

**“CRIMEAN SCENARIO 2.0”:  
HOW THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION  
IS ERADICATING UKRAINIAN  
IDENTITY IN CHILDREN IN  
OCCUPIED TERRITORIES**



**“Crimean Scenario 2.0: How the Russian Federation is Eradicating Ukrainian Identity in Children in Occupied Territories. Analytical Report” / M. Sulialina, O. Shapoval. — Kyiv: CCE “Almenda”, 2024. — 32 pp.**

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The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not reflect the official position of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic.



The Centre for Civic Education “Almenda” (CCE “Almenda”) is a non-governmental organisation registered in Yalta in 2011. Until 2014, the organisation’s priority area of activity was human rights education. In 2014, due to the occupation of Crimea, the organisation was forced to move to Kyiv. Currently, the organisation’s priority is to ensure the systematic collection of accurate, timely, verified data on grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict.

In preparing its monitoring reports, the CCE “Almenda” is guided by the principles of objectivity, reliability and timeliness.

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# Introduction

Since the beginning of the armed aggression against Ukraine in 2014, the Russian Federation has begun to implement a system aimed at eradicating the Ukrainian identity of children and youth in the territories it occupies.<sup>1</sup> Part of the system is the targeted destruction of the Ukrainian studies component in education, indoctrination, militarisation and propaganda of the culture of war and service in the armed forces of the Russian Federation. Russia implements this system through formal education, non-formal education, youth movements and an extensive network of camps. The responsibility for implementation lies with the federal state authorities of the Russian Federation, including the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Sports, the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs, as well as the occupying authorities in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine. This also includes local governments, educational institutions, cultural, art, cinema, and sports organizations, recreational facilities (including camps), educational and scientific organizations, youth and children’s groups, veterans’ organizations of the Russian armed forces, the public organizations, and traditional religious denominations.

The system of eradicating the Ukrainian identity of children in the temporarily occupied territories is deeply embedded in Russian educational and youth policy and is reflected in a number of regulatory documents, starting with federal laws on the regulation of relations in the field of education (Federal Law of 05.05.2014 No. 84-FZ,<sup>2</sup> Federal Law of 17.02.2023 No. 19-FZ<sup>3</sup>), regulatory documents of the occupation authorities (Law of the Republic of Crimea on Education in the Republic of Crimea of 17.06.2024,<sup>4</sup> Order “On Approval of the Concept of Patriotic and Spiritual and Moral Education of the Population in the Republic of Crimea” No. 522-U,<sup>5</sup> Law of the Republic of Crimea of 19.12.2022 No. 377-ZRK/2022 “On Patriotic Education of Citizens in the Republic of Crimea”<sup>6</sup>) and other documents issued by the Russian Federation or the occupation authorities. In addition, the issue of patriotic education is addressed separately in recommendations, specialised programmes and projects developed for the occupied territories.

This report aims to systematise in one document the information already collected by the CCE “Almenda” about the actions of the Russian Federation aimed at eradicating the identity, militarisation and indoctrination of children in the occupied territories.

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1 Infographic: “Russian System of Eradicating the Identity of Children in the Temporarily Occupied Territories”, <https://almenda.org/en/rosijska-sistema-znishhennya-identichnosti-ukrainskix-ditej-na-tot-sxema/>

2 <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/38441>, архів: <https://archive.ph/wip/DOy3O>

3 <http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/Document/View/0001202302170006>, архів: <https://archive.ph/x3NpD>

4 [https://monm.rk.gov.ru/file/6\(2\).docx](https://monm.rk.gov.ru/file/6(2).docx), архів: <https://archive.ph/wip/1XFDP>

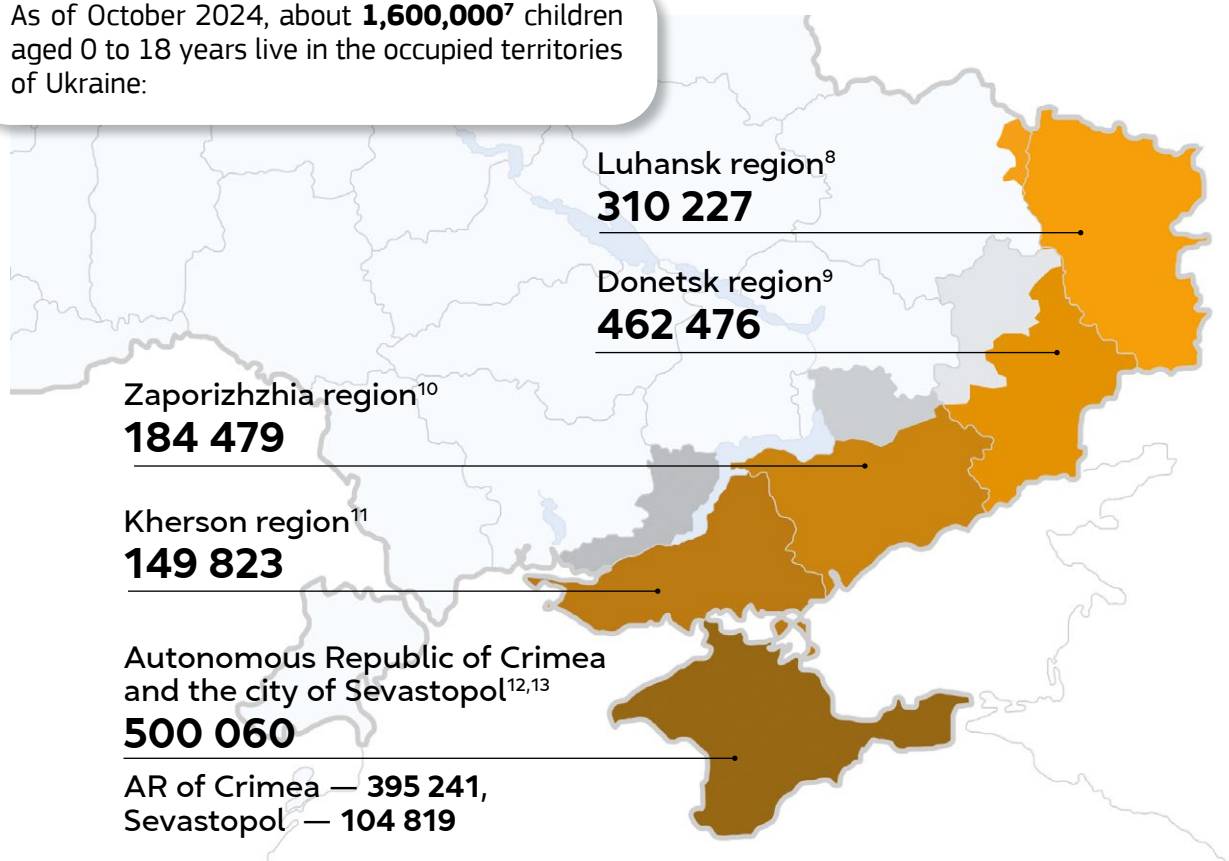
5 [https://monm.rk.gov.ru/file/1\\_Указ%20Главы%20ПК.pdf](https://monm.rk.gov.ru/file/1_Указ%20Главы%20ПК.pdf), архів: <https://archive.ph/Yl4zK>

6 <http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/Document/View/9100202212220049?index=1>, архів: <https://archive.ph/wip/VGh3e>

# Statistical data on the number of children living in the occupied territories, educational institutions and the number of children studying in schools in the occupied territories

Due to the limited access to the occupied territories, the statistical information is taken from open sources and statistics of the Russian Federation and the occupation administrations, the actual number may differ.

As of October 2024, about **1,600,000**<sup>7</sup> children aged 0 to 18 years live in the occupied territories of Ukraine:



7 Due to limited access to the occupied territories, the statistical information is based on open sources and data from the Russian Federation. The actual number of children may vary.

8 <https://bdex.ru/naselenie/luganskaya-narodnaya-respublika/>, archive: <https://archive.ph/EOKvH>

9 <https://vk.com/@-224569566-rabota-nad-strategiei-razvitiya-promyshlennosti-dnr>, apxib: <https://archive.ph/Sgpru>

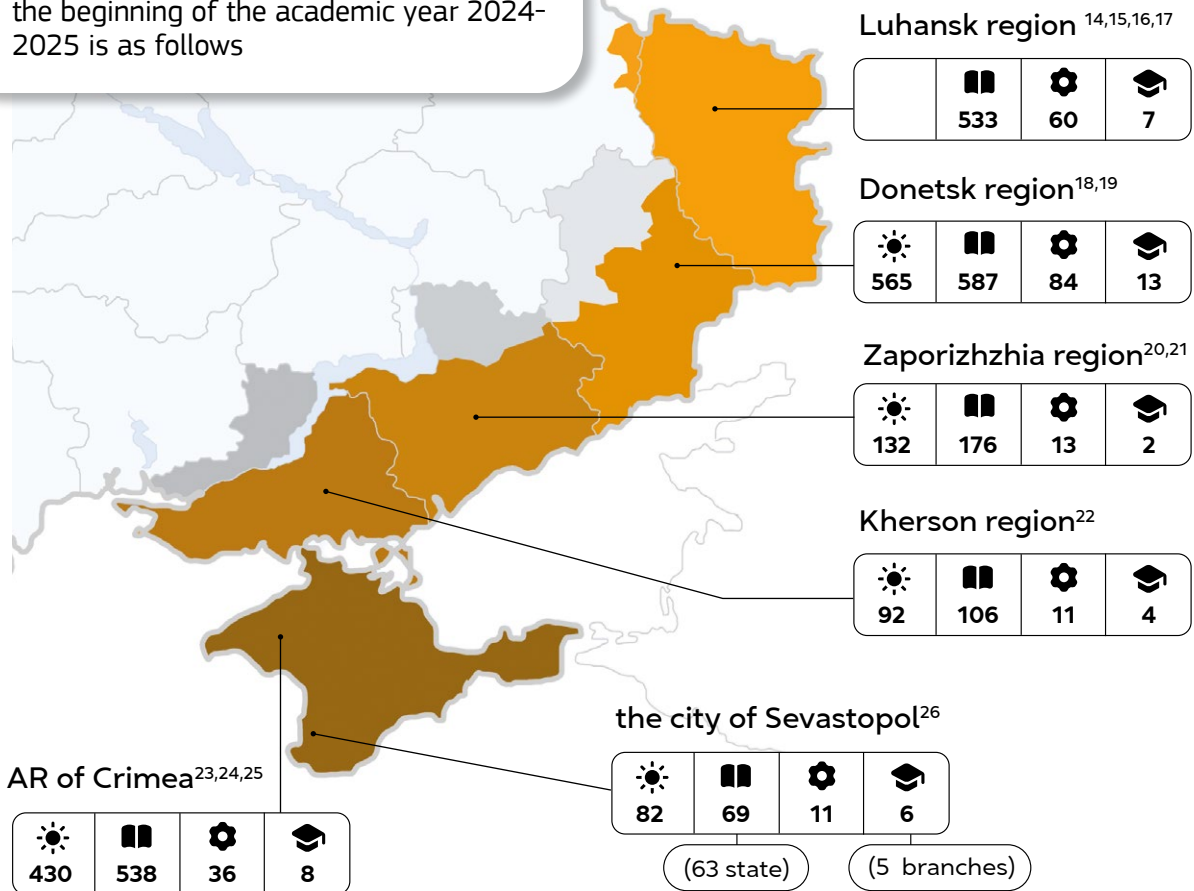
10 <https://bdex.ru/naselenie/zaporozhskaya-oblast/>, apxib: <https://archive.ph/NMcPF>

