archive.ph/j1MUS>

40 <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1129047>, archive <https://archive.ph/qxwWx>

II. Main Part

1. Youth Policy in the Russian Federation

1.1. General Overview

The idea and necessity of developing a state youth policy was first expressed by the researcher of Russian youth issues, I.M. Illinsky, back in 1986 during the period of “perestroika”, when the Soviet system began to collapse. This date is commonly considered the starting point for the development of youth policy in modern Russia. During “perestroika”, the Pioneer movement⁴¹ and Komsomol,⁴² which had been the main tools of state policy in youth environments, lost their relevance, leading to the need for a new conceptual approach.⁴³ However, as mentioned earlier, the actual creation of youth policy as a tool for educating young people in the “correct” patriotic spirit began under President Vladimir Putin in the 2000s. This development was partly a response to the democratic revolutions in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan. It was Putin who decided to revive old Soviet-era traditions, reintroducing practices of indoctrinating children and youth in state-sponsored organisations, similar to the Pioneer movement and Komsomol, which had been prominent during the Soviet period.

Youth policy is mentioned in the highest law of the Russian Federation. Specifically, paragraph “e” of Part 1, Article 72 of the Russian Constitution establishes that matters relating to education, science, culture, physical culture and sports, and youth policy are under the joint jurisdiction of the Russian Federation and its constituent entities.⁴⁴ The Russian Constitution also identifies children as a primary focus of state policy, particularly in terms of fostering patriotism and citizenship among them.⁴⁵ It is important to note that Russian legislation de-

41 The first Pioneer squads were established in the USSR in 1922. The formally voluntary All-Union Pioneer Organisation united children and teenagers aged 9–10 to 15 years. From 1924, it was named after Vladimir Lenin. The Pioneer movement ceased to exist with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Read more at the following link: https://lb.ua/world/2022/07/20/523769_rosii_stvorili_onovlenu_pioneriyu.html, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/1Llle>

42 The name *Komsomol* is a shorthand derived from the full Russian title of the organisation *Kommunisticheskiy Soyuz Molodyozhi*, which translates to the *Communist Union of Youth*. The Russian Communist Union of Youth (RKSM, in 1926 renamed as the All-Union Leninist Communist Youth League, or VLKSM) was established by the Bolsheviks with the primary goal of creating a foundation for educating and preparing a “combat reserve” for the Communist Party. Recruiting personnel for the party and Soviet apparatus was essential for the functioning and perpetuation of the “Red regime” in the future. In this context, Komsomol was envisioned as a “school of communism” to indoctrinate young people with the appropriate ideology and replenish the ranks of “fighters for socialism”. More details are available at the following link: <https://tyzhden.ua/partyia-skazala-nado/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/S7kbk>

43 <https://vmo.rgub.ru/files/report-937-2.pdf>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/71jpo>

44 https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_28399/c6e42f15d1b028b04b556f3f9ca32433ae2cc969/, archive <https://archive.ph/9Pw5q>

45 https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_28399/95c44edbe33a9a2c1d5b4030c70b6e046060b0e8/, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/gmBuW>

fines children as individuals under the age of 18,⁴⁶ which means that senior school pupils, as one of the youth groups (ages 14–18), are subject to the normative and legal acts concerning patriotic education for children in the Russian Federation.

The main regulatory legal act governing youth policy in the Russian Federation is the specialised law passed in 2020. This act defines the basic principles of youth policy in Russia and sets the corresponding directions for the activities of federal subjects. In 2024, an initiative by the State Duma of the Russian Federation proposed the addition of Article 7.2, titled “Patriotic Education of Youth,” which grants authorities at various levels the power to develop measures aimed at fostering “citizenship, patriotism, continuity of traditions, respect for national history, and the historical and cultural heritage of the peoples of the Russian Federation, as well as shaping young people’s readiness to fulfil their constitutional duty to defend the Motherland”. Additionally, Russian authorities are tasked with supporting the activities of centres for patriotic education, military-patriotic organisations, and other associations, as well as monitoring the effectiveness of patriotic education.⁴⁷ As of the time of writing this report (November 2024), the amendment had been approved in its first reading by the Russian Parliament. A second reading vote and presidential signing are required before it comes into force.⁴⁸

However, in the updated youth policy strategy, approved in 2024 and succeeding the “Fundamentals of State Youth Policy of the Russian Federation until 2025,” a focus on militarism emerges. Thus, patriotic education for young people is to include the formation of “a strong patriotic consciousness, a sense of loyalty to their Motherland, and readiness to fulfil their civic duty and constitutional obligations to protect the interests of the Motherland”.⁴⁹ The main tool for implementing the strategy is the new national project of the Russian government, “Youth and Children”, developed in 2024.⁵⁰

The Strategy views youth policy as an integral part of state policy, aimed at “the formation and development of a patriotic, highly moral, and responsible generation of Russian citizens capable of ensuring the sovereignty, competitiveness, and further development of Russia”. Interestingly, among the challenges facing Russian youth, the authors of the strategy mention the “devaluation of channels and mechanisms for transmitting traditional Russian spiritual and moral values and guidelines”, the expansion of the “Western lifestyle and consumption style” (cosmopolitanism, apoliticality, deviation), including via the internet, and the spread of radicalism, neo-Nazism, and other destructive ideologies.⁵¹ To address these “problems”, a whole network of state bodies, institutions, and organisations operates in Russia, which will be described below.

46 https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_19558/8ecbe3314ad9e500bfb90273b6c736f7e0e78429/, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/8LfU>

47 <https://www.vedomosti.ru/society/articles/2024/09/12/1061720-zakonoproekt-menyayuschii-zakon-o-molo-dezhnoi-politike>, archive <https://archive.ph/6nay1>

48 <https://sozd.duma.gov.ru/bill/716309-8>, archive <https://archive.ph/ldGQS>

49 <http://static.government.ru/media/files/jBrmuji7WMLGB0FtXWhrMlzKFCglgq07.pdf>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/LXaT6>

50 <https://lenta.ru/news/2024/08/29/strategiyu/?ysclid=m3fsc8rkw9714446441>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/4W-FIQ>

51 https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_484654/a0e9c3103be7062936e2ea43df02e2b-734f853f7/, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/rw9yd>

1.2. Organisations Responsible for Youth Policy in the Russian Federation

The two main federal executive authorities responsible for implementing the state youth policy in Russia are the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation and the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs (Rosmolodezh).⁵²



The Russian Ministry of Science and Higher Education creates and implements state policy and regulatory frameworks in the field of youth policy. Within this Ministry, the Department

⁵² Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of 21 January 2020 No. 21 (ed. 08.08.2022) "On the structure of federal executive authorities". https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_343385/, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/louB2>

Rosmolodezh is a contracted name derived from "Rossiyskaya molodezh", meaning "Russian Youth"

⁵³ Including those that unlawfully operate in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine

of State Youth Policy and Educational Work has been established.⁵⁴ As of the time of writing this report, the department is headed by acting director Denis Savenkov,⁵⁵ who directly oversees the activities of the department responsible for patriotic education of youth.⁵⁶ Additionally, the Council for the Implementation of State Youth Policy operates under the Ministry of Science and Higher Education – an advisory body established to ensure interaction between various authorities and institutions in the implementation of youth policy.⁵⁷ The Council is chaired by the Minister of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation, Valery Falkov. It was under Falkov's tenure that work on patriotic education in higher educational institutions was intensified, including the appointment of vice-rectors for youth policy and educational work in Russian (and Russia-controlled) higher education institutions.⁵⁸ Falkov is also one of the responsible persons for the “University Sessions” program, which encourages children from the temporarily occupied territories to enrol in Russian universities, as well as promoting the russification, indoctrination, and militarisation of Ukrainian teenagers.⁵⁹

The Federal Agency for Youth Affairs (Rosmolodezh) is the main federal executive body responsible for moral and patriotic education.⁶⁰ Rosmolodezh oversees civic and patriotic education of young people.⁶¹ The bulk of funding for youth policy, which is more than 90%, is allocated to Rosmolodezh – for example, in the current year of 2024, more than 54 billion rubles (96% of the youth policy budget) was allocated.⁶²

Representatives of youth and children's public associations are included in the working processes of the relevant departments of the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia and Rosmolodezh. Each of these bodies has established mechanisms for interaction with the aforementioned associations. Specifically, Rosmolodezh holds weekly meetings with the leaders of more than 30 youth and children's public associations, and representatives of these associations participate annually in nationwide youth educational forums organised and conducted by Rosmolodezh. Rosmolodezh also maintains the Federal Register of Youth and Children's Associations that receive state support.⁶³

In the Russian Federation, the Association of Public Organisations “National Council of Youth and Children's Associations of Russia” has been operating since 1992. The Association represents the Russian Federation, together with the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia, in the Council on Youth Affairs of the CIS member states, as a permanent member of the Council since its foundation. It holds consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations and is a member of the UN's Major Group for Children and Youth.⁶⁴

54 Order of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation No. 1188 of 14 December 2023 “On Approval of the Regulations on the Department of State Youth Policy and Educational Activities of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation”: <https://rulings.ru/acts/Prikaz-Minobrnauki-Rossii-ot-14.12.2023-N-1188/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/A2pMr>

55 https://minobrnauki.gov.ru/about/deps/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=81136, archive <https://archive.ph/idoJ3>

56 <https://minobrnauki.gov.ru/about/deps/dgmpispsvsvo/opvm/>, archive <https://archive.ph/M32cS>

57 <https://www.minobrnauki.gov.ru/press-center/news/novosti-ministerstva/27144/>, archive <https://archive.ph/FsF3F>

58 <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/17742133>, archive <https://archive.ph/OCdIT>

59 Read more about the ‘University Sessions’ programme in the analytical material by the NGO “CCE Almenda”: https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Univer_EN.pdf

60 https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_77318/b10ec4649937faec7536ec6500529f01afc09325/, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/yrK9q>

61 https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_77318/787fb4c2791bd29c43215361d876a183bfe6e8b0/, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/pNJZw>

62 <https://almenda.org/en/finansuvannya-molodizhnoi-politiki-v-rosii/>

63 <http://surl.li/evopaz>, archive <https://archive.ph/zqucq>

64 <http://surl.li/evopaz>, archive <https://archive.ph/zqucq>

The largest children's and youth organisation is the Movement of the First, established under the federal law "On the Russian Movement of Children and Youth" signed by Putin on 14 July 2022. It is noteworthy that the introduction of this bill to the State Duma was timed to coincide with the 100th anniversary of Soviet Pioneer movement. The list of founders of the "Movement of the First" includes 26 largest children's and youth organisations, including the Russian Movement of Schoolchildren, which has more than 3 million members; the paramilitary organisation "Young Army", created by the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation with 1.406 million members; the project "Big Change", which has 5 million members; and the military-patriotic centre "Vympel" (Pennant). All these organisations are involved in the development of youth policy in Russia and the territories it occupies.⁶⁵ Since September 2024, the "Movement of the First" has been headed by Artur Orlov,⁶⁶ a participant in the war against Ukraine and Russia's military operations in Syria.⁶⁷ Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion and at least until 2023,⁶⁸ Orlov commanded a tank battalion of the 90th Guards Tank Division.⁶⁹ According to the Insider, two soldiers from this division are suspected by Ukrainian law enforcement agencies of gang-raping a pregnant woman on the TOT of Ukraine, who subsequently lost her child, during the occupation of Kyiv region in the spring of 2022.⁷⁰ He was awarded the Order of Courage (2022) and the Gold Star Medal (2022) for his services in the so-called "special military operation".⁷¹



https://iy.kommersant.ru/Issues.photo/NEWS/2024/09/14/KMO_111307_59615_1_t241_211028.jpg

