

Monitoring Report

**“UNIVERSAL SOLDIER”,
or The Activities of Russian Children’s
and Youth Movements in the Temporarily
Occupied Territories of Ukraine**



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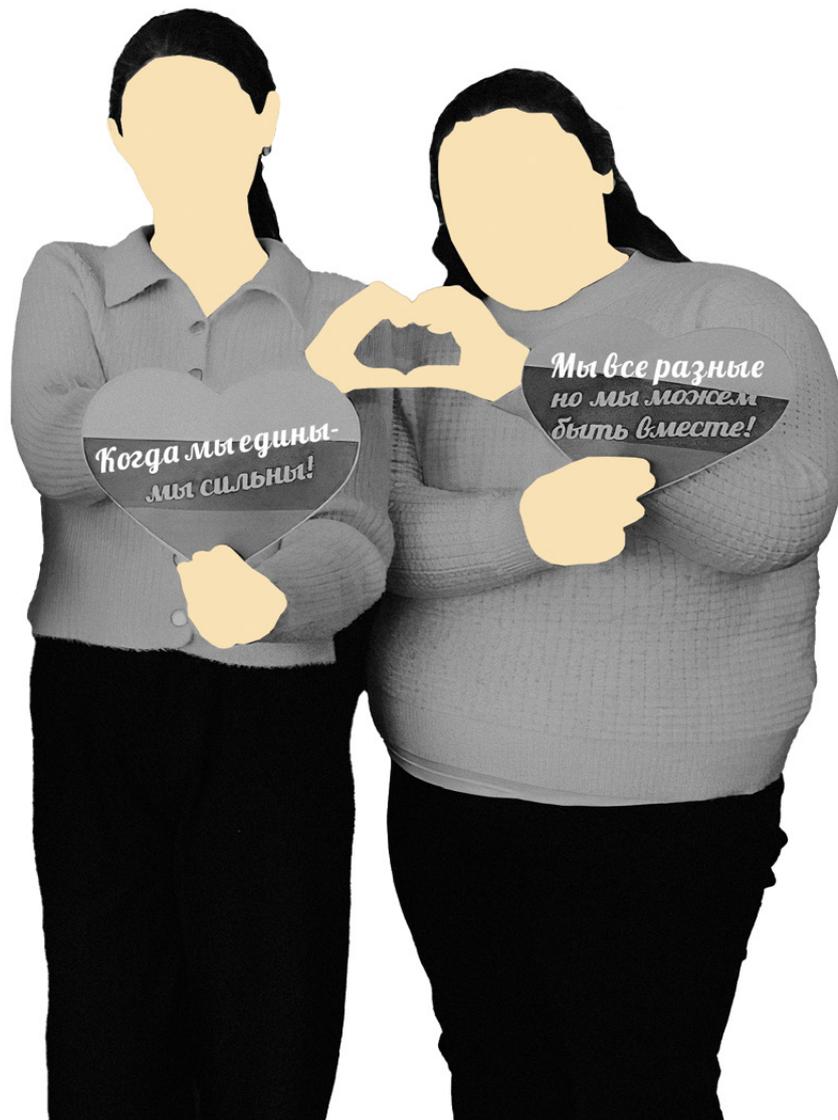
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ABBREVIATIONS

AR of Crimea	Autonomous Republic of Crimea
DOSAAF	the Voluntary Society for Cooperation with the Army, Aviation, and Navy (a Soviet-era organisation, known in Russian as ДОСААФ),
DPR	the so-called Donetsk People's Republic, i.e. the territory of Donetsk Region temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation
HEI	higher education institution
LPR	the so-called Luhansk People's Republic, i.e. the territory of Luhansk Region temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation
RF	Russian Federation
SMO	"special military operation", the term used in Russia to refer to the full-scale invasion of Ukraine
TOT	temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine
UAV	unmanned aerial vehicle

INTRODUCTION

The scale, systematic character, and comprehensiveness of the activities of Russian children's and youth structures in the TOT indicate the implementation of a state policy aimed at the assimilation and russification of Ukrainian children. Through a network of ideologized organisations, children's and youth movements, and so-called "volunteer" initiatives, the Russian Federation creates a tightly controlled environment in which expressions of Ukrainian identity are marginalised, while children are systematically absorbed into the Russian political, cultural, and educational space.

One of the key instruments of this policy is the use of children's and youth movements to re-shape the worldview of minors, foster loyalty to the occupation authorities, and cultivate readiness to support the actions of the aggressor state, including armed aggression against Ukraine. Through the imposition of Russian historical and cultural narratives, militarised practices, and the cult of "veterans of the SMO", the occupation administrations seek to instil in the younger generation a sense of belonging to the so-called "Russian world". Significant attention is also devoted to dismantling the Ukrainian education system, the displacement of the Ukrainian language, literature, and history, as well as the demonstrative destruction of Ukrainian symbols.

Within this process, youth organisations effectively perform the functions of a parallel "up-bringing vertical". They not only complement the school system controlled by the RF, but also operate as a separate channel of militarised socialisation. It is precisely through these structures that minors are involved in mass propaganda events, military-patriotic competitions and camps, pseudo-volunteer actions in support of the Russian army, as well as ceremonial activities designed to consolidate their identity as "citizens of Russia".

The issue of the use of children's and youth movements by the RF for the indoctrination and militarisation of children and young people is analysed in detail in the Analytical Report ["Youth Movements as an Instrument of Indoctrination and Militarisation in the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine"](#).

A wide network of such organisations operates in the TOT, including "Young Guard of United Russia", "Volunteers of Victory", "Voluntary People's Squad", "Young Army"¹, "Movement of the First", "Young South"², "Eaglets of Russia", "WE ARE TOGETHER".

The purpose of this Monitoring Report is to present an up-to-date picture of the size, territorial coverage, and operational mechanisms of the largest-scale Russian children's and youth structures operating in the TOT, namely "Young Army", "Movement of the First", "Young South", and "Eaglets of Russia", as well as to identify practices that may constitute violations of international humanitarian law, the rights of the child, and generally recognised standards in the field of education.

The actions documented in this Monitoring Report may be considered violations of:

- Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which stipulates that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and shall promote understanding, tolerance, and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups;

1 the name of the movement in Russian is "Yunarmiya", also widely referred to as the "Youth Army"

2 the name of the movement in Russian is "Yug Molodoy"

- Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which guarantees the right to education;
- Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which provides that any propaganda for war shall be prohibited by law;
- Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that a child's education shall be directed to the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national, and religious groups;
- Articles 38 and 39 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which regulate the protection of children in situations of armed conflict;
- Article 50 of the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, which prohibits the occupying power from enlisting children in formations or organisations subordinate to it;
- Article 51 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits the occupying power from compelling protected persons to serve in its armed or auxiliary forces, as well as any pressure or propaganda aimed at securing voluntary enlistment.

Thus, the documented activities are not incidental or sporadic. They constitute an element of a broader and systematic policy of the RF, aimed at altering the identity of the younger generation of Ukrainians and preparing them to serve as a future mobilisation resource for the aggressor state.

METHODOLOGY

Period of research: 1 June to 30 November 2025.

Geographical scope: temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

Areas of research: the activities of Russian children's and youth movements aimed at the militarisation of children in the occupied territories, indoctrination and the eradication of Ukrainian identity, the involvement of minors in actions intended to support the armed aggression of the RF against Ukraine, and the destruction of the Ukrainian education system.

Sources of information: the report is based on information from open sources, including:

- official communications from Ukrainian public authorities;
- reports and publications by civil society organisations;
- open sources from the TOTs, namely:
 - information posted on the official websites and social-network pages (including the «VKontakte» network) of the so-called «ministries/departments/education departments of the temporarily occupied territory»;
 - information posted on the websites of general-education schools in the TOTs;
 - publications by local media in the temporarily occupied parts of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts, the AR of Crimea, and the city of Sevastopol';
 - information published on social networks.
- official statistical data of the RF.

LIMITATIONS

For the purposes of this report, the authors used only sources available to them. Source collection and analysis continued until 5 December 2025. Information and reports that could not be verified as of the publication date were not included.

In preparing the report, the authors used data obtained from the social network “VKontakte”. This is due to the fact that following the full scale invasion of Ukraine by the RF, the majority of information from representatives of the occupation authorities has been published on this platform. As a result, it is currently effectively the only possible source for accessing the necessary information. For the same reasons, the report also uses materials from Russian media and resources operating in the TOT of Ukraine.