11 <https://bdex.ru/naselenie/hersonskaya-oblast/>, apxib: <https://archive.ph/6x619>

12 <https://rosstat.gov.ru/compendium/document/13284>, apxib: <https://archive.ph/ySflj>

13 <https://rosstat.gov.ru/compendium/document/13284>, apxib: <https://archive.ph/ySflj>

The situation regarding educational institutions in the occupied territories as of the beginning of the academic year 2024-2025 is as follows



Pre-school educational institutions (hereinafter referred to as PSEIs)     
 General secondary education institutions     
 Vocational education institutions     
 Higher education institutions

14 <https://rg.ru/2024/08/14/reg-dnr/kak-pedagogi-i-shkoly-v-lnr-i-dnr-gotoviatsia-k-urokam-truda.html>, archive: [archive.fo/wip/GdDiy](https://archive.fo/wip/GdDiy)

15 <https://bloknot-lugansk.ru/news/60-kolledzhey-i-tehnikumov-lnr-v-2024-godu-predla-1752248>, archive: [archive.fo/wip/DITB6](https://archive.fo/wip/DITB6)

16 <https://lug-info.ru/comments/zapret-na-telefony-novye-predmety-i-mery-zaschity-pojavjatsja-v-shkolah-lnr-v-novom/>, archive: [archive.fo/wip/u73Qx](https://archive.fo/wip/u73Qx)

17 <https://dan-news.ru/official/spisok-vuzov-v-donbasse-i-novorossii/>, archive: [archive.fo/wip/VZIsy](https://archive.fo/wip/VZIsy)

18 <https://dnr-news.ru/politics/2024/08/30/817741.html>, archive: [archive.fo/wip/ZtcVP](https://archive.fo/wip/ZtcVP)

19 <http://mondnr.ru/oo-srednee-obrazovanie>, archive: <https://archive.fo/nS609>

20 <https://t.me/BalitskyEV/3814>, archive: <https://archive.fo/TjmwN>

21 <https://t.me/obrzp/17928>, archive: <https://archive.fo/dMpbA>

22 <https://t.me/depobrherson/8885>, archive: <https://archive.fo/tahMX>

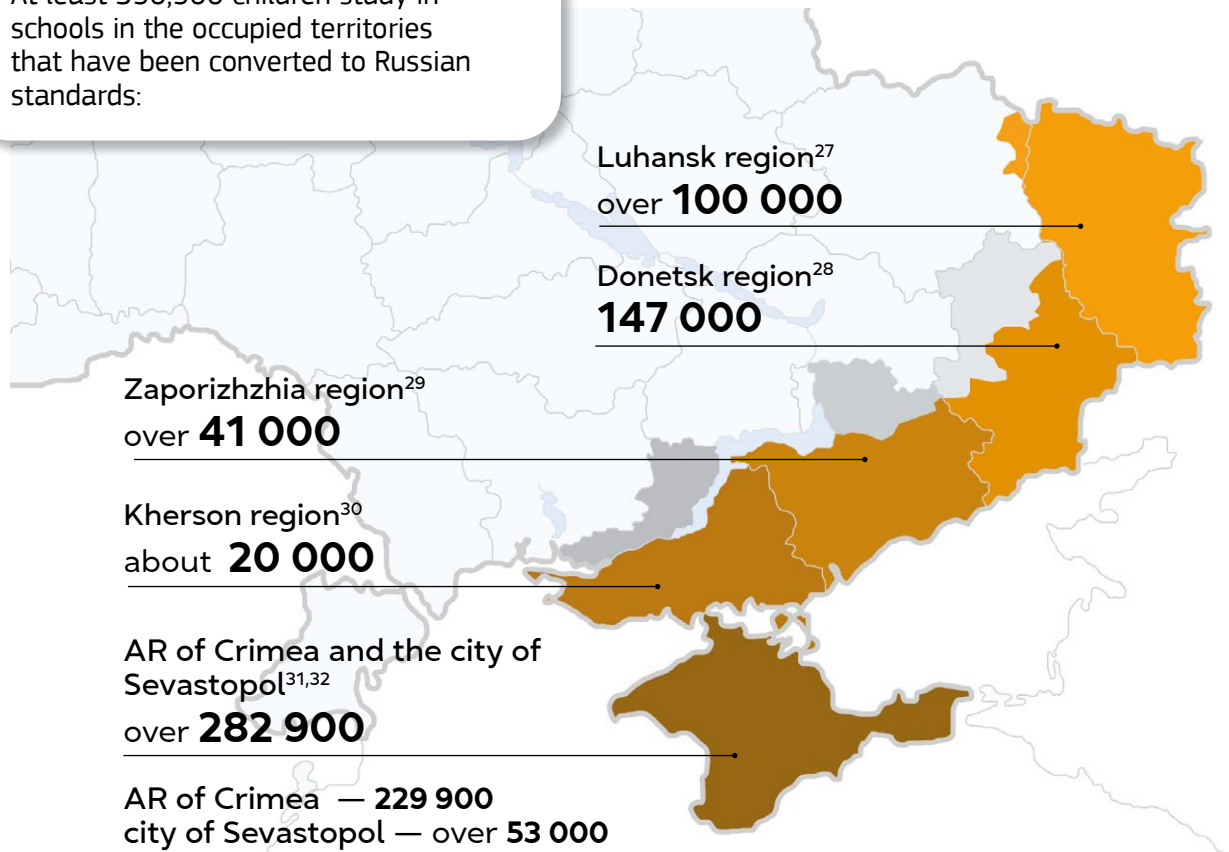
23 [https://vk.com/wall-116028735\\_264386](https://vk.com/wall-116028735_264386), archive: <https://archive.fo/7yLG2>

24 <https://crimea.ria.ru/20240827/shkolnye-lineyki-na-den-znaniy-v-krymu-proydu-t-v-shkolnykh-pomescheniyakh-1139911327.html?ysclid=m0f6ozug42871510484>, archive: <https://archive.fo/jYlko>

25 <https://monm.rk.gov.ru/structure/3748b454-d262-48b3-b605-85cf93fadbbc>, archive: <https://archive.ph/vWZkl>

26 <https://sev.gov.ru/gorod/social/school/?ysclid=m1l6pmyfq393480653>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/XVLwE>

At least 590,900 children study in schools in the occupied territories that have been converted to Russian standards:



27 <https://edu.ru/news/regiony/bolee-100-tysyach-detey-poydut-v-shkoly-luganskoy-/?ysclid=m4wgt2r46164970736>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/kVBz9>

28 [https://t.me/minobrnauki\\_dnr/16201](https://t.me/minobrnauki_dnr/16201), archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/r1OU2>

29 <https://t.me/BalitskyEV/3814>, archive: <https://archive.ph/Tjmwn>

30 <https://t.me/depobrherson/8842>, archive: <https://archive.ph/a8f3a>

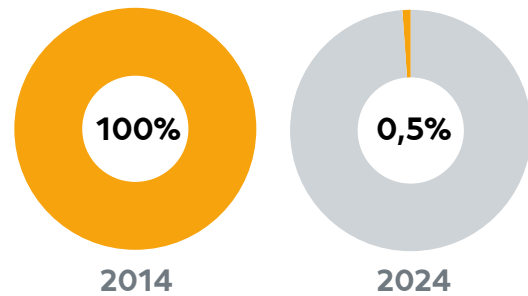
31 <https://monm.rk.gov.ru/structure/3748b454-d262-48b3-b605-85cf93fadbbc>, archive: <https://archive.ph/vWZkl>

32 [https://vk.com/wall-177557250\\_27298](https://vk.com/wall-177557250_27298), archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/UDn9P>

## Access to the Ukrainian language

One aspect of the Russian Federation’s policy to eradicate the identity of children in the occupied territories is to block access to learning the Ukrainian language. Before the occupation, **100% of children** studied Ukrainian language and literature as part of the school curriculum. This applies to both the territories occupied in 2014 (the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions) and the territories occupied after 2022.

The situation has deteriorated significantly since the occupation. Thus, as of 2024, according to information published on the website of the occupation Ministry of Education of Crimea, 1249 children study Ukrainian, which is 0.5% of the total number of school-age children.



As for the situation with the study of the Ukrainian language in other occupied territories, the organisation was unable to find information on the websites of the occupation ministries and the website of the Russian Ministry of Education.<sup>33</sup> The only information available is an article on the RTVI website with a link to the data from the Russian Ministry of Education. According to this information, access to Ukrainian language learning in the occupied territories is as follows:

- in the occupied Donetsk region, in the 2023-24 academic year, 1509 schoolchildren (1%) study Ukrainian, the subject “Native language (Ukrainian)” is not taught.
- in the occupied Luhansk region, in the 2023-24 academic year, 94 schoolchildren (0.14%) study Ukrainian, as the subject ‘Native language (Ukrainian)’ is not taught.
- in the occupied Zaporizhzhia region, in the 2023-24 academic year, 17,648 schoolchildren (43.41%) study Ukrainian, including 5,950 schoolchildren in grades 1-4 who study the subject “Native language (Ukrainian)”.
- in the occupied Kherson region, in the 2023-24 academic year, 12,287 schoolchildren (61.47%) study Ukrainian, including 3,528 students in grades 1-4 who study the subject “Native language (Ukrainian)”.

**! Due to the inability to verify these figures, the actual situation may differ.**<sup>34</sup>

In addition to the study of the Ukrainian language, before the establishment of the occupation regime, there were schools and classes with the Ukrainian language of instruction in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson, Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

<sup>33</sup> <https://rtvi.com/news/minprosveshheniya-v-etom-uchebnom-godu-ukrainskij-yazyk-prepodavalsya-v-bashkortostane-i-eshhe-pyati-regionah-rossii/>, archive: <https://archive.ph/Xv0UV>

<sup>34</sup> In particular, the so-called “Minister of Education and Science of the DPR” reports that the Ukrainian language is not taught in the territory of the so-called DPR – <https://t.me/OlegVTrofimov/6096>, archive: <https://archive.ph/gEgxR>



The dynamics of education with Ukrainian as the language of instruction in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea is as follows:

<b>2013/2014</b>	<p><b>7</b> schools where the language of instruction was Ukrainian</p> <p><b>76</b> schools with both Ukrainian and Russian as languages of instruction</p> <p><b>829</b> classes where the language of instruction was Ukrainian</p> <p><b>12694</b> pupils in schools and classes where the language of instruction was Ukrainian</p>
<b>2014/2015</b>	<p><b>7</b> schools where the language of instruction was Ukrainian</p> <p>Classes with Ukrainian as the language of instruction were available in schools where the primary language of instruction was Russian (exact number unknown)</p> <p><b>1990</b> pupils in schools and classes where the language of instruction was Ukrainian</p>
<b>2015/2016</b>	<p><b>2</b> schools where the language of instruction was Ukrainian (Grades 1–9)</p> <p>Classes with Ukrainian as the language of instruction were available in 20 schools where the primary language of instruction was Russian (exact number unknown)</p> <p><b>949</b> pupils in schools and classes where the language of instruction was Ukrainian</p>
<b>2016/2017</b>	<p><b>1</b> school where the language of instruction was Ukrainian (Grades 1–9)</p> <p><b>19</b> classes with Ukrainian as the language of instruction in 12 schools where the primary language of instruction was Russian</p> <p><b>371</b> pupils in the school and classes where the language of instruction was Ukrainian</p>
<b>2018/2019</b>	<p><b>1</b> school with Ukrainian as the language of instruction (Grades 1–9)</p> <p><b>8</b> classes with Ukrainian as the language of instruction in 5 schools with Russian as the language of instruction</p> <p><b>249</b> pupils in the school and classes with Ukrainian as the language of instruction</p>
<b>2019/2020</b>	<p><b>1</b> school with Ukrainian as the language of instruction (Grades 1–9)</p> <p><b>3</b> classes with Ukrainian as the language of instruction in 1 school</p> <p><b>214</b> pupils in the school and classes with Ukrainian as the language of instruction</p>
<b>2021/2022</b>	<p><b>1</b> school with Ukrainian as the language of instruction (Grades 1–9)</p> <p><b>2</b> classes with Ukrainian as the language of instruction in 1 school</p> <p><b>212</b> pupils in the school and classes with Ukrainian as the language of instruction</p>
<b>2022/2023</b>	<p><b>1</b> school with Ukrainian as the language of instruction (Grades 1–9)</p> <p><b>1</b> class with Ukrainian as the language of instruction in 1 school</p> <p><b>197</b> pupils in the school and classes with Ukrainian as the language of instruction</p>
<b>2023/2024</b>	<p>there is no information available regarding schools and classes with Ukrainian as the language of instruction. However, one class with Ukrainian as the language of instruction, which functioned at the “Simferopol Academic Gymnasium” (where Russian was the general language of instruction), is no longer available in the 2023/2024 academic year.<sup>35</sup></p>
<b>2024/2025</b>	<p><b>1</b> school with Ukrainian as the language of instruction (grades 1-9)</p> <p><b>164</b> pupils with Ukrainian as the language of instruction.</p>

35 <https://cdn.crimeaschool.ru/organization-609/4ba2cfb43d064c1c8249eff4b92b6a73>, archive: <https://archive.ph/JInmN>

It is important to note that there are reasonable doubts about the veracity of the information provided by the occupation authorities about the functioning of the school with Ukrainian as the language of instruction, namely the Municipal Budgetary Educational Institution “School No. 20 in Feodosia of the Republic of Crimea”.

All the documentation and the website of the institution were kept exclusively in Russian. There was a lack of material and technical support, namely textbooks (there is no information on the website of the so-called Ministry of Education and Science of Crimea on the provision of textbooks in Ukrainian for subjects such as mathematics, but there is information on the provision of textbooks in the Crimean Tatar language).

Additionally, back in 2020, a survey conducted by monitors of the Crimean Human Rights Group found that most lessons and extracurricular activities were conducted in Russian.<sup>36</sup>

As of the time this report was written, the organization was unable to find information regarding the trends in access to education in the Ukrainian language in the occupied territories of Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Luhansk, and Kherson regions.

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

# The use of educational institutions for militarization, propaganda of service in the armed forces of the occupying country, and indoctrination of children in the occupied territories

The Russian Federation is actively using educational institutions of all levels, from pre-schools to higher education institutions, to eradicate the Ukrainian identity of children in the occupied territories, including militarisation, propaganda of service in the armed forces of the occupying country and indoctrination. The greatest impact is exerted on children during their school years, which is primarily due to the lack of opportunity for children not to attend schools converted to Russian education standards in the Russian-occupied territories of Ukraine.



In 2023, the public organization CCE “Almenda” and its partner, the Regional Center for Human Rights, analysed school education according to Russian standards and prepared a **study “School Education: a Hidden Weapon of the Russian Federation Against Ukraine”**. The objects of the study were the approved state educational standards, programmes of the Russian Federation, as well as school textbooks for grades 1-11 recommended for use in Russian educational institutions, used in the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine from 2014 to 31 December 2022.

The full version of the study is available here:  
<https://almenda.org/en/doslidzhennya-zmistu-shkilnykh-pidruchnykh-rosiyi/>



According to the study, in the Russian Federation, at the national level (educational standards, curricula and concepts for teaching specific subjects):

- **Firstly**, the intention of the aggressor state to impose a Russian identity on Ukrainian children, to form a patriotic attitude towards the Russian Federation as a Motherland and a willingness to perform military duty in favour of this state is clearly visible.
- **Secondly**, a number of narratives have been identified that can lead to a change in children’s national identity from Ukrainian to Russian, form a positive attitude towards the Russian army among Ukrainian children, and justify Russia’s imperialist policy in general and in terms of armed aggression against Ukraine. Special attention should be paid to the narratives found in school textbooks, namely: “all-Russian identity”, “patriotism”, “militarism”.
- **Thirdly**, school history textbooks convince pupils that significant segments of Russian history took place on the territory of modern Ukraine, thus imposing on pupils the belief that modern Russia has a historical right to these lands.

Also in 2023, the CCE “Almenda”, in partnership with the Regional Center for Human Rights, analysed the content of 23 school textbooks of the Russian Federation that were found in schools

in the Kharkiv region after its de-occupation. The study analysed what values and narratives are imposed on Ukrainian children, what tools of psychological and pedagogical influence are used, as well as the issue of legal qualification of the actions of the Russian Federation in the field of education.

The narratives identified in the study can be conditionally grouped into the following clusters:

- ▶ **Formation of an “pan-Russian identity”.** The basis for the formation of a “pan-Russian identity” is the narrative of fraternal peoples, the existence of historical and cultural ties between them and Russia, in which Russia plays a major role. The Russian Federation is also portrayed as the sole and exclusive heir to Rus’, and all the latter’s assets – cultural heritage sites, figures and their achievements – also belong to Russia. The issue of language is fundamental to the content of this narrative, as only the Russian language plays a unifying role for fraternal peoples, their cultures and traditions – in other words, “it reinforces the bonds of the fraternal family”.
- ▶ **“The heroization of war”.** In order to form a positive attitude of Ukrainian children towards military service in the Russian Federation, numerous examples of “military valor” are given, the Russian army is glorified, and moral virtues are attributed to it. In addition, children are told about the benefits of service in the Russian armed forces, its prestige and the guarantees that await those who join the Russian army. This is intended to develop in children an attitude towards the army as an extremely favourable environment for personality development and towards military service as a suitable option for a life scenario.
- ▶ **“Formation of a positive attitude towards the leadership of the Russian Federation/’USSR’ and the state”, “Formation of a positive attitude towards a ‘strong state/authority’, towards dictatorship”, “Authority means unrestricted and essential control over citizens”, “Formation of a positive attitude towards the ‘Russian Orthodox Church’”** aim to instill among pupils in the occupied territories a respect for the actions of the authorities, the belief in the “divine” origin of power, and, most importantly, demand blind obedience to those in power. Any manifestation of the “agency” of citizens is viewed either as extremism, nationalism, or an attempt to harm the “great Russian people”.
- ▶ **The confrontation between Russia and the countries of the “collective West” and the United States is another group of narratives** that influences the formation of Ukrainian children’s ideas about the world and the distribution of forces on the political map. The textbooks are consistent with the representation of other countries either as inferior to “Great Russia” or as its enemies. It is also worth highlighting the significant number of negative assessments of the history of other peoples and countries, their development, and their state policies. For example, the processes of colonisation and the formation of colonial empires are seen as negative phenomena, and the methods of colonisation are described only through the description of “brutal suppression of national resistance”. At the same time, identical processes in the history of Russia are interpreted either as a positive phenomenon for the “peoples of Russia” or in the light of such discourse as the geopolitical interests of the “Russian people”.

The following were identified as the main tools of manipulative influence:

- ▶ **INFORMING** is an extremely common means of social influence. The content of textbooks is structured in such a way that information is provided in accordance with strategic educational objectives and becomes “distorted” not because it is falsified, but because much of it is hidden. For example, literature textbooks provide information only about Russian writers and devote considerable attention to the study of works about the Great Patriotic War.

- ▶ **MYTHOLOGISATION** is the most commonly used tool in textbooks. Among the myths spread by school education are the following: “Russia is a great power”, “The Russian language is great and powerful”, “Russia always wins wars”, “Russia is a peacemaker and defender of peoples”, “Sevastopol is a city of Russian glory”, etc.
- ▶ **SUGGESTION** is an indirect psychological influence based on the hidden inducement of a person to perform a certain action by adding motivation to the content of his or her desires that adjusts the individual’s life plans. This role in the studied textbooks is played by the narrative of “service to the Motherland”, which is read through in all texts. There are even some additional texts in the chapters of history textbooks under the heading “Honour and Glory of the Motherland”. And in literature textbooks, a large block is devoted to the poetry of “the suffering of Russian emigration”.
- ▶ **IMPOSITION AND IMITATION** is a distinctive form of influence that encourages the adoption of certain behavioural patterns and is reinforced by the mechanisms of collective emotional interaction. “In the fight against the enemy, women, elderly people, and minors, alongside men of conscription age, rose up. They not only ensured the functioning of the rear but also fought at the front.”; “As in the years of the First World War, children and teenagers helped their parents forge victory.”; a quote from D. S. Likhachov: “In hunger, people revealed their true nature, stripped away, and freed themselves from any superficialities: some proved to be wonderful, unprecedented heroes, others—criminals, scoundrels, murderers, cannibals.”; “...Heroes who became symbols of courage and military valour: ...Nikolai Gastello, ...Viktor Talikhin, ...Lyudmila Chaykina, ...Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, ...Alexandr Matrosov, ...the 28 Panfilov men,” and so on.<sup>37</sup> Thus, “educational manipulators” use an individual’s ability to imitate in order to form certain models of behaviour in people through the demonstration of actions by those individuals who are trusted and respected.
- ▶ **THE “LABELING” METHOD** – this method involves attributing certain properties, features, or characteristics to events, phenomena, or people without additional justification. In particular, in the textbooks, narratives such as “they / we”, nationalists, etc., are constructed in this way.
- ▶ **THE “BRAINWASHING” METHOD** – this manipulative tool is used to convince a person of the truth of new ideas by changing the ideological and conceptual system of their consciousness. Its aim is to reformat old knowledge and create new understandings, concepts, and perceptions. Through this method, the goal is to shape the “own convictions” of the youth that the salvation of the state lies in strong power, not democratic methods of governance. The skilful use of the textbook’s structure for engaging learning (tasks, questions, projects) helps strengthen the impact of this method. For example, the section “Think, Compare, Reflect” – 5. *Express your attitude towards the opinion of one of the journalists: “If it hadn’t been for the decisive actions of B. M. Yeltsin in 1993, tens of thousands of people would have died in a real civil war. But there are moments in history when it is necessary to interrupt democratic procedures to avoid compromising democracy in the country for many years to come”.*<sup>38</sup>
- ▶ **THE METHOD OF PERSUASION** – its goal is to persuade a person to recognise the truth of values, norms, and behavioural models, which are promoted through various means of propaganda. Typically, pompous phrases with generally accepted content are used, and their very application has a convincing impact on the individual: “...*The war you are waging is a liberation war, a just war. Let the courageous image of our great ancestors – Alexander Nevsky,*

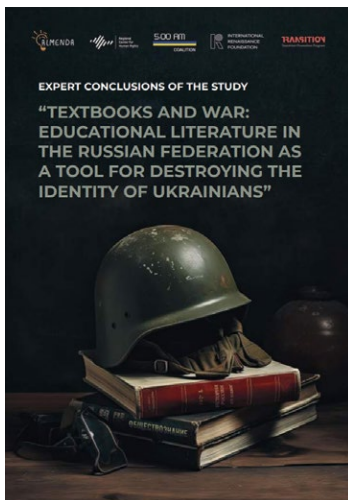
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37 History. History of Russia, 1914-1945: 10<sup>th</sup> Grade, Basic Level: Textbook, Part 2 / M.M. Gorinov, A.A. Danilov, L.G. Kosulina (et al.): edited by A.V. Torkunov. – Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 2022.