65 https://lb.ua/blog/koalitsiia_ua5am/585136_ruh_pershii_nova_pioneriya.html, archive <https://archive.ph/g0mai>

66 <http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/document/0001202409140014>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/XdPQn>

67 <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/7136509>, archive <https://archive.ph/Uktil>

68 <https://mirmol.ru/obshchestvo/dvizhenie-pervyh-vozglavil-geroj-rossii-artur-orlov/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/SiO1N>

69 https://znanierussia.ru/articles/%D0%9E%D1%80%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%B2_%D0%90%D1%80%D1%82%D1%83%D1%80_%D0%92%D0%B0%D0%BB%D0%B5%D1%80%D1%8C%D0%B5%D0%B2%D0%B8%D1%87, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/gMh9q>

70 <https://theins.ru/news/271453>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/SVyG6>

71 <https://www.vedomosti.ru/politics/articles/2024/09/14/1062207-kto-takoi-artur-orlov>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/d5vZk>

The 'Movement of the First' is directly related to youth policy in the TOT. Thus, the movement should contribute to the implementation of state policy in favour of children and youth, organise leisure activities for children and youth; create equal opportunities for the comprehensive development and self-realisation of children and youth. Participation in the movement should form the worldview of children and youth based on "traditional Russian spiritual and moral values, achievements of Russian and world culture, as well as the development of love and respect for the "Fatherland", a sense of personal responsibility for their own destiny and the destiny of the "Fatherland",⁷² the desire for self-realisation in Russia and the development of Russian society and the state.⁷³

As mentioned above, the movement was initially created as a modern version of the Pioneer organisation, so the participants' age was originally limited to 18 years. However, since January 2024, young people up to the age of 25 can join the movement. This means that "Movement of the First" now includes both schoolchildren and student, i.e. two youth groups that are the focus of this study.⁷⁴

Another important actor in the implementation of youth policy is the All-Russian Military-Patriotic Social Movement "Young Army", created in 2016 on the initiative of Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu for people aged 8 to 18. The main objective of the movement is to educate children and young people in patriotism and to raise the prestige of military service. It is noteworthy that the first branch of the "Young Army" was established on 24 May 2016 during the teleconference "Moscow-Sevastopol-Volgograd-Samara".⁷⁵ In the context of this study, it should be noted that the militarisation activities of the "young Army" are aimed at young people aged 14-18 who are eligible for conscription into the Russian army upon reaching the age of majority. As of the time of writing this report, "Young Army" branches were opened in all regions of Ukraine occupied by Russia. Investigations by Ukrainian journalists have revealed that former "Young Army" cadets from the TOT (who have already reached the age of majority) are now taking part in hostilities against Ukraine on the side of the Russian Federation. Some of them have already been killed.⁷⁶ The head of the "Young Army" is a Russian athlete Nikita Nagorny.

1.3. The Main Directions of Youth Policy in the Russian Federation

One of the tasks of the state national policy of the Russian Federation is to form in children and young people at all stages of the educational process an "all-Russian civic identity, patriotism, civic responsibility, a sense of pride in the history of Russia, and the education of a culture of interethnic communication based on respect for the honour and national dignity of citizens, traditional Russian spiritual and moral values".⁷⁷

72 https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_421798/21fe609dcb064480ddcfa6335381a-c843aab4410/, archive <https://archive.ph/dqA0c>

73 <https://bit.ly/4ggERfO>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/4TIHS>.

74 <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/19864977>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/6yRrX>

75 https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Youth-movements-as-the-instrument-of-indoctrination-and-militarization_Almenda.pdf

76 <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/skhemy-ukrayinski-dity-yunarmiya-viyina/33203644.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/I6p5N>

77 <http://pravo.gov.ru/proxy/ips/?docbody=&nd=102161949>, archive <https://archive.ph/UOMYu>

The state national policy of the Russian Federation includes measures that do not directly concern young people, but nevertheless should be implemented in relation to them. One of them is the following directions on “strengthening the all-Russian civic identity, taking into account the spiritual, moral and cultural values of the peoples of the Russian Federation”:

- fostering civic consciousness, patriotism, civic responsibility, and a sense of pride in Russia’s history based on traditional Russian spiritual and moral values;
- supporting public initiatives aimed at patriotic education of children and youth;
- organising visits by children and young people to historical and cultural heritage sites (historical and cultural monuments) of the peoples of the Russian Federation, memorial sites, hero cities and cities of military glory;
- preventing attempts to falsify Russian history;
- creating optimal conditions for the use of the Russian language as the state language of the Russian Federation.⁷⁸

The primary directions of youth policy, as stipulated in the relevant legislation, are as follows:

- education of citizenship, patriotism, continuity of traditions, respect for national history, historical, national and other traditions of the peoples of the Russian Federation;
- ensuring cross-national (inter-ethnic) and inter-confessional harmony in the youth environment, prevention and deterrence of extremism in the activities of youth associations;
- organisation of leisure, recreation, youth rehabilitation, creation of conditions for physical culture and sports, promotion of healthy lifestyles of young people;
- support for the activities of youth public associations;
- promoting youth participation in voluntary (volunteer) activities.⁷⁹

The Russian strategy for the implementation of youth policy lists more than 30 main tasks for the implementation of youth policy at the federal level. The list includes fairly neutral provisions, such as promoting healthy lifestyles, improving reproductive health, supporting young scientists, people with disabilities, and talented youth. More interesting, however, are the clauses that are directly related to the formation of Russian identity, patriotism, and preparation for military service in the Russian armed forces. These tasks include, in particular:

- Ensuring the continuity of traditional Russian spiritual and moral values.
- Promoting the Russian language to strengthen the all-Russian identity.
- Attracting and stimulating the presence of young people in the territories threatened by depopulation and loss of economic potential (demographic problems were stated,

78 <http://pravo.gov.ru/proxy/ips/?docbody=&nd=102161949>, archive <https://archive.ph/UOMYu>

79 <https://base.garant.ru/400156192/8b7b3c1c76e91f88d33c08b3736aa67a/#friends>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/6Z4jW>

in particular, by the so-called “ministries of youth” of the occupied Donetsk and Luhansk regions).

- Ensuring the presence of state symbols of the Russian Federation in all spheres of youth life to form an “all-Russian civic identity”.
- Promoting the study of history based on “reliable facts”, according to the Russian interpretation of historical events.
- Engaging young people in “culture and historical memory”.
- Formation of citizenship and patriotism among young people using the method of “service learning”, i.e. engaging them in Russian volunteer initiatives.
- Engaging young people in supporting combatants and veterans and their families, including participants in the Russian-Ukrainian war.
- Promotion of military service and development of a system of social incentives for combatants, including those who participated in the so-called “special military operation”.
- Development of pre-conscription training in educational institutions of all levels.⁸⁰

That is, these directions include all the tools for eradicating identity: russification, indoctrination, and militarization, through which Russia is trying to turn young Ukrainian citizens into exemplary Russians.⁸¹

80 https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_484654/86043452a9808c16e1556755d272ee85343e308e/, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/2wHcQ>

81 <https://almenda.org/en/rosijska-sistema-znishhennya-identichnosti-ukrainskix-ditej-na-tot-sxema/>

2. Youth Policy in the TOT

2.1. TOT of the AR of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol

2.1.1. General Description

In March 2014, the Russian Federation announced the annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol, which was condemned by the international community.⁸² Since then, the unlawful process of integrating Ukrainian Crimea and Sevastopol as another federal subject of the Russian Federation has begun, including the issue of youth policy. On 18 December 2014, the so-called head of the Republic of Crimea approved the decree No. 522-U 'On Approval of the Concept of Patriotic and Spiritual and Moral Education of the Population in the Republic of Crimea'. The concept states that after "joining" the Russian Federation, the peninsula's executive bodies should quickly recreate the system of patriotic education that has been consistently formed in the Russian Federation since 2001 (i.e., since the beginning of Putin's rule) and ensure its effective functioning in relation to children and youth. The result of the implementation of the Concept should be the formation of a system of patriotic education that promotes the development of 'love for the Fatherland' (i.e. Russia), a sense of civic duty, respect for public service and service in the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation.⁸³

The legal basis for youth policy in occupied Crimea and Sevastopol is the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the Federal Law "On Youth Policy in the Russian Federation", and other federal laws.⁸⁴ The local acts include the Constitution of the "Republic of Crimea", the Charter of occupied Sevastopol, other legal and local acts adopted to implement youth policy, and municipal acts.

In 2020, a programme of patriotic education in occupied Crimea was approved, which was aimed, inter alia, at developing an infrastructure to support volunteerism and improving the system of patriotic education through patriotic, spiritual and moral activities, promoting the development of the youth movement and the work of public associations and non-profit organisations on patriotic education of adolescents and youth.⁸⁵

According to Federal State Statistics Service of Russia, as of 01.01.2023, the population of the TOT of the AR of Crimea aged 14–35 is 472,366 people.⁸⁶ The total amount of funding for 2023 under the Programme was RUB 398,457.55 thousand (almost USD 4 million).⁸⁷

82 <https://press.un.org/en/2014/ga11493.doc.htm>, archive <https://archive.ph/jnpuV>

83 <https://bit.ly/4gcVNE8>, archive <https://archive.ph/Yl4zK>

84 <https://docs.cntd.ru/document/406014168?ysclid=lyep0mirew752082750>, archive <https://archive.ph/VEqCQ>

85 <http://surl.li/bfnbjd>, archive <https://archive.ph/OER1A>

86 <https://82.rosstat.gov.ru/folder/27537?fbclid=IwAR3K3IulukPpuAUcbBs55vCVHFJ8vRssWxQvxZJRvjG76GphsvmN-6q9hiiE#>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/FK8vt>

87 https://gkmp.rk.gov.ru/uploads/gkmp/container/2024/05/28/2024-05-28-08-50-21_1.pdf, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/JjcQE>

In April 2022, a specialised law on patriotic education in occupied Crimea was approved. According to the law, the implementation of the youth policy of the Republic of Crimea is ensured, in particular, by the development and adoption of regulatory legal acts aimed at creating conditions for the development of young people's self-realisation in various spheres of life, and at the civil, patriotic, spiritual and moral education of young citizens for the benefit of the Russian Federation.⁸⁸

According to Federal State Statistics Service of Russia, at the beginning of 2023, 151,066 people aged 14 to 35 lived in occupied Sevastopol, accounting for 27% of the total population of Sevastopol.⁸⁹ In 2023, RUB 28.978 million was allocated for the implementation of youth policy. In 2023, more than 700 youth events were held with a total coverage of more than 82 thousand young people.⁹⁰

In occupied Sevastopol, a separate area of youth policy is the formation of patriotism. This includes fostering interest in and respect for the traditions, customs and culture of the peoples of the Russian Federation among young people, engaging them in the work of commemorating the memory of 'defenders of the Fatherland' (i.e. Russians), organising and conducting search operations by youth search teams to identify unknown military graves, developing a set of educational and special programmes and innovative methods for patriotic education of young people; cooperation with the media on programmes that form and develop "a sense of patriotism, pride in the history of the Motherland, and responsibility for its future" among young citizens.⁹¹

2.1.2. Organisations

At the end of 2019, the State Committee for Youth Policy of the Republic of Crimea was established as an independent executive body and the youth policy infrastructure was formed under its jurisdiction.⁹²

Currently, the infrastructure of youth policy in occupied Crimea is formed by:

- The State Committee for Youth Policy of the Republic of Crimea, which is an executive body of state power that carries out state administration and regulatory oversight in the field of state youth policy, controlled and accountable to the "Head of the Republic of Crimea" and the "Council of Ministers of the Republic of Crimea".⁹³
- The State Budgetary Educational Institution of Additional Education of the Republic of Crimea "Regional Centre for Preparation for Military Service and Military and Patriotic Education";
- State Autonomous Institution of the Republic of Crimea "Resource Centre for Supporting Volunteerism in the Field of Safety Culture and Disaster Relief";

88 <http://crimea.gov.ru/textdoc/ru/8/act/277z.pdf> , archive <https://archive.ph/wip/fveox>

89 <https://82.rosstat.gov.ru/folder/27485#>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/uLYfW>

90 https://sevzakon.ru/view/kontrolnaya_deyatelnost/otchety_pravitelstva_goroda/upravlenie-po-delam-molo-dezhi-goroda-sevastopolya/otchyoty/, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/9dNvK>

91 https://sevzakon.ru/view/laws/bank/2021/zakon_n_655_zs_ot_26_07_2021/tekst_zakona/, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/OTYeP>

92 <https://docs.cntd.ru/document/570781098?ysclid=m2ebj71bnl780697761§ion=text>, archive <https://archive.ph/msx2s>

93 https://gkmp.rk.gov.ru/uploads/txteditor/gkmp/attachments/d4/1d/8c/d98f00b204e9800998ecf8427e/php2Ws-WaN_681.pdf, archive <https://archive.ph/6dwxp>

- The Autonomous non-profit organisation “House of Youth”;
- Youth centres in municipalities of the Republic of Crimea;
- The regional branch of the all-Russian public and state organisation ‘Voluntary Society for Assistance to the Army, Air Force and Navy of Russia’ in the Republic of Crimea;
- The regional branch of the all-Russian public and state movement of children and youth “Movement of the First” of the Republic of Crimea;
- Various socially oriented non-profit organisations and volunteer movements, including the aforementioned “Young Army” 94 and the Krympatriot Centre. The Krympatriot Centre directly prepares children and youth of occupied Crimea for military service: it opens clubs and sections for basic military training in schools, conducts military field training and organises military-patriotic camps for children.⁹⁵

In 2023, the year-round educational and methodological centre for military and patriotic education “Avangard” was opened, and 3 patriotic shifts were held on its basis for 300 children and young citizens of pre-conscription age, i.e. senior school pupils.⁹⁶ During these sessions, Crimean schoolchildren underwent pre-conscription training,⁹⁷ and were taught about “Novorossiya” as historically Russian land,⁹⁸ including with the participation of the “Young Army”.⁹⁹



<https://goo.su/fqgl0n>

94 More information about activities of the Young Army in occupied Crimea can be found in the materials prepared by the NGO “CCE ‘Almenda’”: https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Youth-movements-as-the-instrument-of-indoctrination-and-militarization_Almenda.pdf

95 <https://investigator.org.ua/ua/investigations/265399/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/wwz6v>

96 <https://docs.cntd.ru/document/570781098?ysclid=m2ebj71bnl780697761§ion=text>, archive <https://archive.ph/msx2s>

97 <https://vesti-k.ru/news/2023/10/02/100-starsheklassnikov-iz-evpatorii-poluchayut-voenno-patrioticheskoe-vospitanie/?ysclid=m3imfckhps887106113>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/CwDv3>

98 https://vk.com/wall-81675082_77820, archive <https://archive.ph/kHRHg>

99 https://vk.com/wall-217363296_2962, archive <https://archive.ph/AHOHG>

In order to engage young people in parliamentary activities, the Youth Parliament of the Republic of Crimea operates as a collegial, advisory and consultative body under the State Council of the Republic of Crimea on a voluntary basis.¹⁰⁰ The Chairman of the Parliament since February 2022 is the Head of the Youth Committee of Crimea, Aleksey Zinchenko.¹⁰¹ Although this body is advisory, the head of the “Committee on Information Policy, Information Technology and Communications of the Youth Parliament of Crimea”, Kristina Fadeeva, has repeatedly travelled to the occupied Donetsk region as a representative of the parliament with “humanitarian aid”.¹⁰²

In order to train and promote young professionals to work in the civil service, the Youth Government of the Republic of Crimea was established as a voluntary advisory collegial body.¹⁰³ This Government holds meetings with local officials to encourage children and young people to work for the occupation authorities,¹⁰⁴ presents gifts to children of the participants of the so-called ‘special military operation’,¹⁰⁵ and holds a drawing competition among schoolchildren in occupied Crimea to show their love for Russia.¹⁰⁶

On 20 June 2014, the “Department for Youth and Sports of the Government of Sevastopol” was established by the order of the “Governor of Sevastopol”. The structural subdivisions of the Department for Youth Affairs of Sevastopol include the Department for the Implementation of Youth Policy and Support of Youth Initiatives, Civic and Patriotic Education and Development of Volunteering and Organisational Work.¹⁰⁷

In 2024, a “Youth Centre”¹⁰⁸ was established in Sevastopol, which, among other things, hosted the congresses of Russian pedagogical units in 2024.¹⁰⁹ Children from the “new territories” came to the youth centre to weave camouflage nets for the Russian military.¹¹⁰

In occupied Crimea and Sevastopol, the “Movement of the First” is actively working, including with the support of the “State Committee for Youth Policy of the Republic of Crimea”.¹¹¹ They organise numerous patriotic events, including the handing out of Russian passports during the “We are Russian citizens!” campaign.¹¹²

100 <http://crimea.gov.ru/mprk/about>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/bhtkp>

101 <https://crimeapress.info/spiker-vzroslogo-gossoveta-rk-vstretilsya-s-aktivom-molodezhnogo-parlamenta-kryma/>, archive <https://archive.ph/YHaxQ>

102 https://vk.com/wall-187993858_13076, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/LNcVS>

103 <https://docs.cntd.ru/document/406014168?ysclid=lyep0mirew752082750>, archive <https://archive.ph/VEqCQ>

104 https://vk.com/wall-199568704_500, archive <https://archive.ph/0tpW1>

105 https://vk.com/wall-199568704_483, archive <https://archive.ph/w45TM>

106 https://vk.com/wall-199568704_481, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/AOj4z>; https://vk.com/wall-199568704_472, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/Oz8hy>

107 <https://um.sev.gov.ru/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/Gneyp> <https://sev.gov.ru/government/podrazdeleniya/organy-ispolnitelnoy-vlasti/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/rBI7Y>

108 https://sev.gov.ru/files/iblock/197/lmzodjk2fng50n42cpscope4fj6f80ny/27_MP.pdf, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/ajGOa>

109 https://sev.gov.ru/info/news/241574?sphrase_id=3688841, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/RJKPY>

110 https://sev.gov.ru/info/news/241996?sphrase_id=3688841, archive <https://archive.ph/Cejtc#selection-1965.291-1965.341>

111 https://vk.com/wall-153744445_33047, archive <https://archive.ph/2LTNA>

112 https://vk.com/wall-101503754_25021, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/YaP4o>

2.1.3. Examples of Youth Policy Implementation Measures

It should be noted that this report does not aim to list all the activities conducted by the Russian occupation administrations due to their sheer number. In this section, we aim to illustrate the diversity of Russian youth policy in the TOT of Ukraine through selected relevant examples.

■ **Fostering civic engagement and patriotism among young people through the “service learning” methodology, namely by involving them in Russian volunteer initiatives.**

Volunteerism is also the basis of the work of the international headquarters of the “WEARETOGETHER” movement, which supports the participants in the so-called “special military operation” and their families. The “Youth House” oversees projects such as “PolitZaVod” and “Sickle and Youth”, which create opportunities for rural residents to engage in political activities.¹¹³

The youth of Sevastopol actively participate in events and projects aimed at supporting the participants of the so-called “special military operation”, as well as helping the new territories of the Russian Federation. In May 2023, as part of the programme “Humanitarian Missions #WEARETOGETHER”, 35 volunteers from Sevastopol took part in a humanitarian mission to Zaporizhzhia region to help 2,000 citizens who had been temporarily displaced to the city of Berdiansk.¹¹⁴

■ **Development of pre-conscription training in educational institutions at all levels**

Russians are actively militarising Crimean children and youth in educational institutions. In secondary schools, five-day military-patriotic training camps are organised for senior school pupils,¹¹⁵ where they receive basic military training,¹¹⁶ as well as competitions among young men.¹¹⁷



For the second time, the Crimean Federal University held a military-patriotic relay race “Strength of Spirit” among students of the peninsula.¹¹⁸

<https://goo.su/s7bMThZ>

113 <https://new.crimiz.ru/rubriki/89-gossovet/22135-vladimir-konstantinov-vovlechenie-molodjzhi-v-reshenie-vzroslykh-problem-glavnaya-zadacha>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/HfEin>

114 https://sevizakon.ru/view/kontrolnaya_deyatelnost_otchety_pravitelstva_goroda/upravlenie-po-delam-molodezhi-goroda-sevastopolya/otchyoty/, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/9dNvK>

115 https://vk.com/wall-177557250_25752, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/dwuTT>

116 https://vk.com/wall31591420_2602, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/N8PG9>

117 https://vk.com/wall-196982714_1131, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/NWtpT>

118 <https://cfuv.ru/news/v-kfu-opredelili-silnykh-dukhom-studentov-na-voenno-patrioticheskoy-ehstafete?ysclid=m-2ka21600239810407>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/XrV1P>

Promotion of military service and development of a system of social incentives for combatants, including participants in the so-called “special military operation”;

Crimean children and youth are actively engaged in supporting the so-called “special military operation”. As part of the “ZOV of Youth” (Call of Youth) project by the Volunteer Support Resource Centre, activities include weaving camouflage nets, creating tactical stretchers, and 3D modelling items that assist in performing combat tasks on the front lines.¹¹⁹ Crimean youth were also involved in the “Rubezh” competition of the People’s Front in the Voronezh Oblast of the Russian Federation, where active servicemen of the Russian Ministry of Defence acted as mentors.¹²⁰



Russian military personnel are promoted through the programme “Dialogue on Equal Terms”, such as meetings with members of the so-called “special military operation”.¹²¹

<https://goo.su/sZWQO>

Ensuring the continuity of traditional Russian spiritual and moral values.

Russian traditional values are spread through the coordination of the highest governing bodies of the occupied peninsula. It is worth noting that the occupation administration has a special “Public Coordination Council for Spiritual, Moral, Patriotic Education and Pre-Conscription Training of Citizens” under the leadership of Igor Mykhailichenko.¹²² The so-called governor of the occupied Sevastopol, Mikhail Razvozhayev, headed the commission on “Culture and Traditional Spiritual and Moral Values” in the renewed State Council of the Russian Federation. According to Razvozhayev himself, preserving traditional Russian spiritual and moral values is one of the most important tasks for modern Russia, which is currently under pressure from the “collective West”.¹²³

The youth play a significant role in this effort, particularly by organizing the forum “Istoki” (Origins), where one of the sessions, titled “Family Values,” is aimed at fostering “generational continuity and strengthening family traditions and values”.¹²⁴

119 https://vk.com/wall-187993858_18885, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/oLdg7>

120 https://vk.com/wall-187993858_19199, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/sxTuo>

121 https://vk.com/wall-187993858_19533, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/rD8Sa>

122 <https://www.crimea9.ru/ru/news/20240321/26558.html?ysclid=m3iqtv87oq200390795>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/sblye>

123 <https://tass.ru/politika/21425745>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/O4mRi>

124 <https://news-cr.ru/society/2024/07/11/20923.html?ysclid=m3iro6vbm2101601240>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/n9bi5>

Promotion of the Russian language to strengthen the all-Russian identity.