The information presented in this report is intended to document crimes committed by the RF and to counter the disinformation disseminated by it.

MOVEMENT OF THE FIRST

Первые

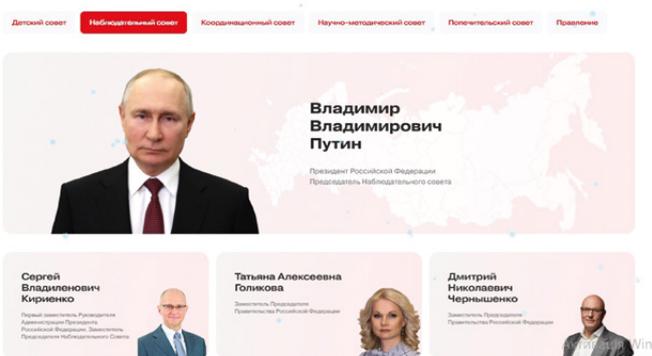


“Movement of the First” is the largest children’s and youth organisation of the RF. According to data provided by the Russian authorities, it includes more than **13 million participants**, including children and young people from the TOT of Ukraine.³ Participation in the movement is envisaged for individuals **aged 6 to 25**.⁴

The organisation was established in 2022 with the personal support of the President of the RF, Vladimir Putin, as an instrument for reviving the Soviet model of the Pioneer movement.⁵ Its activities are regulated by the Federal Law “On the Russian Movement of Children and Youth”,⁶ which defines key ideological objectives, including the formation of a worldview based on so-called “traditional Russian spiritual and moral values”,⁷ the cultivation of loyalty to the RF, and a “sense of personal responsibility for the fate of the state”.⁸

A key role in the leadership of the organisation is played by senior officials of the RF, while **its supervisory board is chaired by Vladimir Putin himself**. In the context of the TOT of Ukraine, he has explicitly stated that the activities of the movement should contribute to “overcoming the destructive legacy of the aggressive nationalist policy of the Kyiv authorities”, thereby effectively assigning “Movement of the First” the task of ideologically integrating Ukrainian children into the Russian political and cultural space.⁹

ОРГАНИЗАЦИОННАЯ СТРУКТУРА ДВИЖЕНИЯ



The image shows some of the individuals who are members of the Supervisory Board of “Movement of the First” (website screenshot). Source: <https://будьвдвижении.пф/organization-structure/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/5lqSm>

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE MOVEMENT

Children’s Council
Supervisory Board
Coordinating Council
Scientific and Methodological Council
Board of Trustees
Governing Board

Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin
President of the Russian Federation
Chair of the Supervisory Board

Sergei Vladilenovich Kirienko
First Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration of the Russian Federation,
Deputy Chair of the Supervisory Board

Tatyana Alekseevna Golikova
Deputy Chair of the Government of the Russian Federation

Dmitrii Nikolaevich Chernyshenko
Deputy Chair of the Government of the Russian Federation

3 <https://будьвдвижении.пф>, archive <https://archive.ph/8CBXH>

4 <https://id.pervye.ru/registration>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/pEpm>

5 <https://www.spb.kp.ru/daily/27395.5/4590329/>, archive <https://archive.ph/j9xpr>

6 <http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/Document/View/0001202207140025?ysclid=l9e4azy8re554739186>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/beOx2>

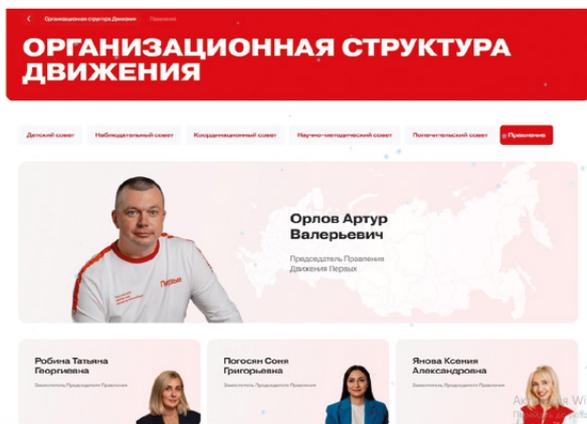
7 https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_421798/21fe609dcb064480ddcfa6335381a-c843aab4410/, archive <https://archive.ph/dqAOc>

8 <https://будьвдвижении.пф/download/NDQ0/ZG9jdW1lbnRz/ZmlsZQ==/>, archive <https://archive.ph/9n7pG>

9 <https://er.ru/activity/news/vladimir-putin-dvizhenie-pervyh-pomogaet-detyam-i-podrostkam-raskryt-silnye-storony-i-najti-put-v-zhizni>, archive <https://archive.ph/dqUt>

The executive body of the movement is headed by **Artur Orlov**, a participant in the so-called “SMO”, appointed by a decree of Vladimir Putin on 14 September 2024.¹⁰ In addition to his participation in the war against Ukraine, he was also involved in the “Time of Heroes” programme, which is aimed at increasing the influence of military “veterans” in the state and public sectors.¹¹ This underscores the militarised character of both the leadership and the ideological upbringing components of the movement’s activities.

More information about Artur Orlov is available in the article [“Russian Youth Policy: ‘Movement of the First’”](#).

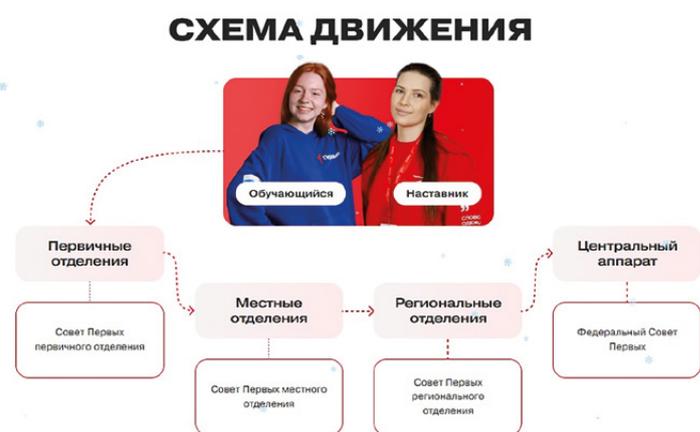


ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE MOVEMENT

- Children’s Council
- Supervisory Board
- Coordinating Council
- Scientific and Methodological Council
- Board of Trustees
- Governing Board
- Artur Valerievich Orlov**
Chair of the Governing Board
Movement of the First
- Tatyana Georgievna Robina**
Deputy Chair of the Governing Board
- Sonya Grigorievna Pogosyan**
Deputy Chair of the Governing Board
- Kseniya Aleksandrovna Yanova**
Deputy Chair of the Governing Board

The image shows some of the individuals who are members of the governing board of “Movement of the First” (website screenshot). Source: <https://будьвдвижениу.пф/organizational-structure/pravlenie/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/LEjZa>

“Movement of the First” has a strictly centralised governance structure. The basic unit consists of **primary branches** established in schools, colleges, HEIs, houses of culture, and other institutions. Since its establishment in 2022, the movement has been immediately rolled out across all the TOTs, and the number of children and young people involved has been increasing annually.



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE MOVEMENT

- Learner
- Mentor
- Primary branches
- Council of the First of the primary branch
- Local branches
- Council of the First of the local branch
- Regional branches
- Council of the First of the regional branch
- Central apparatus
- Federal Council of the First

The image shows a schematic representation of the structure of “Movement of the First”, published on the official website (screenshot). Source: <https://будьвдвижениу.пф/about/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/98ARk>

10 <http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/document/0001202409140014>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/XdPQn>
 11 <https://www.vedomosti.ru/society/news/2024/03/01/1023323-vremya-geroev-zarabotal>, archive <https://archive.ph/MK46j>

Coverage of the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine (as of 2025):¹²

Zaporizhzhia Region — more than 19,000 participants, 196 primary branches;¹³

Kherson Region — more than 6,200 participants, 115 primary branches;¹⁴

Donetsk Region — almost 25,500 participants, 890 primary branches;¹⁵

Luhansk Region — 78,300 participants,¹⁶ 606 primary branches;¹⁷

AR of Crimea — more than 147,000 participants;¹⁸

City of Sevastopol — approximately 21,000 participants.¹⁹

A distinct role in the functioning of the movement in the TOT is played by its regional leaders, who ensure programme coordination, the implementation of ideological initiatives, and interaction with the occupation administrations. The heads of the regional branches in the TOT are:

Zaporizhzhia Region —
Viktoriia Kostromina.²⁰



Kherson Region —
Aleksii Lavrentiev.²¹



Donetsk Region —
Denis Chernobai.²²



Luhansk Region —
Ruyal Asif oglu Aliyev.²³



¹² The information was obtained from open sources, and the actual number of participants may differ.