38 History. History of Russia, 1946 – Early 21<sup>st</sup> Century: 11<sup>th</sup> Grade, Basic Level: Textbook for General Education Institutions, Part 2 / A.A. Danilov, A.V. Torkunov, O.V. Khlebnikov; edited by A.V. Torkunov. – Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 2022. p. 64.

*Dmitry Donskoy, Kuzma Minin, Dmitry Pozharsky, Alexander Suvorov, Mikhail Kutuzov – inspire you in this war! Let the victorious flag of the great Lenin shine upon you!”<sup>39</sup>*

- ▶ **THE PRESENCE EFFECT** – involves a range of elements designed to imitate reality. In textbooks, this method can be associated with project tasks, an example of which could be the project *“Collect information about the struggle of the peoples of the USSR against fascism, using, where possible, archival photographs, newsreels, and the memories of war veterans living in your area. Based on the material you have collected, prepare a class hour together with your teacher on the topic ‘They liberated the Motherland’.”<sup>40</sup>*
- ▶ **THE METHOD OF “REWRITING HISTORY”** – this method involves distorting truthful information by replacing it with hidden falsehoods, making it difficult to understand how exactly the falsification occurs. In the history textbook for 11<sup>th</sup> grade, the authors dedicated a separate paragraph to this method titled “Falsification of the History of the Great Patriotic War”, explaining to schoolchildren the essence of falsification (“...forgery, deliberate distortion, substitution of the true and the real”) and answering the key question: “Who, how, and why falsifies history?” Yet, they used the very same methods of manipulating historical facts and statements that they condemned: “In some countries, entire ‘institutes of national memory’ and special museums, whose maintenance costs far exceed the funding for academic institutions, operate in a direction set by the government”.<sup>41</sup> The consequences of this method are highly effective in the long term, when it is necessary to gradually shape the corresponding worldview, using the mechanisms of “restoring historical truth” through templates of mass memory.



The full text of the study, including citations from textbooks and legal qualifications, is available here: <https://almenda.org/en/doslidzhennya-pidruchnik-i-vijna-navchalna-literatura-rf-na-okupovanij-teritorii-yak-instrument-znishhennya-identichnosti-ukrainciv/>



In addition, starting from the 2023/2024 academic year, the Russian Federation switched to a “unified history textbook” for grades 10-11.<sup>42</sup> This textbook is essentially a propaganda tool. The history textbook for 11<sup>th</sup> grade has added sections on the “Special Military Operation” (SMO) and “Ukrainian neo-Nazism” to ideologically justify the attack on Ukraine and portray the aggression as a “defensive war”. Narratives of Russian propaganda have been included, such as the claim

39 History. History of Russia, 1914-1945: 10<sup>th</sup> Grade, Basic Level: Textbook, Part 2 / M.M. Gorinov, A.A. Danilov, L.G. Kosulina (et al.); edited by A.V. Torkunov. – Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 2022. p. 27.

40 History. World History. Modern History, 1914-1945: 10<sup>th</sup> Grade, Basic Level: Textbook / O.S. Soroko-Tsiupa, A.O. Soroko-Tsiupa; edited by A.O. Chubaryan. – Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 2022. p. 210.

41 History. History of Russia, 1914-1945: 10<sup>th</sup> Grade, Basic Level: Textbook, Part 2 / M.M. Gorinov, A.A. Danilov, L.G. Kosulina (et al.); edited by A.V. Torkunov. – Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 2022. p.108

42 The textbooks in question are “History of Russia” (10<sup>th</sup> grade), “World History” (10<sup>th</sup> grade), “History of Russia” (11<sup>th</sup> grade), and “World History” (11<sup>th</sup> grade), authored by V. Medinsky and A. Torkunov.

that Ukrainians were supposedly invented by the Austrian General Staff in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the aim of dividing the “single Russian people”,<sup>43</sup> the mention of “American biological laboratories” in Ukraine,<sup>44</sup> and the “illegal” transfer of Crimea to Ukraine through the “personal initiative” of N. Khrushchev.<sup>45</sup> The 2014 Revolution of Dignity in Kyiv is presented as a “coup d’état”, with certain sections dedicated to “Ukrainian neo-Nazism”, and so on. The textbook is written in such a way that it retransmits official Russian propaganda, presents false information, and is aimed at indoctrinating children.<sup>46,47</sup>



It is important to note that since 1 September 2024, it has become mandatory for all students to undergo training in small arms handling, medical training and drone operations as part of the subject “Fundamentals of Security and Defence of the Motherland”.

At the same time, schools hold special lessons, such as “Lessons of courage” and “Conversations about important matters”, during which children meet with Russian soldiers involved in the war against Ukraine.<sup>48</sup>



43 V.R. Medinsky, A.V. Torkunov: Textbook on the History of Russia, 1945 – Early 21<sup>st</sup> Century - 11<sup>th</sup> Grade, pp. 397-398.

44 Ibid. p. 402

45 Ibid. pp. 66-67

46 <https://spravdi.gov.ua/pidruchnyk-nenavysti-chomu-medynskij-mozhe-navchyty-rosijskyh-shkolyariv/>

47 <https://almenda.org/en/chomu-rosijskij-yedinij-pidruchnik-z-istori%d1%97-porushuye-mizhnarodne-pravo-abo-novij-vimir-propagandi-na-okupovanix-teritoriyax/>

48 [https://vk.com/wall-214910068\\_218281](https://vk.com/wall-214910068_218281), archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/dgdMc>

### An additional tool of militarisation and indoctrination of children in the occupied territories is the functioning of cadet classes.



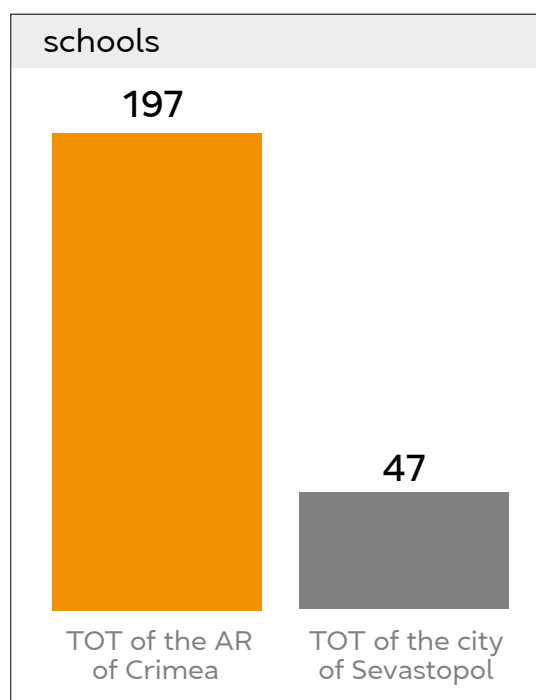
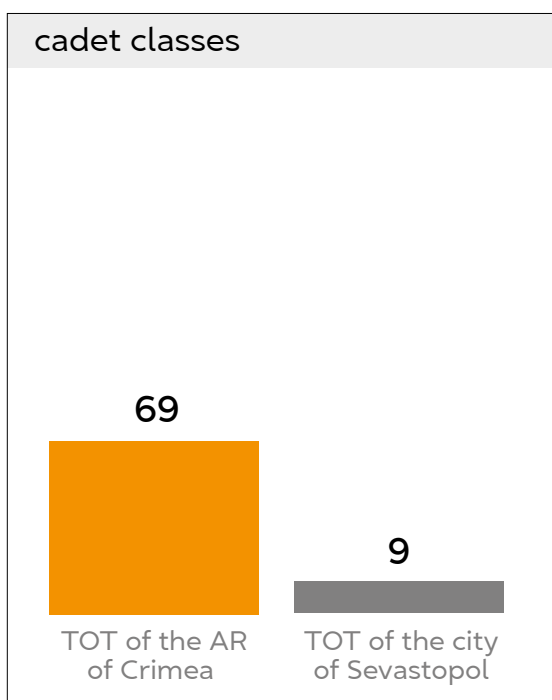
The activities of cadet classes in the occupied territories are described in detail in the analytical report “How the war is produced: childhood spent in the cadet classes in the TOT of the AR Crimea and the city of Sevastopol”, which is available here: <https://almenda.org/en/analitichnij-zvit-fabrika-vijni-kadetst-vo-na-tot-ar-krim-ta-mista-sevastopolya/>



The main goal of cadet classes is to instil in children the “patriotic” values of the Russian state and prepare them for further service in the state apparatus and the armed forces of the Russian Federation.

The programme includes military and patriotic education, which involves the imposition of Russian historical and ideological doctrine, as well as the development of military skills.

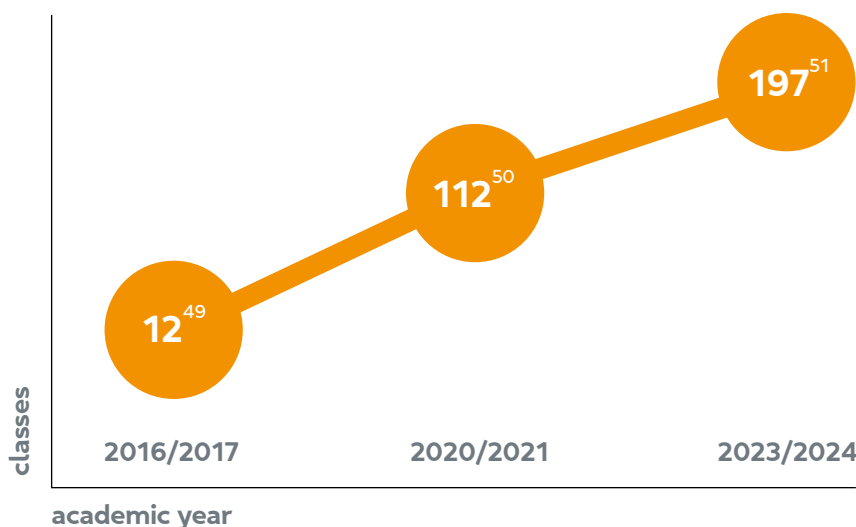
According to the results of the study, in the 2023/2024 academic year, at least the following number of cadet classes and schools where they were opened were identified in the occupied territories of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol:



From open sources, it was possible to establish the rapid growth of the cadet component in schools in the TOT of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol over the 10 years of Russian occupation:



### Dynamics of opening cadet classes in the TOT of the AR of Crimea

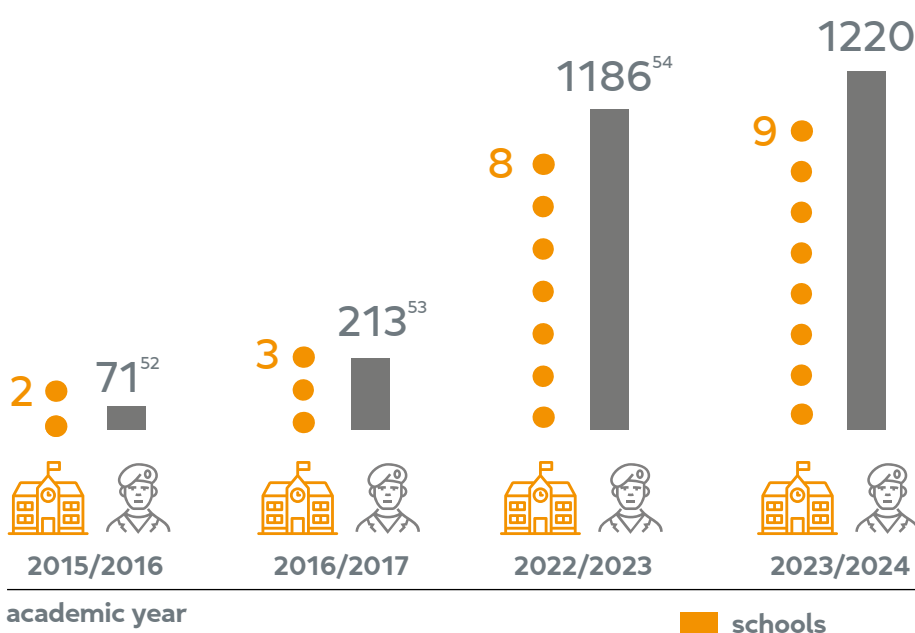


In the 2023/2024 academic year, the number of cadet classes in the TOT of the AR of Crimea increased

**16,4** times

compared to the 2016/2017 academic year.