The Russian language is an instrument of Russian expansion and part of the “Crimean scenario”.¹²⁵ Thus, measures aimed at ensuring the dominance of the Russian language in the public space are actively promoted in occupied Crimea. For example, educational institutions host the All-Russian Olympiad “Symbols of Russia. Russian Language: History of Writing”.¹²⁶ In Simferopol, the collection “Youth, speak Russian!” published by the “State Committee for Youth Policy of the Republic of Crimea” was presented, which includes words from youth slang collected by schoolchildren and students.¹²⁷ There are also grandiose events dedicated to the birthday of the Russian poet Alexander Pushkin (which is celebrated as the Day of the Russian Language), such as the International Festival “Great Russian Word”.¹²⁸

Ensuring the presence of state symbols of the Russian Federation in all aspects of youth life to foster a “all-Russian civic identity”.

Russian symbols are actively imposed on Crimeans during celebrations. In secondary education institutions, the Russian flag is raised every Monday, and in general, Russian symbols are demonstrated as a marker of affiliation with the Russian Federation.¹²⁹



<https://goo.su/qjBz6>

125 <https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Analytical-report-The-%E2%80%98Crimea-scenario-how-the-Russian-Federation-is-destroying-the-Ukrainian-identity-of-children-in-the-occupied-territories.pdf>

126 https://vk.com/wall-193042825_5219, archive <https://archive.ph/uZ1b2>

127 <https://crimea.ria.ru/20230607/govorit-po-russki-v-krymu-molodezh-zamenila-slang-klassikoy-1129242858.html?ysclid=m3ir9r5qkx484669239>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/xqp4N>

128 https://vk.com/wall-199568704_457, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/6Yz9I>

129 https://vk.com/wall-214910068_201347, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/2hBdl>



<https://goo.su/O2UpSjU>

Promoting the study of history based on “accurate facts” in line with the Russian interpretation of historical events.

The Russian military meets with children and young people as part of the project “Dialogues with heroes”, which concerns not only the current so-called “special military operation” but also wars that Russia has waged in the past, such as the Afghan war.¹³⁰

Textbooks edited by Medinsky and Torkunov¹³¹ were introduced to teach the “correct” version of history, which, in particular, describe “the coup d’état in Ukraine, the preconditions for Crimea’s return to Russia, the chronology of the so-called “special military operation” and the reactions of Western countries”.¹³²

The “correct history” should also be taught in higher education institutions. Thus, in October 2023, an order from the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation mandated the compulsory study of a Russian history course comprising 144 hours, 80% of which are to be conducted as in-class lectures and seminars.¹³³

Engaging youth in “culture and historical memory”.

Children and young people are actively engaged in commemorating Russia’s memorable dates to foster a sense of “ownership” of Russian history. For example, the government of occupied Sevastopol reported on the “Candle of Memory”, “Fire Paintings”, “Dream Ships”, “Field Post”, and “St. George’s Ribbon” campaigns, which not only promote Russian narratives

¹³⁰ https://vk.com/wall-49388164_95903, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/w4rZR>

¹³¹ https://vk.com/wall-80821398_95866, archive <https://archive.ph/GqIN1>

¹³² <https://rk.gov.ru/ru/article/show/19650>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/E3EsT>

¹³³ <https://cfuv.ru/news/ob-obnovljenom-kurse-istorii-rossii-dlya-studentov-aspirantakh-prepodavatelyakh-i-vy-zove-sovremennosti-intervyu-natali-karmazinojj>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/OZxWC>

but also aim to foster an emotional connection to Russian memorials.¹³⁴ For this purpose, memorial plaques honouring the fallen “heroes” of the so-called “special military operation” are being unveiled on the walls of secondary and higher education institutions, as detailed in a separate study by the NGO “CCE ‘Almenda’”.¹³⁵

Crimean youth are also being integrated into Russian culture. For example, the “Pushkin Card” program provides 5,000 rubles for visits to cultural and art institutions overseen by the Russian occupation authorities, promoting narratives favourable to them. Russian sources report that Crimean schoolchildren and students have purchased 100,000 tickets and visited over two dozen cultural institutions, including museums.¹³⁶

2.2. “New territories” after 30 September 2022

After the official proclamation of the “reunification” of four Ukrainian regions with Russia, all the largest Russian NGOs began their work in these territories. For example, entire groups of “experts and opinion leaders” travelled to the occupied parts of Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Luhansk and Donetsk regions for “direct dialogue with young people and information work”. In total, millions of rubles are allocated from the Russian federal budget for the development of youth policy.¹³⁷

Interestingly, Russian researchers have already managed to describe the profile of youth in the “newly occupied territories”, which took place when children left for the “University Session’ programme”.¹³⁸ The first life trajectory (“returning to a small homeland”) is associated with young people’s plans to go to study in large Russian cities (Moscow, St. Petersburg, Rostov-on-Don) and then return to their home region; the second life trajectory (“relocation to another federal subject of the Russian Federation”) is associated with obtaining education in one of the large cities of Russia, but does not involve returning to their home region. Russian experts note the widespread prevalence of this trajectory among the youth of the occupied territories and express “concern about its implications for the new regions”.¹³⁹

Therefore, as part of the programme for the comprehensive development of youth policy “Region for the Young”, more than 276 million rubles have been allocated for 2025 to create conditions for youth self-realisation and the creation of 8 modern youth spaces in the four occupied regions. In occupied Kherson region, work is underway to create the Tavrida Art Residence, which is scheduled to open in March 2025. More than 88 million rubles have been allocated to the occupied Donetsk region, more than 80 million to Luhansk region, another 69 million will be allocated to Kherson region and 38 million to Zaporizhzhia region.¹⁴⁰

134 https://sevzakon.ru/view/kontrolnaya_deyatelnost/otchet_y_pravitelstva_goroda/upravlenie-po-delam-molodezhi-goroda-sevastopolya/otchyoty/, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/9dNvK>

135 https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/COMMEMORATIVE-PLAQUES-AS-THE-EVIDENCE-OF-CRIMES-OF-THE-RUSSIAN-FEDERATION-IN-CRIMEA_CCE-ALMENDA.pdf

136 <https://crimea.ria.ru/20240206/pushkinskaya-karta-v-krymu-kuda-chasche-vsego-khodit-molodezh-respubliki-1134723348.html?ysclid=m3iowkl3h0531332831>, archive <https://archive.ph/mXjFe#selection-3541.38-3543.158>

137 <https://repost.press/news/molodezhnaya-politika-v-novyh-regionah>, archive <https://archive.ph/ezfYy>

138 Learn more about the “University Sessions” program in the material by the NGO “CCE ‘Almenda’”: https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Univer_EN.pdf

139 <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/obraz-buduschego-v-subektivnom-prostranstve-politiki-novyh-grazhdan-rf-opyt-empiricheskogo-issledovaniya-molodezhi-novyh-regionov/viewer>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/fjzcz>

140 <http://vybor-naroda.org/lentanovostey/271131-novye-regiony-poluchat-276-mln-rublej-na-razvitie-molodezhoj-politiki.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/5lVqI>

Regional ministries of youth policy have been established in all four “new subjects of the Russian Federation”: “Ministry of Youth Policy of the Donetsk People’s Republic”, “Ministry of Youth Policy of the Luhansk People’s Republic”, “Ministry of Youth Policy of the Zaporizhzhia Region”, “Ministry of Youth Policy of Kherson Region”.¹⁴¹ As of the time of writing this report, there are no relevant laws in Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions.

Rosmolodezh also extends its influence to the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine. For example, a school for leaders and volunteers of the Zaporizhzhia regional branch of the All-Russian public movement “Victory Volunteers” has been established, where participants are taught how to effectively organize and promote patriotic actions and events, as well as how to work with veterans of the so-called “special military operation” and pass on their stories to young people. In reality, this initiative is training personnel to disseminate Kremlin propaganda and narratives among youth in the TOT.¹⁴²

2.2.1. Main Section

TOT of Donetsk region

A new version of the law “On Youth Policy” of the so-called Donetsk People’s Republic was adopted on 27 September 2022, that is, before the official “reunification” with the Russian Federation. However, most of the provisions of this law replicate those of the corresponding Russian law. For instance, the main directions of youth policy implementation include fostering civic responsibility, patriotism, continuity of traditions, and respect for historical, national, and other traditions of peoples – though without direct references to the Russian Federation.¹⁴³ A week after the adoption of the law, on 29 September 2022, the “Ministry of Youth Policy of the Donetsk People’s Republic” was established.¹⁴⁴

At the time of preparing the report (November 2022), the youth infrastructure of the occupied Donetsk region includes the relevant Ministry, state budgetary institutions “Centre for the Development of Youth Initiatives of the Republic”, “Centre for Social Support of Youth” and the municipal budgetary institution “Donetsk City Youth Centre”, as well as public youth non-profit organisations and associations.¹⁴⁵

In December 2023, the Programme “Comprehensive Development of Youth Policy in the Donetsk People’s Republic” was approved, aimed, among other things, at the formation of national and state identity and patriotic feelings.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴¹ <http://surl.li/evopaz>, archive <https://archive.ph/zquc9>

¹⁴² <https://almenda.org/en/finansuvannya-molodizhnoi-politiki-v-rosii/>

¹⁴³ <http://npa.dnronline.su/2022-09-27/415-iins-o-molodezhnoj-politike.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/SY9Ha>

¹⁴⁴ On the Approval of the Program “Comprehensive Development of Youth Policy in the Donetsk People’s Republic” <http://npa.dnronline.su/2024-01-12/postanovlenie-pravitelstva-dnr-113-14-ot-25-12-2023-g-ob-utverzhdanii-programmy-kompleksnoe-razvitie-molodezhnoj-politiki-v-donetskoj-narodnoj-respublike.html?ysclid=m2fb4uu2of486962121>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/1ZxsZ>

¹⁴⁵ <http://npa.dnronline.su/2024-01-12/postanovlenie-pravitelstva-dnr-113-14-ot-25-12-2023-g-ob-utverzhdanii-programmy-kompleksnoe-razvitie-molodezhnoj-politiki-v-donetskoj-narodnoj-respublike.html?ysclid=m2fb4uu2of486962121>, archive <https://archive.ph/1ZxsZ>

¹⁴⁶ On the Approval of the Program “Comprehensive Development of Youth Policy in the Donetsk People’s Republic” <http://npa.dnronline.su/2024-01-12/postanovlenie-pravitelstva-dnr-113-14-ot-25-12-2023-g-ob-utverzhdanii-programmy-kompleksnoe-razvitie-molodezhnoj-politiki-v-donetskoj-narodnoj-respublike.html?ysclid=m2fb4uu2of486962121>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/1ZxsZ>
http://doc.dnronline.su/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Postanov_N113_14_25122023.pdf, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/JEP8u>

TOT of Luhansk region

The specialised law on youth policy was approved on 5 November 2024, i.e. after the “integration” into Russia. Therefore, the text of the law directly refers to the Federal Laws “On Youth Policy in the Russian Federation” and “On State Support for Youth and Children’s Public Associations”. The objectives of youth policy are to foster “citizenship, patriotism, continuity of traditions, respect for national history, historical, national and other traditions of peoples” specifically of the Russian Federation.¹⁴⁷

According to the provision, the “Ministry of Youth Policy of the Luhansk People’s Republic” is an executive body responsible for implementing state youth policy, regulatory and legal regulation, coordination and oversight of activities, international cooperation, and other functions assigned in accordance with the legislation of the Russian Federation. In its activities, the Ministry is also guided by Russian laws, including the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal constitutional laws, federal laws and other regulatory legal acts, the Constitution of the Luhansk People’s Republic and other local laws.