¹³ https://t.me/mypervie_zp/5577, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/YtWS6>

¹⁴ <https://bloknot-herson.ru/news/predsedatel-dvizheniya-pervykh-v-khersonskoy-oblas-1842838?ysclid=mc-5cob3h5588732499>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/nKjz1>

¹⁵ <https://t.me/PushilinDenis/8102>, archive <https://archive.ph/aiUom>

¹⁶ <https://dzen.ru/b/aF5INM8FVXy1AX3F>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/aqBL8>

¹⁷ https://будьдвижении.рф/regional-offices/regionalnoe-otdelenie-luganskoy-narodnoy-respubliki_70, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/7ONdi>

¹⁸ <https://rk.gov.ru/articles/91f222c3-2380-49ad-bae9-a7ea0cf0973b>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/Y5SEC>

¹⁹ https://sevizakon.ru/view/kontrolnaya_devyatelnost_otchety_pravitelstva_goroda/dep_obr_otchyoty/, archive <https://archive.ph/6ZJO1>

²⁰ <https://www.rusprofile.ru/id/1239000004198>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/U93Nk>

²¹ <https://www.rusprofile.ru/id/1239500000728>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/aAckO>

²² <https://www.rusprofile.ru/id/1239300002039>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/6NeDP>

²³ <https://www.rusprofile.ru/id/1239400001631>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/dLnbe>

AR of Crimea —

Yekaterina Arlamenkova,²⁴
dismissed on 28 November 2025.²⁵ As of the date of
preparation of this report, a new head has not been appointed.

**City of Sevastopol:**

Hanna Molchanova
(Russian: Anna Molchanova).^{26 27}



The appointment of regional leaders enabled the movement to rapidly establish a controlled network at the local level and to launch a broad system of influence over children and young people. The activities of regional branches in the TOT can be broadly grouped into three main areas:

1. IDEOLOGICAL INTEGRATION AND CULTURAL RUSSIFICATION

The objective is to form loyalty to the RF and to replace Ukrainian cultural and historical identity with Russian narratives.

Examples of activities aimed at achieving this objective include:

TOT of Kherson Region: schools in the occupied region held events dedicated to the so-called “Day of National Unity”. These events were conducted under titles such as “We Are Strong Through Unity”, “Russia Is a Family of Families”,²⁸ and “I Am Russian” among others.²⁹ Schoolchildren were told about the state symbols of the RF and introduced to the so-called “cultural heritage of Russia”.³⁰ Under the pretext of celebration, children recited poems not only in the Russian language but also in the languages of national minorities, including Tatar, Azerbaijani, Tuvan, Chechen, Belarusian, and Moldovan. Notably, the Ukrainian language was absent.³¹



The photo shows pupils of the Novotroitske school wearing attributes in the colours of the Russian flag against the backdrop of the slogan “Our Motherland is Russia”. Temporarily occupied territory of Kherson Region, November 2025. Source: <https://t.me/mypervie84/8353>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/E0H1a>

24 <https://www.rusprofile.ru/id/1239100002151>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/GmrlW>

25 <https://t.me/arlamenkova/704>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/9fwCU>

26 <https://www.rusprofile.ru/id/1239200000632>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/goCo8>

27 Here and throughout the report, where the Russian spelling of a name differs from the Ukrainian one, the Russian version is provided in brackets.

28 <https://t.me/mypervie84/8396>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/46FdK>

29 <https://t.me/mypervie84/8528>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/3Jxpq>

30 <https://t.me/mypervie84/8353>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/E0H1a>

31 <https://t.me/mypervie84/8373>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/0n5Ys>

The head of the regional branch of the movement, Aleksei Lavrentiev, disseminated propagandistic rhetoric during a local television programme, claiming the existence of “Ukrainian Nazis” and their alleged “expansion” into Donbas, Crimea, and Kuban.³²

TOT of Zaporizhzhia Region: participants of the movement took part in a thematic quiz titled “Russia Is My Motherland, workshops on Russian folk painting, and a screening of the pseudo-documentary film “DNA of Russia”. A regional gathering of the so-called “Guardians of History” was also held, featuring a ceremony with the display of the flags of the RF, an oath of loyalty to the RF, and a quest focused on knowledge of Russian military symbols and history.³³

TOT of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol: at the so-called “New Chersonesos”,³⁴ participants of the historical and cultural forum “Origins”, organised by Rospatriotcentre and “Movement of the First”, created 15 historical games dedicated to key events in Russian history. The forum included a discussion titled “To Serve the Fatherland and Remember” with the participation of RF Senator Liubov Glebova and other senior officials.³⁵ The games developed are intended for use in schools and clubs for the study of Russian history, which de facto serves the systematic introduction of Russian historical narratives through game-based formats.

TOT of Donetsk Region: within the framework of the “StudStart” project, a series of patriotic activities was held at HEIs in the region, including an informal cultural evening featuring poems and songs about the Russian Federation (Mariupol State University named after A. I. Kuindzhi), lectures with a patriotic focus (Donetsk State Pedagogical University named after V. Shatalov), a meeting with a participant of the so-called “SMO” (Donbas National Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture), and the creation of a “Wall of Memory” (Donetsk Academy of Transport).³⁶

TOT of Luhansk Region: at the end of October, “Movement of the First” scientific clubs were opened. Their mentors took part in an educational intensive in Saint Petersburg, RF, together with representatives of 30 regions of the RF, within the all-Russian project “First in Science”.³⁷ The aim of this initiative is to integrate Ukrainian children into the Russian scientific and educational space, to shape professional orientation towards employers of the RF, and to entrench the perception of the occupied territories as an integral part of Russia through participation in federal-level programmes.

2. LEGITIMISATION OF RUSSIAN AUTHORITY AND FORCED PASSPORTISATION

The objective is to create symbolic and legal attachment of children and adolescents to the RF.

“Movement of the First” is implementing a systematic campaign in the TOT of Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk, and Luhansk Regions, the AR of Crimea, and the city of Sevastopol to issue Russian passports to Ukrainian children who have reached the age of 14, within the framework of the all-Russian programme “We Are Citizens of Russia”. The ceremonies are held in schools and cultural institutions with the participation of senior officials of the occupation administrations and security structures of the RF. They are accompanied by the presentation of symbolic gifts and are often timed to coincide with propagandistic dates.

The de facto objective is to legally formalize the affiliation of children with the RF, to form an emotional connection with the Russian state through ceremonial events, and to legitimise the occupation authorities through the symbolic recognition of their powers to issue official documents.

32 <https://t.me/lavrentevai/1079>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/izb80>

33 https://t.me/mypervie_zp/6137, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/pkqW7>

34 Illegally occupied National Preserve “Tauric Chersonese”. — Note.

35 <https://sevastopol-news.com/culture/2025/09/13/497099.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/lbcPA>

36 https://vk.com/wall-221037370_31357, archive <https://archive.ph/XCtB5>

37 <https://t.me/minobrlnr/18971>, archive <https://archive.ph/SBqFF>

Examples of activities aimed at achieving this objective include:

Representatives of “Movement of the First” at Chaplynka School No. 1 in the **TOT of Kherson Region**, in November 2025, presented Russian passports to pupils who had reached the age of 14, along with passport covers, badges, and the collection “Connection of Generations”. Winners of the essay competition “Russian World and the Values of Russian Civilisation” were also awarded separately.³⁸

Similar passport handover ceremonies also took place in Askania Nova,³⁹ Khlibodarivka,⁴⁰ Hryhorivka,⁴¹ Khrestivka,⁴² and Strohanivka⁴³ schools in the occupied region.