### Dynamics of opening of schools with cadet classes in TOT of the city of Sevastopol and the involvement of children:



In the 2023/2024 academic year, the number of children in cadet classes in the TOT of the city of Sevastopol increased by

**17,2** times

compared to the 2015/2016 academic year.

49 <https://crimea-news.com/other/2017/08/29/318029.html>, archive: <https://archive.ph/rcbMJ>

50 <https://vesti-k.ru/news/2021/03/07/ryady-patrioticheskikh-organizacij-kryma-popolnili-10-000-yunarmejcev/?ysclid=lpbl5nm6dc938610056>, archive: <https://archive.ph/gi8nI>

51 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Cadet\\_web\\_eng.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Cadet_web_eng.pdf)

52 <https://sevastopol.su/news/dlya-budushchih-sledovately-i-spasately-v-sevastopole-otkrylis-kadetskie-klassy>, archive: <https://archive.ph/SdNpO>

53 <https://sevastopol.su/news/vsem-sevastopolskim-shkolam-razreshili-sozdavat-kadetskie-klassy?ysclid=lon22ecu7o136402774>, archive: <https://archive.ph/Xq6th>

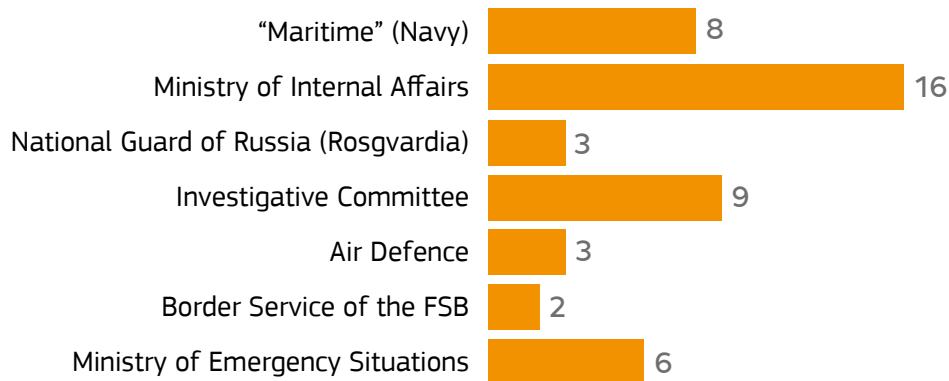
54 <https://edu.sev.gov.ru/about/podvedomstvennye-uchrezhdeniya/srednee-obshchee-obrazovanie/?ysclid=lpbau9prn7520786365>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/upM41>

55 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Cadet\\_web\\_eng.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Cadet_web_eng.pdf)

The distribution of cadet classes by specialisation in the TOT of the AR of Crimea is as follows:<sup>56, 57</sup>



The distribution of cadet classes by specialisation in the TOT of the city of Sevastopol is as follows:<sup>58</sup>



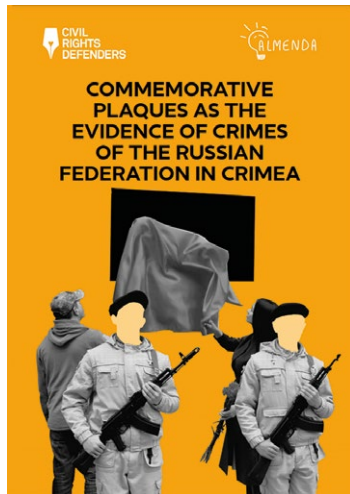
Another tool for influencing children’s consciousness is the marking of the educational space. Schools establish history classrooms, introduce “Hero Desks” dedicated to participants of the so-called “Special Military Operation” (SMO), and install memorial plaques on school facades in honour of those killed during the so-called “special operation”. The purpose of this spatial marking, beyond indoctrination and the imposition of a Russian identity, is to glorify war and military

56 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Cadet\\_web\\_eng.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Cadet_web_eng.pdf)

57 The number of cadet classes by specialisation amounts to 190, which is seven fewer than those identified in the TOT of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (197 classes). This discrepancy arises from the fact that 11 cadet classes at the Municipal Budgetary General Education Institution “Yalta Secondary School No. 11” were consolidated into the “Alexander III Peacemaker Cadet Corps” and are recorded as a single entity across the four specialisations present at the school: Ministry of Emergency Situations, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Aerospace Forces, and National Guard of Russia (Rosgvardia).

58 [https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Cadet\\_web\\_eng.pdf](https://almenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Cadet_web_eng.pdf)

service in the occupying country’s armed forces. Additionally, in this context, memorialization is not aimed at honouring the victims of the Russian-Ukrainian war but at turning the younger generation of Crimeans against Ukraine, encouraging youth to follow the example of those forced to fight against their own country.



In the report “Memorial Plaques as Evidence of Russian Crimes in Crimea”, the CCE “Almenda” analysed how the unveiling of plaques on school facades affects the minds of children who studied and are studying under occupation. In addition to being a tool for influencing the minds of children, the plaques are also proof of the Russian Federation’s destructive policy of Russification and militarisation of children, as the plaques themselves depict people who were children and studied at schools at the time of the occupation of the peninsula in 2014, automatically acquired Russian citizenship and were drafted into the Russian Armed Forces, contrary to the provisions of international humanitarian law, which expressly prohibits such actions. Their involvement and deaths in the war against their own country are, to a significant extent, the result of Russia’s actions aimed at eradicating their Ukrainian identity, glorifying war, and promoting service in the Russian armed forces.

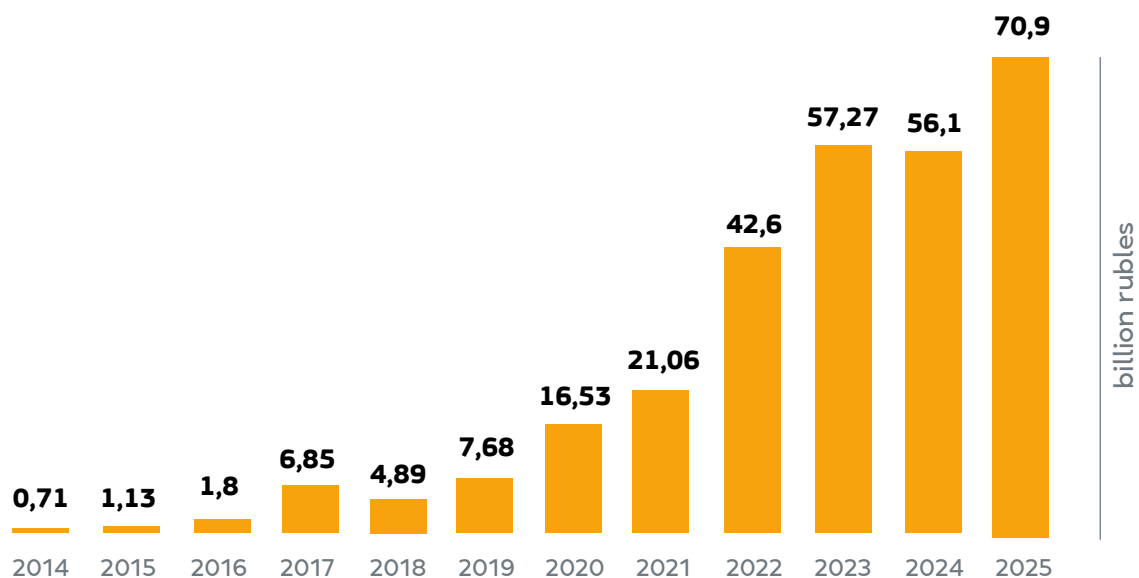


The study is available here: <https://almenda.org/en/doslidzhennya-memorialni-doshki-yak-dokaz-zlochiv-rf-v-krimu/>

# The role of youth movements

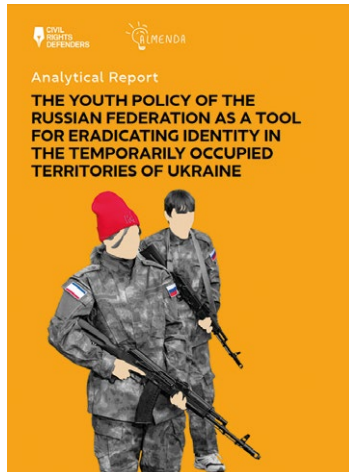
The youth policy of the Russian Federation also plays a role in the indoctrination and militarisation of children and youth in the occupied territories of Ukraine.