One of the tasks is to create, in cooperation with public associations representing the interests of children and young people, conditions for ensuring a healthy lifestyle, moral and patriotic education of young people, and the realisation of their professional opportunities. The ministry also takes measures within its authority to ensure that young people are educated based on “spirituality and patriotism”, as well as to involve the younger generation in public and state processes and integrate them into the international community.¹⁴⁸

On the establishment of the Regional Coordination Council under the head of the LPR for cooperation with the “Movement of the First”.¹⁴⁹ This council reported that the movement’s branches operate in 502 educational institutions in all municipalities, and that over 27,000 people took part in the actions.¹⁵⁰ The council also announced a new project, “Luhansk Character”, which aims to create “Squads of the First”, united by a common goal and socially useful work, similar to the Soviet Octobrists and Pioneers.¹⁵¹

TOT of Kherson region

The objectives of youth policy in occupied Kherson region include “education of citizenship, patriotism, continuity of traditions, respect for national history, historical, national and other traditions of the peoples of the Russian Federation”.¹⁵²

The “Ministry of Youth Policy” of occupied Kherson region is to be guided in its activities by Russian legislation, including the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal constitutional laws, federal laws, acts of the President of the Russian Federation and the Government of

147 <https://nslnr.su/zakonodatelstvo/normativno-pravovaya-baza/23644/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/GCMeq>

148 <https://minmol.lpr-reg.ru/page/static/35d27077-3207-4286-aad7-14385dbf1933>, archive <https://archive.ph/eAaMr>

149 https://minmol.lpr-reg.ru/minmol/uploads/custom_documents/25.04.2024/1714044307090_v55y784imds.pdf, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/bTWKI>

150 https://vk.com/wall-170890505_5273, archive <https://archive.ph/Q0z8Y>

151 <https://t.me/mypervielnr/7013?single>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/gcHGl>

152 Decree of the Governor of Kherson Oblast No. 80-u dated 4 August, 2023, “On the Establishment of the Ministry of Youth Policy of Kherson Oblast” <https://khogov.ru/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/80-u-06.pdf>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/2Etr6>

the Russian Federation, and is coordinated by the “First Deputy Governor of Kherson Oblast for Internal Policy”.

The “Ministry”, in particular, coordinates activities on military-patriotic education and pre-conscription training of citizens in Kherson region.¹⁵³ It should be noted that most of the employees of the “Ministry”, including the “Minister”, are citizens of the Russian Federation.¹⁵⁴

In 2024, the Youth Centre “Patriot” was established based on the “Ministry” with the aim of fostering patriotism among the youth, engaging them in socially significant practices, projects, and volunteer activities, as well as supporting volunteer initiatives, organisations, and movements.¹⁵⁵ Thus, as part of the joint career guidance project called “Gos.Start.Dialog” conducted by the centre with the so-called “ministry”, “career guidance” meetings are held with Russian military commissars.¹⁵⁶

In 2024, the State Autonomous Institution “House of Youth” was established to provide vocational guidance services for young people, including as part of the project “Gos.Start.Dialogue”.¹⁵⁷ The “House of Youth” also organises events to support participants in the so-called “special military operation”¹⁵⁸ and meetings with Russian historians who teach Ukrainian children the “correct” interpretation of historical events.¹⁵⁹

It is noteworthy that the first regional branch of the “Movement of the First” was opened in Kherson region with the participation of Russian Minister of Education Sergey Kravtsov at school No. 1 and the medical college.¹⁶⁰

TOT of Zaporizhzhia region

The main objectives of the youth policy in the TOT of Zaporizhzhia region are the formation of “spiritual and moral values, patriotic education; formation and establishment of patriotic views and a sense of loyalty to the Motherland, pride in their country, respect for the military past of Zaporizhzhia region, its shrines, traditions of service to the Motherland, respect for the history and culture of Zaporizhzhia region, traditions of the people, Zaporizhzhia Cosacks”.¹⁶¹

153 Decree of the Governor of Kherson Oblast No. 80-u dated 4 August, 2023, “On the Establishment of the Ministry of Youth Policy of Kherson Oblast” <https://khogov.ru/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/80-u-06.pdf>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/2Etr6>

154 <https://t.me/depobrherson/8427>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/KH6Ji>

155 Order of the Government of the Kherson Oblast dated 08.02.2024 No. 07-rp. “On the establishment of the autonomous non-commercial organisation “Youth Centre ‘Patriot’” <https://gov.khogov.ru/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2024/02/07-rp-24.pdf>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/oZwxD>

156 <https://www.herson.kp.ru/online/news/6043582/>, archive <https://archive.ph/6nvYi>

157 Order of the Government of the Kherson Oblast dated 19.04.2024 No. 51-rp “On the establishment of the state autonomous institution of the Kherson Oblast ‘House of Youth’” <https://gov.khogov.ru/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2024/05/51-rp-24.pdf>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/DK4Y5>

158 <https://t.me/DOMmolodegi/48>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/hLRYj>

159 <https://t.me/DOMmolodegi/89>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/rsx8U>

160 https://vk.com/wall-30558759_354259, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/SgiCM>

161 <https://zo.gov.ru/docs/show/1475>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/25Gj5>

Youth policy in the occupied Zaporizhzhia region is carried out by a specialised ministry.¹⁶² The Ministry of Youth Policy of Zaporizhzhia region is guided by the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal constitutional laws, federal laws, decrees and orders of the President of the Russian Federation, resolutions and orders of the Government of the Russian Federation, and regulatory and other acts of federal executive bodies.

Interestingly, a separate area of youth policy activity is cooperation with the media on programmes that form and develop in young citizens “a sense of patriotism, pride in the history of Zaporizhzhia region and the Russian Federation. Implementation of measures to form civic patriotism among young people, assistance in preparing young people for military service”.¹⁶³

In addition, the “Youth Policy Council” operates in the occupied Zaporizhzhia region as an advisory and consultative body established to coordinate the implementation of youth policy. In its activities, the Council is guided by Russian laws, in particular the Constitution and federal laws of the Russian Federation, as well as the regulations of the occupation administration.¹⁶⁴

More than 20 youth organisations operate in the occupied territory of Zaporizhzhia region, including the regional organisation of the Russian Youth Union, which is responsible for the project “Staff School of the Union of Youth” for young people aged 16 to 35.¹⁶⁵

2.2.2. Examples of Youth Policy Implementation Measures

It should be noted that this report does not aim to list all the activities conducted by the Russian occupation administrations due to their sheer number. In this section, we aim to illustrate the diversity of Russian youth policy in the TOT of Ukraine through selected relevant examples.

■ **Increasing interest in the study of the history, culture, and languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation, as well as significant historical events that became the foundation of national holidays and commemorative dates related to the implementation of the state national policy of the Russian Federation.**

In general, in the occupied territories, much attention is paid to the celebration of Russian memorial dates, which is held with great pomp. For example, in the occupied territories, children and young people are required to participate in the celebration of Russia Day, Slavic Literature and Culture Day, Victory Day, National Unity Day, Heroes of the Fatherland Day (9 December), Russian Constitution Day, and the Day of ‘reunification’ with the Russian Federation. Interestingly, the occupied Zaporizhzhia region has a Day of the Revival of the Russian Cossacks, which is celebrated on 30 June.

162 <https://zo.gov.ru/docs/show/1475>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/25Gj5>

163 <https://minmol.zo.gov.ru/docs/show/17>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/HHcld>
Document dated 12 January 2024

164 <https://gubernator.zo.gov.ru/docs/show/498?ysclid=m3ps6fed9y346406332>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/JU0xe>
Document dated 28 December 2023, Number: 211-y

165 https://vk.com/wall-222520886_582, archive <https://archive.is/wip/jlQ3F>

■ **Preservation and enrichment of the spiritual, historical, and cultural heritage, as well as the potential of the multinational people of the Russian Federation (the Russian nation), through the promotion of ideas of patriotism, unity, and friendship among peoples.**

To implement this direction, youth participation in the All-Russian Forum of National Unity, the All-Russian Public Award “Pride of the Nation”, all-Russian thematic online lessons aimed at civic and patriotic education (as part of the federal project “Patriotic Education of Citizens of the Russian Federation”), participation in the interethnic cultural and educational project “We Are Russia”, and participation in the Youth Interethnic Forum “Russia is Our Common Home” in 2025 were encouraged.¹⁶⁶

To promote travel within Russia, the federal program “More Than a Journey” is being implemented in the temporarily occupied territory of Kherson region with the support of the “Ministry of Youth Policy”. Under the programme, young Kherson residents travel to Moscow, where they visit Red Square, the Kremlin and the international exhibition and forum “Russia”.¹⁶⁷ A delegation from the occupied Zaporizhzhia region also took part in the iVolga youth festival in the Samara region.¹⁶⁸



166 On approval of the Action Plan for the implementation in Zaporozhskaya Oblast in 2024-2025 of the Strategy of the State National Policy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025 <https://gubernator.zo.gov.ru/docs/show/494>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/lRAwz>

167 https://vk.com/wall-221973574_216, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/Ot5mj>

168 https://vk.com/wall-218383340_3286, archive <https://archive.is/wip/ZZibz>

■ **Popularisation of the Russian language to strengthen the all-Russian identity.**

The Russian occupation authorities are pursuing an active policy of Russification of Ukrainian children and youth. Thus, one of the policy directions in the occupied territories is “preservation and support of the Russian language as the state language of the Russian Federation and the languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation”. The occupation authorities organize events dedicated to the Day of the Russian Language, including a recitation contest for secondary school pupils in the Zaporizhzhia region to mark the birthday of the Russian poet Alexander Pushkin on 6 June.

■ **Ensuring the continuity of traditional Russian spiritual and moral values.**

The implementation of this direction is ensured through educational work. For example, in occupied Kherson region, a series of lectures entitled “We are part of one huge family – Russia” was held.¹⁶⁹ Aleksey Lavrentiev, the head of the Council of the Regional Branch of the “Movement of the First”, introduced the young people of Kherson region to the “Russian World”. Lavrentyev, in particular, spoke about the foundations of Russian state policy regarding the preservation and strengthening of traditional Russian spiritual and moral values, enshrined in 2022 by a decree of the President of the Russian Federation.¹⁷⁰

■ **Engaging and encouraging the presence of youth in territories threatened by depopulation and loss of economic potential.**

It should be noted that Russian youth policy also includes encouraging Russian citizens to relocated to the TOT of Ukraine. In 2022, Putin’s decree¹⁷¹ launched the #WEARETOGETHER humanitarian mission programme, in which selected programme participants are sent to the TOT. Each verified volunteer is entitled to compensation payments in case of injury (RUB 3 million) or death (RUB 5 million). In 2023, 194 missions were organised with the participation of 2,388 volunteers from 72 constituent entities of the Russian Federation. In 2024, 422 humanitarian missions were organised with the participation of 1,607 volunteers.¹⁷²

Children from the TOT are also actively encouraged to move to Russia to study, including special conditions for admission, based on the results of an interview without exams.¹⁷³ For schoolchildren in the TOT of Kherson region, studies at the National Research University “Higher School of Economics” (Moscow, Russian Federation) are being promoted.¹⁷⁴

169 <https://t.me/depobrherson/9408>, archive <https://archive.ph/AKshs>

170 <https://t.me/minmolXO/2947>, archive archive.ph/wip/RvnrK

171 Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of 30 April 2022 No. 247 „On support of volunteer activities in the territories of the Donetsk People’s Republic, Luhansk People’s Republic, Zaporozhskaya Oblast and Kherson Oblast“ <https://docs.cntd.ru/document/350287199>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/OENQu>

172 <http://surl.li/evopaz>, archive <https://archive.ph/zqucq>

173 https://vk.com/wall-217630752_3091, archive <https://archive.is/wip/GtmPh>

174 <https://t.me/depobrherson/8543>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/T4yqB>

■ Ensuring the presence of the state symbols of the Russian Federation in all areas of youth life to foster a unified Russian civic identity.