The photo shows the handing over of Russian passports to pupils of Chaplynka School No. 1 by representatives of “Movement of the First”. Temporarily occupied territory of Kherson Region, November 2025. Source: <https://t.me/mypervie84/8470>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/XFz45>.

In the **TOT of Zaporizhzhia Region**, in the city of Melitopol, Russian passports were handed over to young people at the Multimedia Historical Park “Russia — My History” during the so-called “Zaporizhzhia Forum of National Unity”, with the participation of the so-called First Deputy Governor of Zaporizhzhia Region, Oksana Viunik.⁴⁴



The photo shows children from 23 regions of the RF, including children from the TOT of Ukraine, at the International Children's Centre “Artek” (TOT of the AR of Crimea), being presented with Russian passports. The passports were handed over by a participant of the so-called “SMO”. The ceremony was accompanied by rhetoric presenting the passport as a symbol of “love for the Motherland” and “new opportunities for the future”. Source: https://vk.com/wall-122681115_9135, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/dtRC2>

38 <https://t.me/mypervie84/8470>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/XFz45>

39 <https://t.me/mypervie84/8542>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/PGcse>

40 <https://t.me/mypervie84/8513>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/OZnr5>

41 <https://t.me/mypervie84/8555>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/JedEf>

42 <https://t.me/mypervie84/8576>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/MiFJ8>

43 <https://t.me/mypervie84/8615>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/BF2Tn>

44 <https://t.me/YugMolodoj/30098>, archive <https://archive.ph/Uk5dJ>



The photo shows schoolchildren from TOT of the city of Sevastopol who received Russian passports in November 2025 from RF Senator Larisa Melnik, Police Lieutenant Colonel Natalia Tsygankova, Deputy of the Council of the Leninsky Municipal District Oleksandr Subin (Russian: Aleksandr Subin), and Deputy Head of the Council of the regional branch of "Movement of the First" Misha Movsisyan. Source: <https://t.me/mypervie92/6724>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/uHFFG>

In the TOT of Donetsk Region, in the city of Horlivka, in October 2025, Russian passports were handed over to adolescents by representatives of the occupation administration and the leadership of the regional branch of the movement. The ceremony was accompanied by calls to “be worthy citizens” and rhetoric about responsibility for the “future of a great state”, which is intended to instil in children a sense of personal responsibility for the RF and to legitimise the occupation.⁴⁵

In the TOT of Luhansk Region, at the youth centre “Kvartyra” (“Flat”). 17 adolescents received Russian passports during events timed to the so-called “Day of Reunification” of the occupied regions with the RF in September 2025. The passports were handed over by the so-called Chair of the People’s Council of the LPR, Denis Miroshnichenko, and the head of the regional branch of “Movement of the First”, Ruyal Aliyev. The ceremony was accompanied by calls to “love the Motherland”, meaning Russia, which is intended to form an emotional attachment to the RF and to legitimise the occupation authorities.⁴⁶

3. MILITARISATION AND SUPPORT FOR RUSSIAN MILITARY FORCES

The objective is to form loyalty to Russia through military themed activities and the direct involvement of children in support for the Russian armed forces.

The occupation authorities systematically involve children and adolescents from the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine in direct support of Russian military forces through the

⁴⁵ <https://gorlovka-pravda.com/novosti-gorlovki/v-administraci-gorodskogo-okruga-gorlovka-vruchili-pasporta-yu-nyim-gorlovchanam-29498.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/y4Vr8>

⁴⁶ <https://luganmedia.ru/2025/09/26/v-luganske-molodym-lyudyam-torzhestvenno-vruchili-pervye-pasporta/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/osCpp>

production of material assistance, the writing of letters, and participation in military-patriotic programmes. In parallel, an extensive infrastructure for youth military training is being developed through the “Warrior” Centre (transliterated from the Russian “VOIN”). Branches of the centre operate in 21 regions of the RF, including the occupied territories of Ukraine, with plans to expand to all constituent entities by 2030. Participation is promoted through promises of additional points towards the Unified State Examination and prospects of admission to Russian HEIs. The instructors are combat participants, which ensures the direct transmission of military experience and ideology. The scale of militarisation indicates the strategic nature of this policy. In 2025, almost 13,000 cadets passed through the summer military-patriotic programmes “Time of Young Heroes”, representing a 15 % increase compared to the previous year. The leadership has openly declared plans to involve “hundreds of thousands” of children and to establish a “full-fledged system of initial military training”.⁴⁷

Further evidence of continued activities aimed at the militarisation of young people is the fact that “Movement of the First” is actively strengthening ties with veterans and participants in the so-called “SMO”. In 2025, the organisation **concluded an agreement with the so-called “Association of SMO Veterans”**, which provides for the joint implementation of projects and programmes, the organisation of events for experience sharing, and the involvement of children and families of military personnel.⁴⁸

MILITARY PATRIOTIC PROGRAMME OF “MOVEMENT OF THE FIRST”

On 17 July 2025, the Coordinating Council of “Movement of the First” approved the Programme of Military Patriotic Work with Children and Young People, developed by the governing board of the movement jointly with the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs, with the participation of relevant federal executive authorities. The programme envisages partnership with the security and law enforcement bodies of the RF, including the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the National Guard, the Investigative Committee, and the Federal Security Service, for the use of their infrastructure and the involvement of specialists as mentors. The programme covers children and young people aged 6 to 25 and provides for systematic military training across six areas: the development of “critical thinking and resistance to manipulation of consciousness” (in practice, resistance to information about crimes committed by the RF); the study of Russian statehood and military history; military-technical training, including work with weapon mock-ups, UAV programming, and engineering training; and military sports and applied military training, including initial military training, tactical training, firearms training, tactical medicine, and military-tactical games. The key flagship project is the All-Russian military-patriotic game “Zarnitsa 2.0”,⁴⁹ which in 2024 involved more than 805,000 children at the selection stage, and in 2025 received more than 3.1 million applications for participation, including from children from the TOT of Ukraine. The programme directly integrates participants of the so-called “SMO” as mentors for children, forms “readiness to defend the Fatherland” in the context of the war against Ukraine, and provides for phased psychological conditioning, from early acceptance of Russian identity at ages 6 to 10 (“I know, accept, and preserve the heritage of our Fatherland”) to readiness for combat activities at ages 18 to 25 (“I am ready to defend my Fatherland”). The objective of the programme is the mass militarisation of children from an early age, the formation of readiness for military service in the armed forces of the RF, the romanticisation of the war against Ukraine, and the creation of legal and psychological preconditions for the future conscription of Ukrainian children from the occupied territories into the armed forces of the RF.

47 <https://crvsp.ru/news/jurij-trutnev-my-namereny-prisvaivat-filialam-tsentra-vojn-imena-geroev-spetsial>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/xpX73>

48 https://t.me/mypervie_zp/6267, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/XdD5r>

49 For more details on the game “Zarnitsa 2.0”, see the article [“Zarnitsa 2.0 Game: Military Training for Children in the TOT”](#).

TOT of Kherson Region: school pupils were involved in collecting humanitarian assistance for Russian military forces as part of the campaign “Your Hands Are Their Warmth”,⁵⁰ producing raccoon talisman toys as part of the campaign “A Talisman for a Soldier”,⁵¹ and writing letters to servicemen participating in the war against Ukraine.⁵² In addition, 150 child participants of “Movement of the First” were transported to the TOT of the AR of Crimea to take part in a thematic camp session.⁵³

TOT of Zaporizhzhia Region: from March to December 2025, the regional branch of “Movement of the First” has been implementing the project “First for Our Own”⁵⁴ with the declared aim of supporting participants of the so-called “SMO”. The project includes workshops on producing “dry showers”, trench candles, and camouflage nets; meetings with participants of the so-called “SMO” to listen to their personal accounts; and the writing of letters of support to soldiers. Documented outcomes include the following. Activists of the Melitopol Industrial College produced 50 trench candles.⁵⁵ Schoolchildren from the Kuibyshevskiy District produced 15 tactical bracelets, 45 “dry showers”, one camouflage net measuring 5 by 2 metres, and wrote letters to servicemen of the RF participating in the war against Ukraine.⁵⁶ The project declares objectives of “forming an active civic position” and “social integration between SMO participants and young people”.⁵⁷



The photo shows minors wearing branded clothing of “Movement of the First” weaving camouflage nets for servicemen of the Russian Federation. Temporarily occupied territory of Zaporizhzhia Region, November 2025. Source: https://t.me/mypervie_zp/6269, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/Bbg3f>

In the TOT of Donetsk Region, a military sports centre “Warrior” is being constructed to train young people aged 14 to 18 in the following areas: UAV operation, firearms training, engineering training, communications, tactical medicine, and tactical training. The instructors are participants of the so-called “SMO”. Two formats of activity are planned: a three-month military sports training programme and 21 day summer sessions titled “Time of Young Heroes”.⁵⁸

“Movement of the First” serves as a key instrument used by the occupation authorities for systematic ideological conditioning and the forced integration of Ukrainian children into the Russian political and cultural space. The movement encompasses more than 275,000 children in the TOT of Ukraine and carries out ideological transformation, the legitimisation of the occupation, and militarisation through a network of more than 1,800 branches. Owing to its centralised governance by the RF, the movement operates as a mechanism for the forced indoctrination of Ukrainian children.