From 2014 to 2021, the budget for youth policy in the Russian Federation ranged from 0.7 billion rubles to 21 billion rubles, and since 2022, there has been an almost twofold increase, with spending of more than 42.5 billion rubles.<sup>59</sup> As of 2024, more than 56.1 billion rubles<sup>60</sup> (equivalent to more than \$617 million) have been budgeted. In the Federal Law of the Russian Federation of 30 November 2024 No. 419-FZ “On the Federal Budget for 2025 and for the Planning Period of 2026 and 2027” (effective from 1 January 2025), the expenditures for youth policy in 2025 amount to 70.9 billion rubles (equivalent to about 677.3 million US dollars) are allocated.<sup>61</sup>



59 The data is sourced from the federal budgets of the Russian Federation for the years 2014–2024:  
 2014 - <https://ivo.garant.ru/#/document/70525334/paragraph/77971/doclist/5203/14/0/0/0%20федеральном%20бюджете%20на%202014%20год:0>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/bmmzC>  
 2015 - <https://ivo.garant.ru/#/document/70810756/paragraph/342179/doclist/6239/10/0/0/0%20федеральном%20бюджете%20на%202015%20год:15>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/Mae2f>  
 2016 - <https://ivo.garant.ru/#/document/71279990/paragraph/70059/doclist/5515/10/0/0/0%20федеральном%20бюджете%20на%202016%20год:6>, archive: <https://archive.ph/UYvsS>  
 2017 - <https://ivo.garant.ru/#/document/71570266/paragraph/12/doclist/5675/9/0/0/0%20федеральном%20бюджете%20на%202017%20год:8>, archive: <https://archive.ph/Pstk3>  
 2018 - <https://ivo.garant.ru/#/document/71825896/paragraph/156426:13>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/HpUjR>  
 2019 - <https://ivo.garant.ru/#/document/72116686/paragraph/194157:13>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/RbxlT>  
 2020 - <https://ivo.garant.ru/#/document/73098374/paragraph/102587/doclist/6480/10/0/0/0%20федеральном%20бюджете%20на%202020%20год:15>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/Ontlj>  
 2021 - <https://ivo.garant.ru/#/document/75018021/paragraph/139023/doclist/6505/10/0/0/0%20федеральном%20бюджете%20на%202021%20год:17>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/vPzjQ>  
 2022 - <https://ivo.garant.ru/#/document/403171045/paragraph/84934/doclist/6649/6/0/0/0%20федеральном%20бюджете%20на%202022%20год:19>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/LYDSw>  
 2023 - <https://ivo.garant.ru/#/document/405874129/paragraph/83507/doclist/6699/1/0/0/0%20федеральном%20бюджете%20на%202023%20год:21>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/Mun1Q>  
 2024 - <https://ivo.garant.ru/#/document/408079281/paragraph/150657/doclist/6739/1/0/0/0%20федеральном%20бюджете%20на%202024%20год:23>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/aaSdr>  
 60 <https://ivo.garant.ru/#/document/408079281/paragraph/171165:3>, archive: <https://archive.ph/p4eMy>  
 61 <https://surl.li/smokfx>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/40IOt>

The increase in funding since 2021 is likely due to preparations for a full-scale invasion of Ukraine and the need to “properly” tune young people to accept the Kremlin’s decisions. This also explains the further increase in funding during the years of active military invasion, to foster a loyal attitude to the government and to raise a generation of convenient youth.<sup>62</sup>



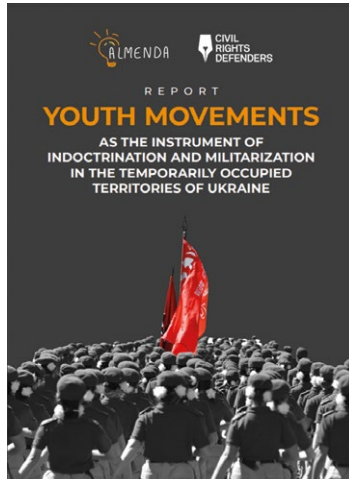
Read more about the role of youth policy in the analytical report “ The Youth Policy of the Russian Federation as a Tool for Eradicating Identity in the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine”<sup>63</sup>

<https://almenda.org/en/analitichnij-zvit-molodizhna-politika-rf-yak-instrument-znishhennya-identichnosti-na-tot-ukraini/>



One of the key instruments of youth policy is the activity of youth movements, which are also directly or indirectly funded by the Russian state budget.

The largest youth movements in the occupied territories are the “Young Army” and the “Movement of the First”.



The report “Youth Movements as the Instrument of Indoctrination and Militarization in the TOT of Ukraine”<sup>64</sup> describes in detail the peculiarities of the functioning of these movements, as well as the persons responsible for the activities and involvement of Ukrainian children in the occupied territories.

<https://almenda.org/en/molodizhni-ruxi-yak-instrument-indoktrinacii-i-militarizacii-na-okupovanix-teritoriyax/>



In addition to these two movements, it is also worth noting the “Eaglets of Russia”, “Yug Molodoj”, “Volunteers of Victory”, “Young Guard of United Russia”, and “Young Sevastopolites”.

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

63 <https://almenda.org/en/analitichnij-zvit-molodizhna-politika-rf-yak-instrument-znishhennya-identichnosti-na-tot-ukraini/>

64 <https://almenda.org/en/molodizhni-ruxi-yak-instrument-indoktrinacii-i-militarizacii-na-okupovanix-teritoriyax/>

According to the information available as of October 2024, the situation with the focus of activities and the number of these movements is as follows:



### All-Russian children’s and youth military-patriotic movement “Young Army”

The “Young Army” organizes and regularly conducts militaristic events and games, including the transfer of children to the territory of the Russian Federation. For example, in July 2024, the reason for the transfer of children to the territory of the Moscow region of the Russian Federation was the final of the military sports game “Victory”, which is implemented by the militaristic movement “Young Army” with the support of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation and the “Movement of the First”. The purpose of this game is to provide military training for children and to popularize the power and armed forces of the Russian Federation.<sup>65 66</sup>

#### Number of children involved:

AR of Crimea	from <b>1500</b> (2017) <sup>67</sup> increased to about <b>15,020</b> <sup>68</sup>
the city of Sevastopol	from <b>40</b> (2016) <sup>69</sup> increased to over <b>16,000</b> <sup>70</sup>
Kherson region	from <b>200</b> (2023) <sup>71</sup> increased to over <b>600</b> <sup>72</sup>
Zaporizhzhia region	<b>237</b> participants <sup>73</sup>
Donetsk region	from <b>77</b> (2019) <sup>74</sup> increased to over <b>5,000</b> <sup>75</sup>
Luhansk region	from <b>100</b> (2019) <sup>76</sup> increased to over <b>5,500</b> <sup>77</sup>



### Russian movement of children and youth “Movement of the First”

The “Movement of the First”, in addition to conducting Russification and propaganda activities, organizes an action called “We are citizens of Russia”, which is

65 [https://vk.com/wall-217363296\\_2939](https://vk.com/wall-217363296_2939), archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/bCnk1>

66 [https://vk.com/wall-217363296\\_2931](https://vk.com/wall-217363296_2931), archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/hiEJz>

67 <https://alushta24.org/blog/alushta/id-17549-yunarmiya-kruglyiy-stol-na-temu-razvitie-yunarmii-v-munitsipalnom-obrazovanii-gorodskoy-okrug-alusht.html>, archive: <https://archive.ph/RVn9u>

68 <https://gkmp.rk.gov.ru/structure/9bd500bf-caa3-4220-b187-2379acc5c373>, archive: <https://archive.ph/JxWaB>

69 <https://sevastopol-news.com/politics/2019/04/18/92073.html>, archive: <https://archive.ph/CjZAQ>

70 [https://vk.com/wall-177557250\\_25974](https://vk.com/wall-177557250_25974), archive: <https://archive.fo/qFi6a>

71 [https://vk.com/wall-145460148\\_158561](https://vk.com/wall-145460148_158561), archive: <https://archive.ph/OQYg0>

72 [https://vk.com/wall-215245628\\_1367](https://vk.com/wall-215245628_1367), archive: <https://archive.ph/uKvCL>

73 [https://vk.com/minoinzo?z=photo-217630752\\_457246812%2Fwall-217630752\\_2678](https://vk.com/minoinzo?z=photo-217630752_457246812%2Fwall-217630752_2678), archive: <https://archive.ph/NG8Ue>

74 <https://dan-news.ru/defence/pervye-77-uchastnikov-dvizheniya-molodaya-gvardiya-yunarmiya-prisyagnuli-na-vernost-narodu-dnr-v-donecke/?ysclid=m4v3rhxisx977140271>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/cFmfu>

75 <https://www.mk-donbass.ru/social/2024/11/26/bolee-pyati-tysyach-zhiteley-dnr-voshli-v-sostav-yunarmii.html?ysclid=m4v4bb8qin863969007>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/wADNc>

76 <https://gorod-lugansk.com/2019/06/26/gorodskoy-shtab-yunarmii-v-2019-m-sformirovan-v-stolice.html>, archive: <https://archive.ph/VjWou>

77 <https://krasnodon-adm.ru/news/65bced4689f92c300c0dd5c6/>, archive: <https://archive.ph/aPYaP>

*regularly held in all TOT (Zaporizhzhia,<sup>78 79</sup> Kherson,<sup>80 81</sup> Luhansk,<sup>82</sup> Donetsk<sup>83</sup> regions, and AR of Crimea<sup>84</sup>) and consists of publicly handing Russian passports to Ukrainian children (forced passportization).*

### Number of children involved:<sup>85</sup>

<b>AR of Crimea</b>	started in January 2023, more than <b>13,000</b> children involved <sup>86</sup>
<b>the city of Sevastopol</b>	started in February 2023, more than <b>10,000</b> children involved <sup>87</sup>
<b>Kherson region</b>	the first branch was opened in January 2023, <sup>88</sup> <b>4,215</b> children were involved during the year <sup>89</sup>
<b>Zaporizhzhia region</b>	the first primary branches were opened in December 2022, <b>2,000</b> children were involved <sup>90</sup>
<b>Donetsk region</b>	the first branch was opened in December 2022, <sup>91</sup> more than <b>16,000</b> children were involved <sup>92</sup>
<b>Luhansk region</b>	in December 2022, the first branch was opened, <sup>93</sup> involving more than <b>21,500</b> children <sup>94</sup>



### “Eaglets of Russia”

*The program was created in 2021 and involves the youngest children (from the 1<sup>st</sup> grade) in russification and militaristic activities, and is the first step for the child's further transition to membership in the “Movement of the First” and the “Young*

78 [https://vk.com/wall-216422329\\_6686](https://vk.com/wall-216422329_6686), archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/J8exW>

79 [https://vk.com/mypervie\\_zp?w=wall-218359825\\_650&z=photo-218359825\\_457240262%2Fwall-218359825\\_650](https://vk.com/mypervie_zp?w=wall-218359825_650&z=photo-218359825_457240262%2Fwall-218359825_650), archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/t7vJ6>

80 [https://t.me/molodezh\\_genichesk/1711](https://t.me/molodezh_genichesk/1711), archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/593Xf>

81 [https://t.me/tavria\\_kherson/27606](https://t.me/tavria_kherson/27606), archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/VeH18>

82 <https://gorod-lugansk.com/2024/09/27/v-luganske-sostojalas-torzhestvennoe-vruchenie-pasportov.html>, archive: [archive: https://archive.ph/wip/14ffk](https://archive.ph/wip/14ffk)

83 <https://dnrnews.ru/society/2024/09/30/846616.html>, archive: [archive: https://archive.ph/wip/OD7TW](https://archive.ph/wip/OD7TW)

84 [https://vk.com/wall-153744445\\_32665](https://vk.com/wall-153744445_32665), archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/IFJBM>

85 <https://www.arhcity.ru/data/115/16022024PR.pdf?ysclid=m10bshbza799329617>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/9ifAQ>

86 <https://xn--90acagbhgpc7c8c7f.xn--p1ai/news/655?ysclid=m4v84l2nwk358458779>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/VCTlw>

87 [https://vk.com/wall-80821398\\_107932](https://vk.com/wall-80821398_107932), archive: <https://archive.fo/zqkU1>

88 <https://www.xn--c1acpgembb1l.xn--p1ai/tpost/z41boj8801-v-zaporozhskoi-oblasti-otkrilos-pervoe-p>, archive: <https://archive.ph/QGARq>

89 <https://www.arhcity.ru/data/115/16022024PR.pdf?ysclid=m10bshbza799329617>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/9ifAQ>

90 <https://rutube.ru/video/fed47bfc270f39e37e03634d5f46b422/>, archive: <https://archive.ph/e0me9>

91 <https://pobedarf.ru/2022/12/30/pervaya-yachejka-novogo-molodezhnogo-dvizheniya-sozdana-v-dnr/>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/te1Xc>

92 [https://vk.com/video-76988535\\_456242217?t=1h33m6s](https://vk.com/video-76988535_456242217?t=1h33m6s), archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/YVuVO>