Russian state symbols are being actively imposed on TOT residents. As in the occupied Crimea, every Monday morning in secondary schools begins with the raising of the Russian flag. Russian state symbols are actively used at celebrations of Russian memorial dates.¹⁷⁵



<http://surl.li/xshqfs>

■ Promoting the study of history based on “reliable facts”.

The occupation administrations use historical memory as a tool to eradicate identity in the TOT. For example, in the town of Torez, during the games of the “Leaders of Youth Opinions” project organized by Rospatriotcenter, various quests were held related to Russian symbols, traditions, and significant milestones in history.¹⁷⁶ In Kherson region, local museums organise “educational” lectures for young people about the history of Russia.¹⁷⁷ In occupied Melitopol, a separate youth club operates on the basis of the multimedia complex “Russia is my history”.¹⁷⁸

■ Engaging young people in “culture and historical memory”.

As in occupied Crimea, the occupation administrations of the “new regions” actively involve children and young people in commemorative events, such as the “Memory Watch” and “Garden of Memory”, aimed at imposing historical narratives favourable to Russia.

¹⁷⁵ https://vk.com/wall738221096_1638, archive <https://archive.ph/Yjfkx>

¹⁷⁶ https://vk.com/wall-195434415_6178, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/BJ3w5>

¹⁷⁷ https://vk.com/wall-221973574_220, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/DRN3p>

¹⁷⁸ <https://vvesti.com/kultura/v-zaporozskoj-oblasti-park-rossia-moa-istoria-posetili-27-tysac-celovek>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/DZw0w>

■ **Fostering citizenship and patriotism among young people through the “service-learning” methodology.**

In occupied Donetsk region, in particular, the formation of a volunteer asset, promotion of an active civic position among the youth of the Republic and involvement of the younger generation in volunteer activities will be carried out. Young people are also involved through the implementation of measures to support the practice of volunteering in the Region of Good Deeds.¹⁷⁹

■ **Engaging young people in activities aimed at supporting participants and veterans of combat operations, as well as their families.**

It should be noted that, contrary to international law, the occupation administrations conscript and mobilise TOT residents. As part of the youth policy, a separate “programme of psychological assistance and career guidance for demobilised and commissioned participants of the so-called “special military operation” under the age of 35” is being implemented.¹⁸⁰ The Prime Minister of Russia, Dmitry Chernyshenko, also spoke separately with demobilised students – participants of the so-called “special military operation” from Donetsk region.¹⁸¹

■ **Popularisation of military service with the aim of fostering a sense of civic responsibility and patriotism among young people, and the development of a system of social incentives for combat participants, including those involved in the so-called “special military operation”.**

Young people are actively encouraged to join the Russian armed forces. Thus, teenagers aged 14 to 17 from Kherson region participated in the patriotic summer camp “Avangard”, which implements the additional programme “Time of Heroes” in tactical, drill and firearms training. The trips are organised by the Centre “Voin” (Warrior) with the assistance of the Ministry of Youth Policy and the Ministry of Education of Kherson region, and members of the Kherson region Duma (Council).¹⁸² A similar event was also organised for young people from Zaporizhzhia region at the military-patriotic forum “SVOi People”¹⁸³ (Own People) in Tver region.¹⁸⁴

Volunteer youth squads¹⁸⁵ also operate in the occupied territories, which, among other things, conduct tactical training sessions for young people.¹⁸⁶

179 http://doc.dnronline.su/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Postanov_N113_14_25122023.pdf, archive <https://archive.ph/JEP8u>

180 “On the approval of the Program ‘Comprehensive Development of Youth Policy in the Donetsk People’s Republic’” <http://npa.dnronline.su/2024-01-12/postanovlenie-pravitelstva-dnr-113-14-ot-25-12-2023-g-ob-utverzhdenii-programmy-kompleksnoe-razvitie-molodezhnoj-politiki-v-donetskoj-narodnoj-respublike.html?ysclid=m2fb4uu2of486962121>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/1ZxsZ>
http://doc.dnronline.su/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Postanov_N113_14_25122023.pdf, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/JEP8u>

181 https://vk.com/wall-195434415_5887, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/IQ1pY>

182 <https://vk.com/@-221973574-vremya-geroev-dlya-hersonskoi-molodezhi>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/mbKfX>

183 SVOi refers to the Russian abbreviation “CBO” – SVO, which stands for *Special Military Operation*. Thus, “SVOi People” refers to individuals associated with or supporting the so-called “Russian Special Military Operation” in Ukraine, emphasizing the personal or group connection to those involved in the operation. It is a term that reflects solidarity or alignment with the military effort.

184 https://vk.com/wall-218383340_3253, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/73wY0>

185 <https://t.me/YugMolodoj/19849>, archive <https://archive.ph/FIXV8>

186 https://t.me/DMD_ZO/466, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/olBP7>

■ **Development of pre-conscription training in educational institutions at all levels.**

The Russian occupation authorities militarise not only schoolchildren. For example, a drone racing masterclass was organised at the sports complex of the O.I. Kuindzhi Mariupol State University (established by the occupation administration of Mariupol) as part of the project “All-Russian Student League for Drone (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) Racing”.¹⁸⁷

■ **Education of youth in countering the spread of the ideologies of Nazism, nationalism, xenophobia, religious extremism, and terrorism.**

“Extremism” is understood as any resistance to the Russian propaganda machine, so measures are taken to combat dissent in the TOT in order to educate “obedient” citizens. For example, in Genichesk, a game “Patriots of Kherson Oblast” was held, aimed at “fostering patriotism, love for the Motherland, a sense of belonging to Russian culture and history”. The game was judged by Russian servicemen and employees of the regional office of the National Guard of Russia.¹⁸⁸

Young people from Zaporizhzhia region took part in a preventive discussion on extremism and terrorism. The lecture on anti-terrorism security was attended by activists from “#Yug-Molodoj” (Young South), “Victory Volunteers” and members of the “Volunteer Youth Squad”. Dmitry Matsevich, a representative of the “Ministry of Youth Policy”, spoke about important rules, answered questions, showed thematic videos and handed out information leaflets. The event was hosted by the “Ministry of Youth Policy” with the support of the “Main Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia in Zaporozhskaya Oblast” (Russian for “Zaporizhzhia region”).¹⁸⁹

■ **International cooperation**

The Russian occupation administrations claim to engage in international cooperation through so-called international friendship clubs. Such “friendship clubs” are reportedly established with Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovakia, along with planned educational initiatives involving Tajikistan.¹⁹⁰ It is important to note that collaboration with unrecognized republics constitutes a violation of international law

187 https://vk.com/wall-82287460_26171, archive <https://archive.ph/9zv6L>

188 https://vk.com/wall-214129347_23198, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/08y5X>

189 https://vk.com/wall-218383340_3310, archive <https://archive.is/wip/3KuPs>

190 <https://t.me/YugMolodoj/20064>, archive archive.ph/wip/qlhxs

III. Responsible persons

RUSSIAN OFFICIALS



<http://surl.li/oelnjl>

Ksenia Razuvaeva

Ksenia Denisovna Razuvaeva served as the head of Rosmolodezh until 14 August 2024,¹⁹¹ holding this position for three years. Prior to this, from 2018, she worked as part of the team of the First Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration, Sergey Kiriyenko, who was involved in youth policy projects. Before joining the Presidential Administration, she headed the federal state budget institution “Rospatriotcenter,” where she was responsible for organizing youth educational forums such as “Territory of Meanings on the Klyazma” and “Tavri-da” in occupied Crimea. The Russian government’s press service did not disclose the details of her dismissal but separately explained that Razuvaeva left of her own accord, and the decision “was dictated” by personal family circumstances.

Is under Ukrainian sanctions.¹⁹²



<http://surl.li/mwimre>

Denis Ashirov

Denis Valeryevich Ashirov was the acting head of Rosmolodezh from 14 August 2024 until the appointment of Grigory Gurov. He is currently the State Secretary and Deputy Head of Rosmolodezh.¹⁹³ In 2012–2013, he was the deputy director of the multifunctional youth cultural, business, and social centre “Sevastopol” of the Eastern Administrative District of Moscow. From 2014 to 2016, he held the position of deputy director of the resource centre for the development and support of

191 <https://fadm.gov.ru/news/kseniya-razuvaeva-pokinet-post-rukovoditelya-rosmolodyezhi-po-sobstven-nomu-zhelaniyu-/?ysclid=m3g86m75dt247689455>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/xheNB>

192 <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/644662/?ysclid=m3g86qpflu83699863>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/40Eqw>

193 https://fadm.gov.ru/agency/structure/?ELEMENT_ID=35819&ysclid=m3g7wqiyo2387808165, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/1UrBm>

the volunteer movement “Mosvolonter” (Moscow Volunteer). In 2016–2017, he worked in a similar role at the City Centre for Professional and Career Development. From 2017 to 2020, he was the head of the Moscow branch of the “Young Guard of United Russia”. In 2020, he became the head of the public reception office of United Russia in Moscow. On 14 April 2020, he was appointed the director of the Department of State Youth Policy and Social Projects in the Field of Higher Education at the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. In 2022, he became Deputy Head of Rosmolodezh.¹⁹⁴ He frequently travels on business to temporarily occupied territories, including unveiling a mural with Darya Dugina in Melitopol¹⁹⁵ and participating in the “YugMolodoj” forum in occupied Berdyansk.¹⁹⁶

Ashirov is actively involved in the cooperation of Rosmolodezh in the occupied southern territories. For example, he participated in organizing an event to train personnel for implementing youth policy in occupied Kherson region, where they learned from the Crimean experience.¹⁹⁷



<http://surl.li/havatz>

194 <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/6892615?ysclid=m3g7wtx8mt214595552>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/rP9xd>

195 https://vk.com/wall3711989_3717?ysclid=m3g7xfiro8844152445, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/ofxHU>

196 <https://www.gazeta.ru/social/news/2023/08/17/21094958.shtml?ysclid=m3g8ncyuhi266922306>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/Wfz73>

197 <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/19015567?ysclid=m3g8t5ce2v1694491>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/3wrJO>



<http://surl.li/nplvec>

Grigory Gurov

In September 2024, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin appointed Grigory Gurov as the new head of Rosmolodezh.¹⁹⁸ Previously, he served as the chairman of the “Movement of the First”. Gurov started his career as a specialist at a municipal youth centre, then worked his way up to become the deputy minister of science and higher education of Russia. He also worked in the Legislative Assembly of the Stavropol Krai and in the representation of the North Caucasus Federal District. In 2017, Gurov joined Rosmolodezh and, over the course of four years, rose to the position of deputy head.¹⁹⁹ He is currently under sanctions imposed by the USA, Switzerland, the EU, and Ukraine.²⁰⁰



<https://tass.ru/politika/20835697>

Dmitry Chernyshenko

Dmitry Chernyshenko is born on 20 September 1968, in Saratov. On 21 January 2020, he was appointed Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation by a Presidential Decree. On 14 May 2024, he was reappointed as Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation. He has been awarded the Order “For Merit to the Fatherland” II class, the Order of Friendship, the Order of Honour, the Order of St. Sergius of Radonezh II and III class, and the Golden Olympic Order.²⁰¹

Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Chernyshenko oversees general and secondary vocational education, as well as youth policy. This includes the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Sport, the Ministry of Construction, the Ministry of Economic Development, Rosmolodezh (Federal Agency for Youth Affairs), the Ministry of Education, and Federal Service for Supervision in Education and Science.²⁰²

For his active involvement, he was sanctioned by the EU, the USA, the UK, Canada, Switzerland, Japan, New Zealand, Australia,²⁰³ and Ukraine.²⁰⁴ Interestingly, despite Chernyshenko’s advocacy for limiting Western influence and preserving “traditional Russian values”, his own children received their secondary and higher education in the United Kingdom.²⁰⁵

198 <http://static.government.ru/media/files/WASULrQJWEGdOV1Qe6wpJgrwbOyFMPYw.pdf>, archive <https://archive.ph/icOiO>

199 <https://www.gazeta.ru/social/news/2024/09/14/23924881.shtml>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/uFsok>

200 <https://war-sanctions.gur.gov.ua/sanctions/persons/2390>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/BFmoP>

201 <http://government.ru/gov/persons/366/events/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/sjmsR>

202 <https://tass.ru/politika/20835697>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/y8Pvs>

203 <https://war-sanctions.gur.gov.ua/sanctions/persons/197>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/NQjI6>

204 <https://www.president.gov.ua/documents/4002022-42813>

205 <https://theins.ru/news/274641>, archive <https://archive.ph/TCAo0>

During Chernyshenko's tenure, Rosmolodezh will oversee the national project "Youth and Children" and coordinate the efforts of all relevant agencies and regions.²⁰⁶ It is worth noting that 458 billion roubles are set to be allocated to the "Youth and Children" project in 2025.²⁰⁷

APPOINTED OFFICIALS IN THE TOT

TOT of Donetsk region



<http://surl.li/qmtuca>

Kirill Makarov

Kirill Borisovich Makarov has served as the Minister of Youth Policy of the so-called "Donetsk People's Republic" since 2022.²⁰⁸ Born in Donetsk on 24 November 1994, he previously led the public organisation "Young Republic", and is currently a deputy of the "People's Council".²⁰⁹ In 2022, he was awarded the "Order for Courage" by Sergei Kiriyenko, the head of the administration of the President of the Russian Federation.²¹⁰

“The top priority for the youth of Donbas today is bringing victory closer. Because without it, there will be no youth policy, no peaceful life, and no future for our young people. Therefore, everything we do today must be aimed at supporting the front. First and foremost, this is volunteer work.”²¹¹

Makarov was notified by the Ukrainian authorities of suspicion regarding collaborationist activities and his involvement in the occupation administration (under Part 5, Article 111-1 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine) by the Donetsk Regional Prosecutor's Office.²¹² He is also subject to sanctions.²¹³

“Those who stayed here are great patriots of Donbas and Russia. When the liberation began, people understood that they were making history. They were the first to enter, the first to see, they help and create conditions for the residents of the liberated ter-

206 <https://xn--90aivcdt6dxbc.xn--p1ai/articles/news/dmitriy-chernyshenko-rosmolodezh-budet-rukovodit-natsproektom-molodezh-i-deti/?ysclid=m3fscdhk66815065832>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/fYJYE>

207 <https://www.pnp.ru/social/byudzheth-nacproekta-molodezh-i-deti-sostavit-458-milliardov-rublej-v-2025-godu.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/OvM4B>

208 http://doc.dnronline.su/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Ukaz_N872_29092022.pdf, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/3y3iO>

209 <https://prodonetsk.ru/news/obschestvo/makarov-kirill-borisovich-naznachenn-ministrom-molodezhnoy-politiki-donetskoy-naro.htm>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/3u3yo>

210 <https://www.donetsk.kp.ru/online/news/5045969/?ysclid=m3gbtp6xjr225334397>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/PFuN7>

211 <https://argumenti.ru/interview/2024/10/924222?ysclid=m3gc7qzw95587758524>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/WIAcX>

212 https://t.me/Donetsk_obl_prokuratura/2385, archive <https://archive.ph/lejTK>

213 <https://www.opensanctions.org/entities/NK-X7PTDMN5yk8mBj2BTxQRSE/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/gay1i>

*ritories so that they feel at home. It's some kind of mission, perhaps even the mission for which we were born and live. Maybe this is what it's all about – to be here today.*²¹⁴

TOT of Luhansk region



<https://luganmedia.ru/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/DSC0029-scaled.jpg>

Yulia Velichko

She has been the “Minister” of Youth Policy of the so-called “Luhansk People’s Republic” (LPR) since June 2023.²¹⁵ She was born in 1993 in Bilovodsk, Luhansk region. In 2011, she worked as a teacher-organiser at the Luhansk Regional Centre for the Development of Children’s Movement “Luhari”. She also worked as the Deputy Director of the “Centre for the Development of Children’s and Youth Movements” and Head of the “Youth Affairs Department, Sports and Youth Administration, Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Youth of the LPR”. Before her appointment, she was an advisor to the “Head of the People’s Council of the LPR”.²¹⁶

In November 2023, the Security Service of Ukraine announced that she was suspected of collaborationist activities under Part 5, Article 111-1 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine.²¹⁷ On 8 January 2024, criminal proceedings No. 761/307/24 were submitted for consideration to the Shevchenkivsky District Court in Kyiv.²¹⁸

“ On 7 September 2023, a Youth House was opened in Luhansk, covering more than 5,000 square metres, one of the most significant attractions in our republic, <...> where young people regularly spend their leisure time as well as work on their ideas and projects. <...> During its operation, around 150,000 young people have visited it. There is also a multimedia historical park “Russia – My History” operating at the centre.”²¹⁹

A meeting was held at the Youth House, opened during Velichko’s tenure, with curators of youth policy from the municipalities of the LPR. The discussion focused on infrastructure development, participation in grant competitions, collaboration with patron regions, and increasing the involvement of young people from Luhansk in Russian initiatives.²²⁰

214 <https://radiokp.ru/podcast/novorossiya-geroi-novogo-vremeni/728672?ysclid=m3gc835eth491071665>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/DcJ38>

215 <https://www.rusprofile.ru/id/1239400003688>, archive <https://archive.ph/ZdKAR>

216 <https://news-lugansk.ru/politics/2023/06/14/67108.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/tg7pM>

217 <https://t.me/SBUkr/10226>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/KkOeZ>

218 https://court.gov.ua/log_documents/78665919/2610/, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/d5BBB>

219 <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/22304633>, archive <https://archive.ph/L21Cg>

220 https://vk.com/wall3711989_3805, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/6sp14>

TOT of Zaporizhzhia region



<http://surl.li/iwpuvb>

Yegor Logunov

Yegor Andreevich Logunov has been the “Minister of Youth Policy of Zaporozhskaya Oblast” (Russian for “Zaporizhzhia region”) since March 2024.²²¹ Before moving to occupied Melitopol, he held the position of General Director of the company “Russtroy” in Simferopol. According to the “Mirotvorets” centre, his main involvement was in the smuggling of goods and cargo in the occupied territories of Ukraine.²²² After his appointment, he took part in sending Zaporizhzhia children on the “train of friendship” to Russia,²²³ participated in an event featuring a banner with Putin’s image,²²⁴ and also emphasised the positive aspects of involving Russian military personnel in the patriotic education for youth.²²⁵

“We understand that the war with guns and rifles will end, but the information war will continue for quite some time. Therefore, our younger generation, which will become the foundation of our country, must, without a doubt, be prepared for such challenges. They need to understand how to fight these phenomena when they encounter them and how to counteract these factors.”²²⁶



https://vk.com/wall-225185065_125

221 <https://www.rusprofile.ru/id/1249000000941>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/rHuvY>

222 [https://ria-m.tv/news/352791/kontrabandista_iz_kryima_prislali_v_okkupirovannyiy_melitopol_rukovodit_molodejyu_\(foto\).html](https://ria-m.tv/news/352791/kontrabandista_iz_kryima_prislali_v_okkupirovannyiy_melitopol_rukovodit_molodejyu_(foto).html) archive <https://archive.ph/wip/KM1UJ>

223 <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/21805897?ysclid=m3h8jd80vz872473154>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/8ROTq>

224 https://vk.com/wall-225185065_125, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/eXxGR>

225 https://vk.com/wall-225185065_101, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/e51uu>

226 <https://crimea-news.com/society/2024/11/01/1504005.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/qhCbK>



<https://bit.ly/3DdvJtP>

Anton Titsky

Anton Titsky (used to be the “Minister of Youth Policy” until January 2024)²²⁷ is currently the “First Deputy for Internal Politics” of the so-called “Governor of Zaporozhskaya Oblast”, Yevgeny Balitsky.²²⁸ He was born in 1990 in Volgograd and graduated from Kyiv University of Tourism, Economics, and Law. From the age of 14, he was an activist of the pro-Russian movement in Ukrainian Crimea, ran for the Ukrainian parliament, and headed the office of the “Russian Unity” party of the future Crimean Governor Sergey Aksyonov in Sevastopol.²²⁹ In 2014, he participated in the occupation of Crimea. From 2016 to 2019, he was the head of the Leninsky Municipal Department of Education of Sevastopol. He later held the position of advisor to the head of Rosmolodezh (the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs). From July 2022, he served as the “Minister for Youth Policy of Zaporozhskaya Oblast”.²³⁰ During a trip to Melitopol, he was introduced by Sergei Kiriyyenko, the First Deputy Head of the Administration of the President of Russia.²³¹

Ukrainian law enforcement has opened two criminal proceedings against Titsky. One concerns his activities in occupied Crimea,²³² while the other involves the indoctrination of youth in occupied Zaporizhzhia region, alongside the “Governor” Balitsky and the head of the “YugMolodoj” organisation, Yulia Klimenko.²³³ The cases are currently under consideration in Ukrainian courts.

227 https://zo.gov.ru/news/show/ministrom_zaporozhskoj_oblasti_po_molodezhnoj_politike_stal_anton_tickij?ysclid=Iza8avu3ev626844876, archive <https://archive.is/wip/4UEtR>

228 <https://t.me/balitskiy/166>, archive <https://archive.is/wip/5ikpE>

229 <https://war-proekt.media/chinovniki-iz-rossii-v-ukraine/person/ticky-anton-robertovich/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/zUbm2>

230 <https://www.zap.kp.ru/daily/27559.5/4883695/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/GsSvy>

231 <https://ruinform.com/page/anton-tickij-ja-uveren-cto-v-skorom-vremeni-k-nashej-komande-prisoedinijsja-vs-ja-molodezh-zaporozhskoj-oblasti>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/ryThu>

232 <https://suspilne.media/crimea/621137-ukraina-suditime-ministra-okupovanoi-castini-zaporizkoi-oblasti-z-krimu/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/Bv98z>

233 [https://ria-m.tv/ua/news/355638/melitopolskomu-gaulayteru-ebalitskomu-ta-dvom-yogo-zastupnikam-povid-omili-pro-pidozru-\(foto\).html](https://ria-m.tv/ua/news/355638/melitopolskomu-gaulayteru-ebalitskomu-ta-dvom-yogo-zastupnikam-povid-omili-pro-pidozru-(foto).html), archive <https://archive.ph/wip/gNplk>

TOT of Kherson region



https://vk.com/wall-225185065_125

Igor Astranin

He was born in Russia, near Astrakhan. At 23, he became an advisor to the Governor of Astrakhan Oblast, and at 25, he moved to work in the Moscow government. At 27, he began working as a political consultant for some regional heads in Russia and countries abroad. Since 2022, he moved to occupied Kherson region.²³⁴ He worked as the Vice-Rector for Youth Policy at Kherson State Pedagogical University, and later became the head of the “Ministry of Youth Policy of Kherson Oblast”.²³⁵ He is under sanctions imposed by Ukraine,²³⁶ Switzerland,²³⁷ and the EU.²³⁸