50 <https://t.me/mypervie84/8624>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/53H07>

51 <https://t.me/mypervie84/8534>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/BY7vA>

52 <https://t.me/mypervie84/8585>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/MSmpK>

53 <https://t.me/mypervie84/8402>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/OaxmD>

54 Original title: “Первые для СВОих”, where “СВОих” is a wordplay resembling the Russian abbreviation for the so-called “СВО” (“SMO”)

55 https://t.me/mypervie_zp/6293, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/RATCS>

56 https://t.me/mypervie_zp/6269, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/Bbg3f>

57 <https://projects.pervye.ru/projects/34555f2e-19f7-41f0-a7dd-c69d2acce18c>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/PvgRv>

58 <https://www.donetsk.kp.ru/daily/27676.5/5065383/>, archive <https://archive.ph/rh8jF>

YOUNG ARMY

“Young Army” is a movement established in 2016 at the initiative of the Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation, Sergei Shoigu, with the involvement of DOSAAF of Russia, the Veterans’ Public Organisation of the Armed Forces of Russia, and the Central Sports Club of the Army. As of 2025, the movement reportedly includes **1.85 million participants** aged eight and older, **of whom more than 42,000 children are located in the TOT of Ukraine**. According to its founding documents, it is defined as a “military patriotic movement”, the core purpose of which in practice is the militarisation of children and adolescents. The occupation authorities place particular emphasis on activities in the TOT, where efforts are focused on re-educating Ukrainian children as future “defenders of Russia”. According to Vladislav Golovin, the head of the organisation, more than 120,000 former members of “Young Army” are already serving in the armed forces of the RF or its security structures, with some participating in the so-called “SMO”.⁵⁹



The photo shows the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, together with participants of the “Young Army” movement. Source: <https://yunarmy.ru>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/EwIAo>

The leadership of “Young Army” is exercised by the main headquarters, which includes senior officials of the RF and former military personnel, among them the head of “Movement of the First”, **Artur Orlov**.⁶⁰

In December 2024, the position of Chief of the Main Headquarters of “Young Army” was assumed by Russian serviceman Vladislav Golovin, known during his military service by the call sign “Struna”. He took part in the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, including the occupation of Mariupol.⁶¹

It should be noted that both Artur Orlov and Vladislav Golovin were awarded the title “Hero of Russia”⁶² for their participation in the war against Ukraine. According to the National Police of Ukraine, their subordinates are suspected of committing war crimes in Ukraine.⁶³

59 <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/23885015>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/m1fTc>

60 <https://yunarmy.ru/headquarters>, archive <https://archive.ph/tbz0d>

61 <https://war.obozrevatel.com/ukr/kvitok-na-toj-svit-z-ukrainskih-ditej-z-okupovanih-teritorij-rosiya-gotue-kadrovij-rezerv-dlya-svoei-armii.htm>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/YQ9Ks>

62 <https://t.me/agentstvonews/6082>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/zUelf>

63 <https://npu.gov.ua/news/zgvaltuvaly-vahitnu-zhinku-katuvaly-ta-hrabuvaly-liudei-na-kyivshchyni-oholoshe-no-pidozru-dvom-rosiiskym-viiskovosluzhbovtsiam>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/2ekUH>

Состав Главного Штаба Движения

ЮНАРМИЯ



ВЛАДИСЛАВ НИКОЛАЕВИЧ
ГОЛОВИН



ВИКТОР РОМАНОВИЧ КАУРОВ



ЕКАТЕРИНА ЮРЬЕВНА
ЧИЖИКОВА



ЗАУРБЕК АЛЕКСАНДРОВИЧ
БАСИТИ



ВЛАДИСЛАВ ИГОРЕВИЧ
БРЕДИХИН



АРТУР ВАЛЕРЬЕВИЧ ОРЛОВ



ИВАН АЛЕКСАНДРОВИЧ ШИЦ



ЮРИЙ КОНСТАНТИНОВИЧ
ВАЛЯЕВ

The image shows some of the individuals who are members of the Main Headquarters of "Young Army" (website screenshot). Source: <https://yunarmy.ru/headquarters>, archive <https://archive.ph/tbz0d>

COMPOSITION OF THE MOVEMENT'S MAIN HEADQUARTERS

Young Army

Vladislav Nikolaevich Golovin
Viktor Romanovich Kaurov
Ekaterina Yuryevna Chizhikova
Zaurbek Aleksandrovich Basiti

Vladislav Igorevich Bredikhin
Artur Valeryevich Orlov
Ivan Aleksandrovich Shits
Yuriy Konstantinovich Valyaev

Coverage of the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine (as of 2025):⁶⁴

Zaporizhzhia Region — approximately 413 participants;⁶⁵

Kherson Region — approximately 320 participants;⁶⁶

Donetsk Region — more than 5,500 participants;⁶⁷

Luhansk Region — more than 6,000 participants;⁶⁸

AR of Crimea — more than 14,500 participants;⁶⁹

City of Sevastopol — more than 17,000 participants.⁷⁰

64 Information was obtained from open sources, the actual number of participants may differ.

65 <https://surl.li/oldboe>, archive <https://archive.fo/wip/8P59f>

66 <https://www.herson.kp.ru/daily/27666/5055218/?ysclid=mc8w6t0iuc822631130>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/cccV6>

67 <https://t.me/PushilinDenis/6466>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/8FcSC>

68 https://t.me/glava_lnr_info/3713, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/F2neQ>

69 <https://surl.lu/wfhcfy>, archive <https://archive.ph/oxzBO>

70 <https://sevastopol-news.ru/other/2025/06/22/471217.html?ysclid=mc8yfc5lt0952224576>, archive <https://archive.fo/wip/LPFpW>

Regional leaders:⁷¹

Zaporizhzhia Region —
Fidail Bikbulatov.



Kherson Region —
Mykyta Poliakov
(Russian: Nikita Polyakov), acting head.



Donetsk Region —
Viktor Pudak.



Luhansk Region —
Oksana Luhantseva
(Russian: Oksana Lugantseva).



AR of Crimea —
Serhii Havrylchuk (Russian: Sergei
Gavrylchuk).



City of Sevastopol —
Volodymyr Kovalenko
(Russian: Vladimir Kovalenko).



The organisation carries out systematic activities across several areas:

Propaganda and romanticisation of the war against Ukraine. “Young Army” is actively involved in glorifying the so-called “SMO”, including through participation in propagandistic events. One demonstrative episode occurred during a military parade in Pyongyang, where a column of servicemen from the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, who had participated in hostilities in Kursk Region, marched under the Russian tricolour to the “Young Army” anthem “Serve Russia”. This episode was presented as a symbol of “strong friendship”.⁷² This example illustrates the use of a children’s organisation to legitimise the war and to provide symbolic support for the involvement of foreign military formations.

71 <https://yunarmy.ru/regions>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/xo4zs>

72 <https://t.me/bikbulatovfidail/2207>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/56Qql>

Creation of a system of incentives to encourage enrolment in the RF military educational institutions. Membership in “Young Army” for at least one year grants entitlement to an additional three points in entrance examinations when applying to higher military educational institutions. Graduates of Suvorov and Nakhimov schools and cadet corps are granted preferential admission rights. This system of benefits creates economic incentives for children to join militarised structures and shapes a long-term orientation towards a military career in the RF.⁷³

Practical military training and the normalisation of violence. Through workshops on assembly and disassembly of weapons, familiarisation with military equipment, and interaction with active-duty military personnel, “Young Army” prepares children for potential service in the armed forces of the RF and promotes the perception of war as a normalised phenomenon.