93 <https://lug-info.ru/news/rossijskoe-dvizhenie-detey-i-molodezhi-dvizhenie-pervyh-otkrylo-v-lnr-pervuyu-yachejku/>, archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/yTxSE>

94 <https://lugansk.bezformata.com/listnews/podvel-itogi-raboti-dvizheniya/133832424/>, archive: <https://archive.ph/UDbh8>

Army”. In 2024, the program was actively expanded to the TOT to include pre-school children.<sup>95</sup> Children are taught to love and defend Russia as their homeland, and Russian symbols are popularized.<sup>96</sup>

**Number of children involved:**

<b>AR of Crimea</b>	over <b>23,000</b> children involved in 3 years <sup>97</sup>
<b>the city of Sevastopol</b>	from <b>2,000</b> (2022) <sup>98</sup> increased to <b>15,000</b> <sup>99</sup>
<b>Kherson region</b>	from <b>500</b> (2023) <sup>100</sup> increased to <b>14,000</b> <sup>101</sup>
<b>Zaporizhzhia region</b>	from <b>75</b> (2023) <sup>102</sup> increased to <b>5,722</b> <sup>103</sup>
<b>Donetsk region</b>	more than <b>18,000</b> <sup>104</sup>
<b>Luhansk region</b>	<b>20,000</b> <sup>105</sup>



**“Yug Molodoj”**

The movement is actively engaged in indoctrination and militarization of children and youth in the TOT of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions, in particular through game events: a quiz for schoolchildren “Russia is my Motherland”,<sup>106</sup> and celebrations on the so-called “Day of Reunification of Kherson Region with Russia”. Activists of the #YugMolodoj movement involve children and young people in occupied Ukrainian cities and towns in painting over the colors of the Ukrainian flag and coat of arms, motivating these actions by the presence of “Nazi symbols”.<sup>107</sup> The movement’s members also receive training on the types of extremism (including the identification of pro-Ukrainian positions).<sup>108</sup>

**Number of children involved:**

<b>Kherson region</b>	involvement of children increased from 3 branches in 2022 <sup>109</sup> to <b>17 branches/over 7,000 participants</b> (by the end of 2023)
<b>Zaporizhzhia region</b>	

95 <https://t.me/obrzp/25697>, archive: [archive.ph/wip/BDrXr](https://archive.ph/wip/BDrXr)  
 96 <https://t.me/YugMolodoj/20055>, archive: [archive.ph/wip/qq8q4](https://archive.ph/wip/qq8q4)  
 97 <https://www.crimea.kp.ru/online/news/5560306/>, archive: <https://archive.fo/MJdUd>  
 98 <https://nts-tv.com/news/bolee-dvukh-soten-sevastopolskikh-shkolnikov-stali-46281/>, archive: <https://archive.ph/WIVBA>  
 99 [https://vk.com/wall-177557250\\_28027](https://vk.com/wall-177557250_28027), archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/a8pMd>  
 100 [https://t.me/mypervie\\_zp/1442](https://t.me/mypervie_zp/1442), archive: <https://archive.ph/qZnyg>  
 101 <https://t.me/obrzp/23023>, archive: <https://archive.fo/7fE9y>  
 102 <https://t.me/depobrherson/3199>, archive: <https://archive.ph/VZZhr>  
 103 <https://t.me/depobrherson/4504>, archive: <https://archive.fo/2o7Pb>  
 104 <https://dan-news.ru/obschestvo/k-proektu-orljata-rossii-v-dnr-prisoedinilis-svyshe-18-tys-shkolnikov-mladshih/>, archive [archive.ph/wip/fQSVE](https://archive.ph/wip/fQSVE)  
 105 <https://www.lugansk.kp.ru/daily/27610.5/4936641/?ysclid=m4wj4b9pmy349519880>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/e59ig>  
 106 <https://t.me/YugMolodoj/4021>, archive: <https://archive.ph/H1Bzw>  
 107 [https://t.me/pology\\_yug\\_molodoj/171](https://t.me/pology_yug_molodoj/171), archive: <https://archive.ph/8nbUR>  
 108 <https://t.me/YugMolodoj/19832>, archive: [archive.ph/wip/zEQgA](https://archive.ph/wip/zEQgA)  
 109 <https://kherson-news.ru/society/2023/11/01/221955.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/qZr7E>





### “Volunteers of Victory”

Participants hold militaristic events for children and youth aimed at forming a positive attitude towards Russian military personnel involved in the war against Ukraine, heroizing them, organizing support actions, etc.<sup>110 111</sup>



### Young Guard of the United Russia

It is the youth wing of the political ruling party United Russia. Members of the Young Guard organize propaganda campaigns in support of the Russian president, popularize Russian symbols in the TOT, and call for participation in illegal elections and a referendum in the TOT.<sup>112 113</sup>



### “Young Sevastopolites”

A new patriotic movement was created in 2024 for senior preschoolers in the temporarily occupied city of Sevastopol. According to representatives of the occupation authorities, the creation of this movement is aimed at “forming moral and patriotic qualities in children, fostering a sense of patriotism (note: patriotism for Russia), and a careful attitude to the heroic past of their hometown and country”. According to the organizers, the new movement will be a tool for involving preschoolers in patriotic activities, interaction with children’s public organizations, and will be the first step in a multi-level system of so-called patriotic education aimed, de facto, at militarizing and indoctrinating Ukrainian children in the TOT.<sup>114</sup>

the city of Sevastopol

4,000 (as of March 2024).<sup>115</sup>

110 [https://vk.com/wall-218383340\\_3804](https://vk.com/wall-218383340_3804), archive: [archive: https://archive.ph/wip/2fUri](https://archive.ph/wip/2fUri)

111 [https://vk.com/wall-187993858\\_18433](https://vk.com/wall-187993858_18433), archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/YfF6a>

112 <https://t.me/YugMolodoj/19727>, archive: [archive: https://archive.ph/wip/mWTor](https://archive.ph/wip/mWTor)

113 <https://t.me/YugMolodoj/19720>, archive: [archive: https://archive.ph/wip/Y59V7](https://archive.ph/wip/Y59V7)

114 <https://ok-kazachya.edusev.ru/about/news/2741913>, archive: <https://archive.ph/xtMJz>

115 <https://crimea-news.com/society/2024/03/15/1324489.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/HJwJq>

## Informal education and so-called recreation programs

A specific area of indoctrination and militarization of children includes numerous military gatherings, military-patriotic games, special programs,<sup>116</sup> such as the “University Sessions” program, and the activities of camps.



Some of the programs aim not only at the russification of children but also at promoting changes in the demographic composition of the occupied territories, particularly through the relocation of youth from the occupied areas to study in the Russian Federation. One such program is the “University Sessions” program.

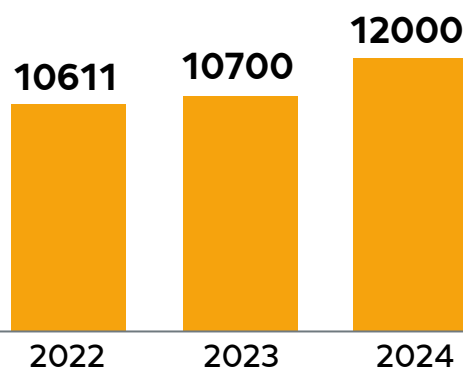
“University Sessions” is a unified educational program that is held on the campuses of Russian universities for children aged 12-17, during shifts of 10 days each.

116 [https://vk.com/crimeapatriot?z=album-217363296\\_306295797](https://vk.com/crimeapatriot?z=album-217363296_306295797), archive <https://archive.ph/wip/lZyrZ>

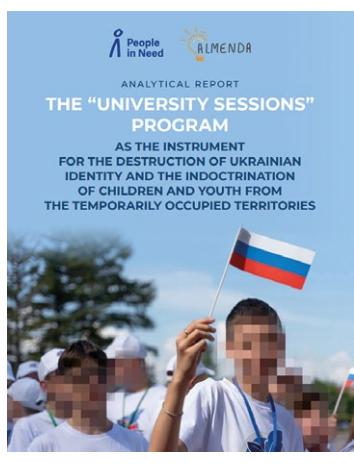
“University Sessions” started on 6 June 2022 as a pilot project for children from the so-called Donetsk People’s Republic and Luhansk People’s Republic, organised by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation in collaboration with the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation, with the involvement of specialists from Russian Federal Agency for Youth Affairs “Rosmolodyozh” and lecturers from the “Knowledge” Society. It is important to note that the project was developed in fulfilment of a personal instruction from the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin.<sup>117, 118</sup> The programme’s goal is career orientation and the formation of a Russian identity, and de facto, it aims at the Russification of Ukrainian children, erasing Ukrainian consciousness, and encouraging their relocation from occupied territories to study and subsequently live in the Russian Federation.

Each higher education institution that hosted children for the “University Sessions” developed its own program for the 10-day stay, which had its own name but should consist of six mandatory modules: educational, cultural and patriotic, extra-professional, sports, excursion and recreation.<sup>119</sup>

Since the start of the program in 2022, **10,611** children were transferred in 2022, **10,700** children in 2023 from the temporarily occupied parts of Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson regions, and more than **12,000** children participated in 2024.<sup>120</sup>



The official amount of budgetary funds spent on the “University Sessions” is not available from open sources, but taking into account the costs of each shift, the average cost per participant is about 48,200 rubles. Given the total number of participants who took part in the University Sessions in 2022, the estimated budget for the project was at least **552,275,600 rubles**, which is roughly equivalent to **\$6,054,062**.<sup>121</sup>



More details about the program can be found in the analytical report “The “University sessions” program as the instrument for the destruction of Ukrainian identity and the indoctrination of children and youth from the temporarily occupied territories” - <https://almenda.org/en/prohrama-universitytetski-zminy/>



117 [https://minobrnauki.gov.ru/press-center/news/novosti-ministerstva/52522/?sphrase\\_id=7771294](https://minobrnauki.gov.ru/press-center/news/novosti-ministerstva/52522/?sphrase_id=7771294), archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/HVtom>

118 <https://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/70319>, archive: <https://archive.ph/JNmKG>