“No propaganda is more effective than a short trip to Crimea, Rostov, Moscow, or St. Petersburg. All the claims of Kyiv’s propaganda fall apart when confronted with the beauty and hospitality of any Russian city.”²³⁹



Sergey Chusov

Sergey Viktorovich Chusov²⁴⁰ is the head of the autonomous non-profit organisation (ANO) “Youth Centre ‘Patriot’” in occupied Kherson region. From 29 March 2022 to 25 August 2023, he served as the General Director of the ANO “Youth House” (TOT of Crimea).²⁴¹ Since 1 March 2024, he has been the director of the ANO “Patriot” in the TOT of Kherson region.²⁴² The organisation’s activities focus on implementing a range of measures aimed at patriotic and military-patriotic education for youth, conducting pre-conscription training, engaging young people in socially significant practices, projects, and

234 <https://tavria.tv/news/politics/ministrom-molodezhnoj-politiki-hersonskoj-oblasti-naznacheni-igor-astranin/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/2ehWu>

235 <https://ast-news.ru/node/astrakhanets-igor-astranin-na-postu-ministra-khersonskoy-oblasti-ot-mechaet-svoy-den-rozhdeniya/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/X3DTI>

236 <https://war-sanctions.gur.gov.ua/sanctions/persons/28523>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/BQWhB>

237 https://www.seco.admin.ch/seco/de/home/Aussenwirtschaftspolitik_Wirtschaftliche_Zusammenarbeit/Wirtschaftsbeziehungen/exportkontrollen-und-sanktionen/sanktionen-embargos/sanktionsmassnahmen/massnahmen-zur-vermeidung-der-umgehung-internationaler-sanktionen.html

238 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L_202400753

239 <https://t.me/xonewsru/10888>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/A0mz6>

240 <https://www.rusprofile.ru/id/1249500001046>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/kKDAY>

241 <https://www.tbank.ru/business/contractor/legal/1209100005400/history/1/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/yE21E>; https://vk.com/wall-69752927_136891?ysclid=m3hc3gd552901163706, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/oCUZe>

242 <https://www.rusprofile.ru/id/1249500001046>, archive <https://archive.ph/kKDAY>

volunteer (voluntary) activities.²⁴³ The ANO also operates a cyber club, which teaches young people to counter the “information war”.²⁴⁴ As part of its activities, the organisation involves youth in commemorating Russian historical dates²⁴⁵ and supporting participants in the so-called “special military operation”.²⁴⁶

TOT of the AR of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol

TOT of the AR of Crimea



<http://surl.li/vlwagd>

Aleksey Zinchenko

He is the head of the “State Committee for Youth Policy of the Republic of Crimea”.²⁴⁷

He was born on 24 February 1995 in the village of Don-skoye, Simferopol District. In 2017, he graduated with honours from the “Crimean Federal University named after V.I. Vernadsky”. From September 2017 to June 2020, he worked as an assistant to a deputy of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, dealing with issues in the Republic of Crimea. From July 2020 to August 2021, he served as the chief consultant to the Secretariat of the “United Russia” faction in the State Council of the Republic of Crimea. From August 2021 to July 2022, he was the deputy head of the Secretariat of the “United Russia” faction in the State Council of the Republic of Crimea. From November 2015 to February 2020, he was the head of the local headquarters of the Simferopol branch of the Crimean regional organisation of the All-Russian public organisation “Young Guard of United Russia”.²⁴⁸

“Today, young people demonstrate their conscious patriotism in practical ways: they participate in humanitarian missions, collect humanitarian aid, help our soldiers in the area of the special operation, and remember their past. They help their great homeland, Russia, and their small homeland, here and now.”²⁴⁹

243 <https://storage.yandexcloud.net/dobro-static/prod/docs/d4556d76-8fc9-53e1-616e-c464d551df0c/%D1%83%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B0%D0%B2.pdf>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/EJOuI>

244 <https://t.me/m2mxo/1405>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/L4thk>

245 <https://t.me/m2mxo/48>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/UL1nq>

246 <https://t.me/m2mxo/611>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/Fo30h>

247 <https://gkmp.rk.gov.ru/heads/9ab160bf-f5e0-47b8-97f7-010f94c337a0>, archive <https://archive.ph/RcDRT>

248 <https://gkmp.rk.gov.ru/heads/9ab160bf-f5e0-47b8-97f7-010f94c337a0>, archive <https://archive.ph/RcDRT>

249 https://vk.com/wall-187993858_19314, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/oy22z>

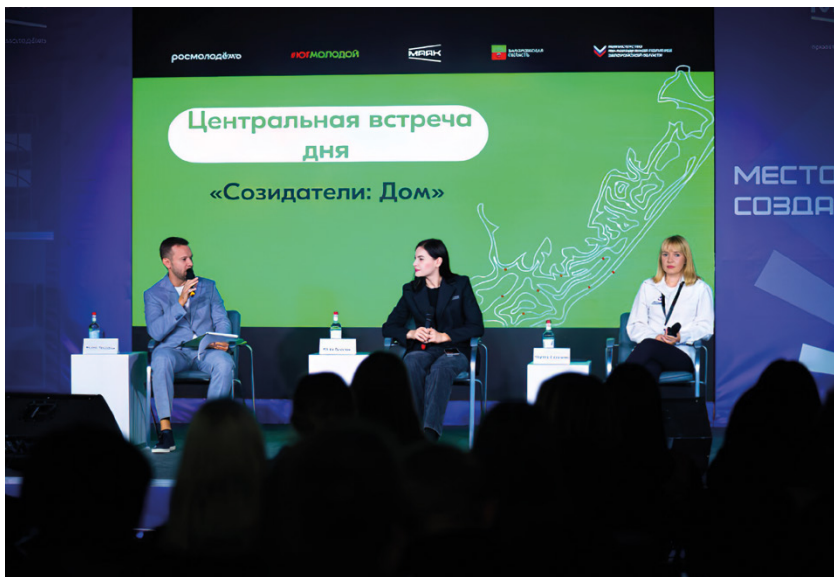
TOT of the city of Sevastopol



Marina Slonchenko

Marina Yurievna Slonchenko was born in the city of Sevastopol. At the time of writing this report, she heads the “Department for Youth Affairs of the City of Sevastopol”.²⁵⁰

During Slonchenko’s tenure, more than 700 youth-related events were held in occupied Sevastopol in 2023 alone, with a total of 72.5 million rubles allocated for the implementation of youth projects and programmes.²⁵¹ Slonchenko also positively evaluates and actively supports the involvement of young Crimeans in supporting the so-called “special military operation”, including making eco-bags, weaving camouflage nets, and collecting medical supplies for the front, as well as organising informal meetings with veterans of the so-called “special military operation”.²⁵² Slonchenko has also visited occupied territories, including Zaporizhzhia region, where she participated in a joint event with the “Minister of Youth Policy of the LPR” Yulia Velichko.²⁵³



https://minmol.zo.gov.ru/novosti/produktivnyj_den_nachinaetsya_s_poleznyx_vstrech

“Youth policy is a large ecosystem with many directions. What unites both young men and women is one thing – self-development and working for the good of Sevastopol and Russia”.²⁵⁴

²⁵⁰ <https://nts-tv.com/news/upravlenie-po-delam-molodyezhi-i-sporta-v-sevastop-48407/?ysclid=m3g9t-07wa5683450276>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/GdhV9>

²⁵¹ https://sevakon.ru/view/prensa/allnews/vtoroj_sozvyv/2024/aprel6/parlamentariyam-rasskazali-o-deyatelnosti-upravleniya-po-delam-molodezhi-v-2023-godu/, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/C8PQg>

²⁵² <https://www.sevastopol.kp.ru/daily/27591/4917087/?ysclid=m3g9tchrno668321138>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/TaqWs>

²⁵³ https://minmol.zo.gov.ru/novosti/produktivnyj_den_nachinaetsya_s_poleznyx_vstrech, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/bgz2>

²⁵⁴ <https://ruinform.com/page/sevastopol-gotovitsja-k-forumu-molodjozh-92>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/3EYqP>

Conclusions

1. The analysed materials provide solid grounds to assert that Russian youth policy in the occupied territories is aimed at eradicating Ukrainian identity and imposing Russian militarised patriotism. Overall, Russian youth policy can be characterised as a tool for fostering not an active citizen with a clear personal stance, but rather an obedient executor who does not question the tenets imposed by the state. Neither in the relevant law nor in the strategy (which is directly aimed at specifying the provisions of the law) is there any mention of, for instance, the development of critical thinking among citizens. Instead, only blind patriotism and a readiness to serve the “Motherland” and even die for it are proposed.
2. The development of militaristic patriotism among Russian youth is a dangerous trend for Ukraine as a whole, because, from kindergarten through university, Russians are being prepared for military service and war against “hostile states”, including Ukraine. However, this policy poses an even greater threat as a tool for imposing Russian identity in the territories occupied by Russia. In the context of youth, the main focus is on patriotism – specifically, fostering a sense of love for Russia as the only homeland, a readiness to serve it, and ultimately, to die in aggressive wars. Young people in the occupied territories are viewed by the Russian authorities purely as a resource: economic, labour, and human (which is why Ukrainian youth from the occupied territories are actively invited to study in Russian higher education institutions). Ultimately, they are also seen as a mobilization resource, which is why the Russian authorities actively promote service in the Russian army under contract and offer numerous benefits to former participants in the so-called “special military operation”.
3. Is contemporary international law capable of offering effective tools to protect the violated rights of Ukrainian youth in the temporarily occupied territories? On the one hand, young people are protected by the full range of international agreements related to human rights and international humanitarian law, which govern the laws and regulations of the occupation regime. For example, Russian youth policy, with its militaristic focus, is a clear violation of Article 51 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits the propaganda of military service in the armed forces of the occupying state and the forced mobilization of the population in occupied territories. Additionally, Russia’s policy of altering the demographic composition of the occupied territories, involving the mass resettlement of Russians to these territories and the deportation of Ukrainians, could likely be considered a war crime under Article 8(2)(a)(vii) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and a crime against humanity under Article 7(1)(d) of the same statute.
4. Although international human rights law does not contain specific guarantees for youth in international agreements, it still plays a significant role in the qualification of Russia’s unlawful actions in the occupied territories. For instance, Russia’s use of higher and secondary education to militarize youth and eradicate their national and cultural identity contradicts the educational objectives outlined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, to which Russia is a party. However, there are currently no mechanisms in international human rights law to hold accountable those who indoctrinate Ukrainian youth in the occupied territories. The lack of recognition of identity destruction as a serious human rights violation hinders the development of mechanisms for accountability, as well as global attention to the

issue. It was only after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine that sanctions were imposed on officials in occupied Crimea and Sevastopol, despite the fact that Russia began implementing the "Crimean scenario" of identity destruction back in 2014. The occupation of Ukrainian territories continues, and Russia's policies of Russification, indoctrination, and militarization are intensifying. The occupying authorities are making considerable efforts and directing substantial resources to ensure that Ukrainian youth forget their roots and begin to view Russia as their sole homeland. In turn, these processes will complicate reintegration and may create further conflicts in the future. Therefore, timely and proactive responses to the implementation of unlawful youth policies should be a priority both for Ukraine, which is already investigating these cases within national legal proceedings, and for the international community.

since 2011 from Ukrainian Crimea

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We are approaching the reintegration of the population of the (de)occupied territories and laying the foundations for guarantees of non-repetition.

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