Some examples of activities conducted in the TOT of Ukraine:

TOT of Kherson Region: in the city of Henichesk, approximately 100 young people took part in an event marking All-Russian Conscript’s Day, held at School No. 3. The programme included speeches by the Head of the Conscription Department of the Military Commissariat and the Head of the Headquarters of the regional branch of “Young Army”, Mykyta Poliakov, as well as interactive stations at which representatives of the military commissariat presented career prospects in military higher education institutions, and officers of the National Guard conducted a workshop on the assembly and disassembly of a Kalashnikov assault rifle.⁷⁴



The photo shows an officer of the National Guard of the RF demonstrating a Kalashnikov assault rifle to a child. November 2025, temporarily occupied territory of the city of Henichesk, Kherson Region. Source: <https://t.me/YunarmiaHerson/869>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/doy9W>

The headquarters of the regional branch of “Young Army” concluded a cooperation agreement with the so-called Investigative Directorate of the Investigative Committee of the RF for Kherson Region. The agreement provides for the establishment of Investigative Committee cadet classes, career-guidance lectures on the work of investigators, and joint activities aimed at fostering in children a “sense of loyalty to the Fatherland” (meaning Russia).⁷⁵ The de facto purpose of these activities is to create a basis for the early professional orientation of adolescents towards service in the security and law-enforcement bodies of the RF, to cultivate readiness to defend Russian interests, and to replenish the mobilisation reserve.

TOT of Zaporizhzhia Region: a propagandistic exhibition titled “Hall of Military Glory” dedicated to participants in the so-called “SMO” was opened at the Multimedia Historical Park “Russia — My History”. The first visitors included cadets of the “Warrior” Centre, members of “Young Army”, activists of the “Immortal Regiment” and “Movement of the First”, as well as cadets of the National Guard of the RF and the Investigative Committee.⁷⁶

73 https://t.me/crimean_patriot/9589, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/D6xiD>

74 <https://t.me/YunarmiaHerson/869>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/doy9W>

75 <https://t.me/YunarmiaHerson/859>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/hxrJC>

76 <https://t.me/yunarmmeetzzo/4940>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/OFm9Z>



The photo shows minors wearing cadet uniforms and “Young Army” uniforms at the exhibition “Hall of Military Glory”. November 2025, TOT of the city of Melitopol, Zaporizhzhia Region. Source: <https://t.me/yunarmeetzso/4940>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/OFm9Z>

On the occasion of the Day of the Ground Forces of the RF, the “Komitet” Young Army unit conducted a workshop and mini competitions on assembling and disassembling weapons for pupils of Enerhodar School No. 5.⁷⁷ Such activities are carried out with the aim of romanticising the war against Ukraine through the personalisation of so-called “SMO heroes”, normalising military themes in the children’s environment through game based formats involving real weapons, and shaping among adolescents the perception of military service as a prestigious career.

TOT of Donetsk Region: in October 2025, the official opening of a “Young Army House” took place at Mariupol School No. 26, representing another step in the systematic militarisation of educational institutions in the TOT. The event included “various competitions and a concert programme” aimed at involving children in the activities of the military patriotic organisation “Young Army”. In particular, children assembled and disassembled a Kalashnikov assault rifle, operated UAVs, took part in a military themed quiz, and received basic training in sapper skills. The establishment of a permanently functioning “Young Army House” directly on the premises of a general secondary school ensures systematic access of occupation military patriotic structures to school aged children, effectively transforming the educational institution into a centre of ideological conditioning and initial military trainin.⁷⁸

Also in October, in the occupied city of Mariupol, a UAV operation tournament was organised for pupils at the Nevskaya School. According to the organisers, the purpose of such events is to popularise this activity among young people and to draw attention to its wide scale use in the zone of the so-called “SMO”.⁷⁹

TOT of the AR of Crimea: under the guidance of a representative of the Crimea Patriot Centre, a ceremonial induction of children into the ranks of “Young Army” took place at School No. 22. The Young Army members swore to “remain loyal to the Fatherland” (meaning Russia) and to “honour the traditions of courage”. The ceremony was conducted with the participation of the so-called Deputy Head of the Education Department, Natalia Matiukhina, and a cleric.⁸⁰

Similar and other militarisation activities are envisaged by the Action Plan to Promote the Development of the Young Army Movement for 2025, approved by Order of the Council of Ministers of Crimea No. 248 r dated 28 February 2025. In addition, the document provides for the involvement of more than 10 regional structures of the occupation administration, the establishment of defence and sports camps, mandatory meetings between children and participants of the so-called “SMO”, participation in events marking the “day of reunification of Crimea with Russia”, and Young Army hikes to so-called “sites of military glory”.⁸¹

77 <https://t.me/yunarmeetzso/4679>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/xHa5A>

78 <https://t.me/mariupol24tv/105489>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/G0hjz>

79 <https://dzen.ru/video/watch/690ccb094fdaa54bfd2713a2>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/Kua0l>

80 https://t.me/crimean_patriot/9660, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/6RWUH>

81 <https://rk.gov.ru/documents/c85ad43b-2353-4995-978a-d40361852467?ysclid=mhzb4us1la976455814>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/87q51>



The photo shows children wearing “Young Army” uniforms during an induction ceremony into the movement. November 2025, TOT of the AR of Crimea. Source: https://t.me/crimean_patriot/9660, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/6RWUH>

The regional branch of “Young Army” also acted as one of the organisers of the training camps “STORM CRIMEA” (School of Tactical Training of Russian Youth). More than 100 participants from the TOT of the AR of Crimea, the TOT of Kherson Region, the TOT of the city of Sevastopol, and Saint Petersburg, RF, took part.⁸² Participants were provided with tactical and field uniforms, and the programme included eight areas of military training: basics of mountain and high altitude training;⁸³ basics of mine and engineering training, including the study of the structure of mines and grenades and the construction of defensive positions,⁸⁴ basics of tactical training, including covert movement, building assault, use of specialised equipment, and teamwork;⁸⁵ and basics of parachute training. A separate block was dedicated to **sniper training**, which further demonstrates the de facto involvement of children in acquiring combat skills directly related to the conduct of hostilities. Children from the TOT of Kherson Region were declared winners of the “Sniper Duel”.⁸⁶ The programme of spiritual and moral upbringing included the screening of the film “Saving Leningrad” for the stated purpose of “developing team spirit, courage, and patriotism”.⁸⁷ The training camps concluded with a meeting with the so-called Hero of the RF, Yevgeniy Shchendrik.⁸⁸



The photo shows an instructor of the “STORM CRIMEA” training camps instructing a minor in the handling of weapons. November 2025, TOT of the AR of Crimea. Source: https://t.me/crimean_patriot/9500, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/UxiS4>

82 https://t.me/crimean_patriot/9480, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/pHhSK>

83 https://t.me/crimean_patriot/9598, archive <https://archive.ph/U73V4>

84 https://t.me/crimean_patriot/9580, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/NFbAu>

85 https://t.me/crimean_patriot/9558, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/aWt1B>

86 <https://t.me/m2mxo/4492>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/EOo6s>

87 https://t.me/crimean_patriot/9500, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/UxiS4>

88 https://t.me/crimean_patriot/9513, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/3CUCd>



The photo shows sniper training of children during the “STORM CRIMEA” training camps. November 2025, TOT of the AR of Crimea. Source: <https://t.me/m2mxo/4492>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/E0o6s>

The activities are effectively aimed at the systematic militarisation of children through the integration of military training into the educational process, the legitimisation of aggression against Ukraine, and the preparation of children for possible future service in the armed forces of the RF.