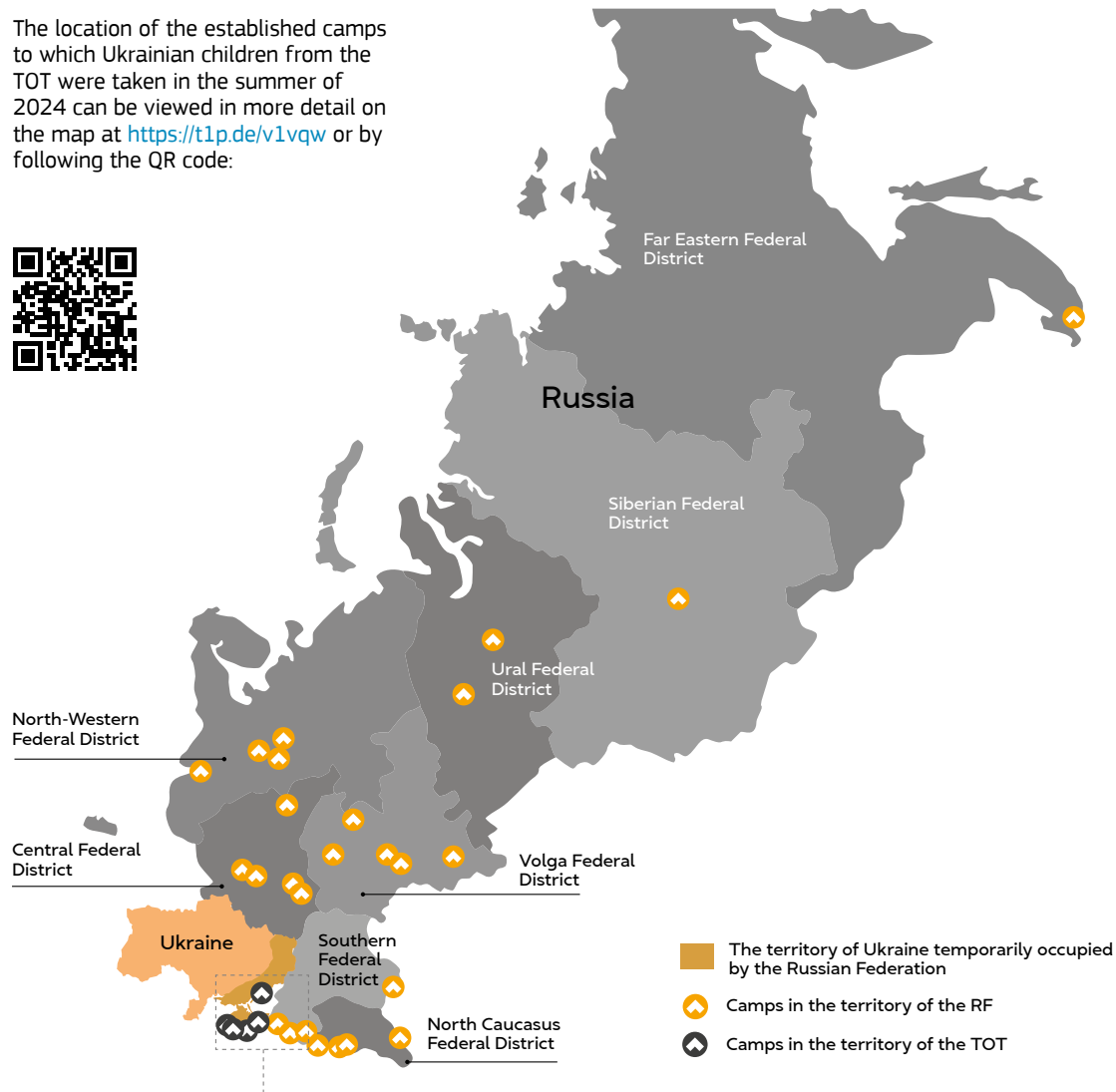
119 [https://minobrnauki.gov.ru/press-center/news/novosti-ministerstva/68712/?sphrase\\_id=7683315](https://minobrnauki.gov.ru/press-center/news/novosti-ministerstva/68712/?sphrase_id=7683315), archive: <https://archive.li/INqPA>

120 [https://minobrnauki.gov.ru/press-center/news/molodezhnaya-politika/91838/?sphrase\\_id=8324831](https://minobrnauki.gov.ru/press-center/news/molodezhnaya-politika/91838/?sphrase_id=8324831), archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/vfUn3>

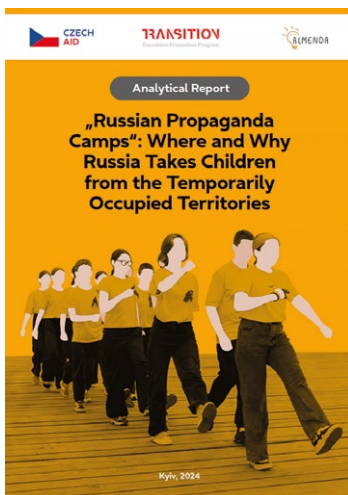
121 The equivalent is calculated based on the exchange rate of the Russian ruble to the US dollar as of the beginning of 2023

Another large-scale tool is the activity of so-called “health camps”. During the summer campaign of 2024 alone, according to the occupation authorities, more than 25,000 children from TOT of Luhansk region were taken to other regions of Russia under the pretext of recreation<sup>122</sup>, more than 13,000 children from TOT of Donetsk region<sup>123</sup>, about 3,000 from TOT of Kherson region<sup>124</sup>, more than 6,000 from TOT of Zaporizhzhia region<sup>125</sup>, as well as 174,000 children from TOT of the AR of Crimea<sup>126</sup> received so-called recreation, in particular in “labor and recreation” camps, where almost 4000 schoolchildren performed daily labor work assigned by the camp management to plant greenery, “volunteer” assistance to the elderly, etc. Such trips most often take place within the temporarily occupied territories (taking children to the camps in the TOT of Crimea, Sevastopol, Berdiansk) and the territory of the Russian Federation, but cases of transferring them to the territory of Belarus have also been established.

The location of the established camps to which Ukrainian children from the TOT were taken in the summer of 2024 can be viewed in more detail on the map at <https://t1p.de/v1vqw> or by following the QR code:



122 <https://dzen.ru/a/ZugdEmOpGQxyr46r?ysclid=m16dcfqwb924256637>, archive: [archive.md/wip/ZJgNZ](https://archive.md/wip/ZJgNZ)  
 123 <https://dnr-online.ru/v-dnr-podveli-promezhutochnye-itogi-otdyha-i-ozdorovleniya-detej-v-2024-godu/>, archive: [archive.md/wip/xy3Xp](https://archive.md/wip/xy3Xp)  
 124 <https://khogov.ru/news/zhiteli-hersonskoj-oblasti-rf-otpravlyayutsya-na-otdyh-i-ozdorovlenie-v-luchshie-sanatorii-i-lagerya-rossii/>, archive: <https://archive.md/9uTP1>  
 125 <https://www.edu.ru/news/regiony/bolee-3-500-shkolnikov-iz-zaporozhskoy-oblasti-otd/>, archive: [archive.md/wip/k4Tib](https://archive.md/wip/k4Tib)  
 126 [https://crimea.mk.ru/social/2024/09/14/otdykhali-i-rabotali-kak-proveli-eto-leto-krymskie-deti.html?ysclid=m1b2\\_aokji6716863557](https://crimea.mk.ru/social/2024/09/14/otdykhali-i-rabotali-kak-proveli-eto-leto-krymskie-deti.html?ysclid=m1b2_aokji6716863557), archive: [archive.md/wip/TF2jb](https://archive.md/wip/TF2jb)



Details about which camps children from the occupied territories were taken to, what types of activities were organized, and the role of the camps in eradicating the identity and militarizing Ukrainian children are revealed in the report “Russian Propaganda Camps’: Where and Why Russia Takes Children from the Temporarily Occupied Territories”: <https://almenda.org/en/analitichnij-zvit-tabori-rosijskoi-propagandi-kudi-i-navishho-rosiya-vivozit-ditej-z-okupovanix-teritorij/>



In addition, since 2023, the Center “VOIN” (Warrior) has expanded its activities to the TOT. In 2023 alone, the center has already trained nearly 17,000 people.<sup>127</sup> By the end of 2024, according to the head of the center, the training will cover at least 30 thousand people. The Russian authorities do not hide the military purpose of the center. The official website of the “VOIN” Center states that it was created to educate a new generation of patriots and defenders of Russia, and that one of the organization’s priorities is to prepare young people for military service in the Russian Armed Forces.<sup>128</sup> This goal is achieved in the already opened 22 branches of the “VOIN” Center, in particular, by targeting Ukrainian children in the TOT<sup>129</sup> – branches in Kherson region (Genichesk), Zaporizhzhia region (Berdiansk), Luhansk region (Luhansk), Donetsk region (Donetsk and Mariupol).<sup>130</sup>

127 <https://vvesti.com/obshchestvo/pocti-17-tysac-celovek-podgotovil-centr-voin-v-2023-godu>, archive: <https://archive.ph/LZDbI>

128 <https://dnr.crvsp.ru/news/programmy-tsentra-voin-v-2024-godu-ohvatjat-okolo-30-tysjach-chelovek>, archive: <https://archive.ph/RERWH>

129 <https://www.rusprofile.ru/branches/1227700820313>, archive: <https://archive.ph/C8yEq>

130 <https://almenda.org/en/voini-dlya-rosijskogo-rezhimu-yak-rosiya-militarizuye-ukrainskix-ditej-z-tot/>

## Conclusions

The Russian Federation’s policy towards Ukrainian children has a clear goal of eradicating Ukrainian identity, imposing Russian identity and militarizing children who have become hostages of the occupation. This policy covers all spheres of a child’s life, from formal education to non-formal education, youth movements, and institutions that are supposed to be responsible for recreation. The actions of the Russian Federation are a violation of international human rights law, international humanitarian law, and may also qualify as war crimes and crimes against humanity.

First of all, it is a violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which the Russian Federation is a party.<sup>131</sup> In particular, the so-called patriotic education, which is cross-cutting in formal education, non-formal education, activities of youth movements and camps, poses a direct threat to the child’s right to preserve his or her own identity (Art. 8), the re-education of children in the spirit of Russian patriotism contradicts the goals of education, which should be aimed at the comprehensive development of the child as a person, and the introduction of a militaristic component contradicts the preparation of the child for life “in a free society in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance... and friendship among all peoples” (Article 29). It should also be noted that activities organized for the education of Russian patriotism can be qualified as inconsistent with the child’s right to leisure and recreation (Article 31).

It is worth noting that the Russian Federation, as an occupying power, is limited in its powers to apply its domestic legislation in the occupied territories of Ukraine and must respect the laws that were in force in the territory before the occupation. The dissemination of Russian legislation, the conversion of educational institutions to Russian standards, and the establishment of branches of Russian organizations in the occupied territories to educate children in the spirit of “Russian patriotism” may be considered a violation of Article 43 of the Hague Convention<sup>132</sup> and Article 50 of the Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons (in the context of the proper functioning of institutions responsible for the care and education of children).<sup>133</sup>

Another aspect is the propaganda of service in the armed forces of the Russian Federation, which is carried out in formal education, non-formal education, through youth movements and the camp system. It should be recalled that the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons prohibits conscription into the armed forces of the Occupying Power, as well as propaganda for voluntary enlistment (Article 51).<sup>134</sup> In addition, it is important to note that children and youth in the occupied territories are also victims of another violation – forced passportization, which, in turn, upon reaching the age of majority, leads to another violation against young people, namely illegal conscription into the armed forces of the occupying power.

It is worth noting that in the context of violations of international humanitarian law, there are difficulties with the legal qualification of the use of education to eradicate the Ukrainian identity of children in the occupied territories of Ukraine, including indoctrination and militarization, since the Rome Statute does not contain a separate crime that would cover the above violations. At the same time, the scope of international crimes as defined in the Rome Statute may allow for interpretation that could encompass the actions described above.

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131 <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>

132 [https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/hague-conv-iv-1907?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/hague-conv-iv-1907?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

133 <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/geneva-convention-relative-protection-civilian-persons-time-war>

134 <https://almenda.org/en/molodizhni-ruxi-yak-instrument-indoktrinacii-i-militarizacii-na-okupovanix-teritoriyax/>

Such a crime is, in particular, a crime against humanity under Article 7(1)(h) of the Rome Statute. This is “persecution” – that is, “the intentional and flagrant deprivation of fundamental rights of a person, contrary to international law, on the basis of membership in a particular group or community”.<sup>135</sup> In the past, this crime has encompassed the practice of denying access to the educational process on ethnic grounds, which enhances the prospects for legal qualification.

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135 ROME STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/2024-05/Rome-Statute-eng.pdf>

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