TOT of the city of Sevastopol: a delegation of Sevastopol members of “Young Army” visited the Military Investigative Directorate for the Black Sea Fleet of the Investigative Committee of the RF. During the visit, children were introduced to the conduct of investigative experiments, and clergy from the Main Cathedral of the Armed Forces of the RF presented them with an icon of Saint John the Warrior and a banner depicting saints. The event took place within the framework of cooperation agreements between the Investigative Committee of the RF and “Young Army” at both the federal and regional levels.⁸⁹



The photo shows an officer of the Military Investigative Directorate of the Black Sea Fleet of the Investigative Committee of the RF demonstrating special equipment to children who are members of the “Young Army” movement. November 2025, TOT of the AR of Crimea. Source: https://t.me/ynarmuy_sev/2767, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/c976C>

On the occasion of the so-called “Day of National Unity”, members of “Young Army” met with combat veteran Danil Belov, a lecturer with the Russian Society “Knowledge” and a member of the Association of SMO Veterans, as part of the “Dialogue with a Hero” programme.⁹⁰

At the All-Russian forum “Council of Young Army Commanders”, the Sevastopol team watched the film “Ballad about War” and completed the symbolic activity “My Tree of Z Defenders”.⁹¹ As part of a tournament marking the 320th anniversary of the Naval Infantry of the Russian

89 https://t.me/ynarmuy_sev/2767, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/c976C>

90 https://t.me/ynarmuy_sev/2787, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/CXBSi>

91 https://t.me/ynarmuy_sev/2866, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/kSPi5>

Navy, members of “Young Army” took part in competitions that included grenade throwing, rifle and pistol shooting, assembling and disassembling a Kalashnikov assault rifle, and medical training.⁹²

TOT of Luhansk Region: in the city of Krasnodon, on the premises of the “Young Guard” Museum, a ceremonial induction of schoolchildren from eight districts of the occupied region into the ranks of “Young Army” took place, timed to the so-called “Day of National Unity”. A welcoming address was delivered by Anatolii Yanchuk, head of the local branch of the “Defenders of the Fatherland” Foundation, who called on children to “remain loyal to the Fatherland” (meaning Russia) and to “preserve a shared memory”.⁹³ During the ceremony, a cooperation agreement was signed between the regional branch of “Young Army” and the Military Investigative Departments of the Investigative Committee of the RF for the joint grouping of forces. The agreement provides for the organisation of career guidance activities for Young Army members with the participation of Investigative Committee specialists, forensic experts, and officers.⁹⁴

TOT of Donetsk Region: republican level competitions titled “Second Militia” were held, timed to the so-called “Day of National Unity”. Members of “Young Army” completed a series of tasks, including shooting with an air rifle, putting on gas masks, partial disassembly and assembly of an AK rifle mock up, and loading a magazine with training cartridges against the clock. The competitions were presented as a means of patriotic upbringing, preparation for service in the armed forces of the RF, and the promotion of applied military sports.⁹⁵



The photo shows minors participating in the “Second Militia” competition. November 2025, TOT of Donetsk Region. Source: https://t.me/youngguard_youngarmy/15692, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/jd8Hf>

The activities of “Young Army” in the TOT of Ukraine constitute a systematic instrument for the militarisation of children and adolescents, aimed at fostering readiness for service in the armed forces of the RF and legitimising Russian aggression. Through practical military training, the promotion of the war against Ukraine, and the creation of incentive mechanisms for admission to military educational institutions, the occupation authorities seek to transform Ukrainian children into future “defenders of Russia”.

92 https://t.me/ynarmuy_sev/2877, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/F008d>

93 <https://t.me/yunarmylnr/1593>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/v7QLu>

94 <https://t.me/minobrlnr/18886>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/Z5Kcj>

95 https://t.me/youngguard_youngarmy/15692, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/jd8Hf>

EAGLETS OF RUSSIA



“Eaglets of Russia” is an all-Russian upbringing programme for primary school pupils in grades 1 to 4, introduced in 2021 at the initiative of the Minister of Education of the RF, Sergei Kravtsov, as the first stage of the Russian Movement of Children and Youth “Movement of the First”.⁹⁶ The programme is organised by the Ministry of Education of the RF, with “Movement of the First”

acting as a co-organiser.⁹⁷ As of 2025,⁹⁸ “Eaglets of Russia” reportedly includes **4.3 million children** aged six and older, including **more than 50,000 children from the TOT of Ukraine**.⁹⁹ From 1 September 2025 alone, more than 850,000 primary school pupils joined the programme.¹⁰⁰

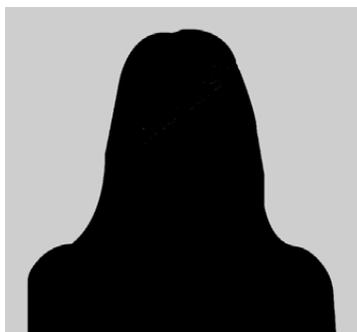


The image shows the leadership of the “Eaglets of Russia” programme. Source: <https://orlyatarussia.ru/o-programme/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/Z31B4>

PROGRAMME TEAM		
Minister of Education of the Russian Federation Sergei Sergeevich Kravtsov Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation	Director Aleksandr Vasilyevich Dzheus Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution “All-Russian Children’s Centre ‘Orlyonok’”	Director Aleksandr Sergeevich Kudryashov Federal State Budgetary Institution “Rosdettsentr”

Regional leaders: ¹⁰¹

Zaporizhzhia Region —
Hanna Volkova (Russian: Anna Volkova).



Kherson Region —
Olha Abibullaeva (Russian: Olga Abibullaeva).



⁹⁶ <https://orlyatarussia.ru/o-programme/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/Z31B4>

⁹⁷ <https://orlyatarussia.ru/upload/position-programm.pdf>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/HXPj1>

⁹⁸ The data reflect the situation as of early 2025. In light of the mass enrolment of children into “Eaglets of Russia” after September 2025, the actual number of participants may differ.

⁹⁹ <https://vsednr.ru/v-vossoedinennykh-regionakh-programma/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/UCANP>

¹⁰⁰ <https://объясняем.рф/articles/news/s-1-sentyabrya-v-ryady-orlyat-rossii-vstupili-eshche-bolee-850-tysyach-uchenikov-mladshikh-klassov/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/wZY6h>

¹⁰¹ https://vk.com/@orlyata_rus-kontaktnye-dannye-regionalnyh-kuratorov-programmy-orlyata-ro, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/T7tpQ>

Donetsk Region —

Yuliia Kulykova
(Russian: Yuliya Kulikova).

**Luhansk Region —**

Aliona Kruchevska
(Russian: Alyona Kruchevskaya).

**AR of Crimea —**

Nataliia Bilousova
(Russian: Natalya Belousova).

**City of Sevastopol —**

Nataliia Koriakina
(Russian: Natalya Koryakina).



According to its statutory documents, the programme's official aim is the “creation and development of organisational and pedagogical conditions for the preservation and **strengthening of traditional Russian spiritual and moral values**” among primary school pupils.¹⁰² In practice, however, the programme functions as an instrument of early ideological conditioning for children aged 6–10 and prepares them for subsequent involvement in militarised structures, including “Young Army” and “Movement of the First”.

In the TOT of Ukraine, the programme is implemented on a compulsory basis through the education system. The designated higher education institution for the TOT of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson Regions is Azov State Pedagogical University named after P. D. Osypenko, located in the TOT city of Mariupol. For the TOT of the AR of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, supervisory functions are carried out by Armavir State Pedagogical University in Krasnodar Krai, RF. These HEIs provide training for primary school teachers through a specialised educational module titled “Upbringing Work at School”, which mandatorily incorporates the “Eaglets of Russia” programme. They also organise teaching placements in schools located in the occupied territories and form pedagogical teams to implement thematic sessions in children's camps.¹⁰³

In addition to the designated HEIs, a network of so-called “flagship schools” is being established in the TOT of Ukraine to serve as regional centres for disseminating the programme.

In the **TOT of Donetsk Region**, this role is assigned to Secondary School No. 65 in the city of Mariupol. In Luhansk Region, it is Anratsyt Secondary School No. 19. In **Zaporizhzhia Region**, it is General Secondary School No. 1 in the city of Berdiansk. In **Kherson Region**, it is Henichesk School No. 1. In the **TOT of the AR of Crimea**, Gymnasium No. 8 in the city of Yevpatoriia

102 <https://orlyatarussia.ru/upload/position-programm.pdf>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/HXPj1>

103 <https://orlyatarussia.ru/o-programme/bazovye-vuzy/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/3xd08>

has been designated as the flagship school. In the **city of Sevastopol**, this role is assigned to General Secondary School No. 33 named after Hero of the Soviet Union V. I. Herasymov, located in Balaklava.¹⁰⁴

These institutions are responsible for replicating the programme's implementation across other schools in the region, serve as hubs for methodological training for primary school teachers, and function as platforms for testing new forms of ideological engagement with children. This system ensures the systematic and large-scale involvement of Ukrainian primary school pupils in propagandistic activities, thereby laying the groundwork for their further integration into the Russian ideological and militarised upbringing system. The “Eaglets of Russia” programme officially declares among its objectives the “upbringing of love and respect for one’s people, small homeland, the community of citizens of our country, Russia”, and the “upbringing of respect for the spiritual and moral culture of one’s family, one’s people, and family values, taking into account national and religious affiliation”.¹⁰⁵ In practice, however, this results in the imposition of Russian identity and values on children in place of Ukrainian ones.



The photo shows pupils of a school in the Dzhankoi District of Crimea (TOT of the AR of Crimea) who are participants in the “Eaglets of Russia” programme, holding movement symbols and flags of the Russian Federation. Source: https://krymka.crimeaschool.ru/orlyata_rossii, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/w8wny>

Since the beginning of the 2025/2026 academic year, Ukrainian children in the TOT of Ukraine have been actively drawn into the “Eaglets of Russia” programme, effectively being compelled to join through pressure exerted on parents.¹⁰⁶ Several examples recorded during the monitoring period in the TOT include the following.

In October 2025, first and second grade pupils at Henichesk School No. 1 in the TOT of **Kher-son Region** were inducted into “Eaglets of Russia” through a ceremonial event that included the performance of an anthem, the taking of an oath, and the presentation of backpacks bearing Russian symbols. The school also displays an exhibition titled “Museum of Sport”, featuring attributes of Soviet and Russian athletes, aimed at fostering in children a sense of pride in the “achievements of Russian sport” and a perceived historical connection with the USSR.¹⁰⁷

In November 2025, a ceremonial induction of first grade pupils into “Eaglets of Russia” took place at Kostiantynivka School No. 2 in the TOT of **Zaporizhzhia Region**. During the ceremony, children were introduced to the “legend of the Eaglet”, presented with membership certifi-

104 <https://orlyatarussia.ru/o-programme/flagman-school/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/FXr94>

105 <https://cdn.crimeaschool.ru/organization-311/eacb8480-cd22-4b1b-a0b8-0beff4e9340b>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/L4g4I>

106 https://t.me/sprotyv_official/7825, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/qscHP>

107 <https://orlyatarussia.ru/news/shkolniki-iz-khersonskoy-oblasti-prisoedinilis-k-orlyatam-rossii/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/LMe54>

cates, led into an “Eaglets’ circle” to perform the anthem, and informed that being an “eaglet” means “cultivating love for the Motherland” (meaning Russia).¹⁰⁸ Similar induction ceremonies for schoolchildren were held in the occupied region at Spaske General Secondary School No. 15,¹⁰⁹ Menchkyurivka General Secondary School,¹¹⁰ and Rozivka General Secondary School No. 29.¹¹¹ This indicates the systematic nature of the programme’s implementation in the occupied territories, where Ukrainian children are forcibly involved in Russian ideological structures from the age of six.

TOT of the city of Sevastopol: in November 2025 alone, 750 children from 12 schools were enrolled into “Eaglets of Russia” for the purposes of early ideological conditioning and the formation of Russian identity.¹¹²

At the G. T. Beregovoi Cadet Boarding School in the **TOT of Donetsk Region**, 48 pupils from grades 1 to 4 were inducted into “Eaglets of Russia” with the participation of cadets from the specialised Investigative Committee class and so-called representatives of the Investigative Directorate of the Investigative Committee of Russia for the DPR. The ceremony included official addresses, the tying of uniform neckerchiefs by Investigative Committee officers, interactive tasks related to the “Eaglets” programme tracks, and the performance of the Eaglets’ anthem.¹¹³



The photo shows pupils of the G. T. Beregovoi Cadet Boarding School being inducted into “Eaglets of Russia”, with the participation of so-called representatives of the Investigative Directorate of the Investigative Committee of Russia for the DPR. November 2025, TOT of Donetsk Region. Source: <https://dnr.sledcom.ru/news/item/2035992/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/t7ff0>

108 <https://t.me/obrzp/36864>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/S1sZD>

109 <https://t.me/obrzp/36924>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/dk7yQ>

110 <https://t.me/obrzp/36734>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/2a6yc>

111 <https://t.me/obrzp/36713>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/7eakW>

112 <https://www.sevastopol.kp.ru/online/news/6681117/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/yrJX0>

113 <https://dnr.sledcom.ru/news/item/2035992/>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/t7ff0>

In the **TOT of the AR of Crimea**, mass events dedicated to the Day of the State Emblem of the Russian Federation¹¹⁴ were held for pupils in grades 1–4.¹¹⁵ During these events, children were exposed to the imposition of Russian state narratives and encouraged to perceive Russia as their homeland through the study of the history and symbolism of the Russian state emblem. In practice, this amounts to the eradication of Ukrainian identity.



The photo shows participants of the “Eaglets of Russia” programme from Dalekivska Secondary School named after B. A. Demus holding flags of the Russian Federation. November 2025, TOT of the AR of Crimea. Source: https://vk.com/wall-216865464_16086, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/b5zbW>

The “Eaglets of Russia” programme constitutes a systematic instrument of early ideological conditioning targeting Ukrainian children aged six and older in the TOT of Ukraine. The forced involvement of more than 50,000 children through the education system, the establishment of a network of flagship schools, and the training of specialised pedagogical staff demonstrate the strategic nature of a policy aimed at the russification of the younger generation. The programme lays a psychological foundation for the subsequent involvement of children in militarised structures such as “Young Army” and “Movement of the First”, fostering loyalty to the RF from an early age and replacing Ukrainian identity with a Russian one.

114 https://vk.com/wall-216865464_16082, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/Fqj2g>

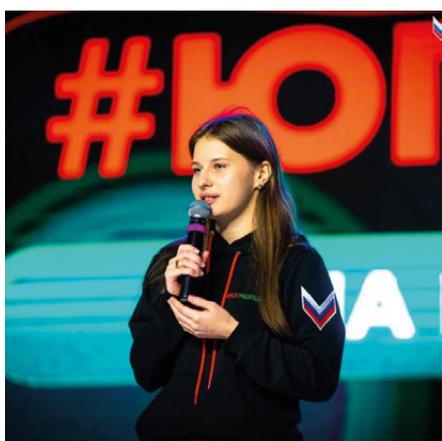
115 https://vk.com/wall-216865464_16086, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/b5zbW>

YOUNG SOUTH

#ЮГМОЛОДОЙ

In addition to all-Russian structures, regional youth movements are also being established and supported in the TOT of Ukraine. These movements are coordinated and directed by the occupation authorities towards the systematic russification and militarisation of children and adolescents living under occupation.

“Young South” is an interregional youth movement established in 2022 by the occupation authorities for the purposes of “civic patriotic upbringing, promotion of volunteering, and youth development” in the TOT of Ukraine. As of 2025, over the course of its activities, the movement has reportedly conducted more than 5,000 events with the participation of approximately 3,000 volunteers,¹¹⁶ bringing together more than **1,000 individuals** from the TOT through 38 local branches and 600 permanent activists.¹¹⁷ Despite official statements claiming that the movement operates in the TOT of Zaporizhzhia, Kherson, Donetsk, and Luhansk Regions, its actual activities are currently concentrated only in Zaporizhzhia and Kherson Regions.



The interregional youth movement “Young South” is headed by Yuliia Lohosha (previous surname Klimenko, Russian: Yuliya Logosha).¹¹⁸

The leading role of this movement in the systematic russification and militarisation of children and young people in the TOT of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson Regions is confirmed by the methodological guidelines titled “Patriotic and Moral Upbringing of Youth”, issued by the occupation Ministry for Youth Affairs of Zaporizhzhia Region jointly with the autonomous non commercial organisation “Young South”, with the support of Rosmolodyozh¹¹⁹ and the Russian Federation’s national project “Education”.¹²⁰

In the so-called “patriotic” area, since early 2023 the movement has implemented more than 11,550 activities, covering all spheres of young people’s lives, from pre-school education to vocational training. According to these guidelines, russification is carried out through systematic influence on all age groups based on the model of “**seven stages of the development of patriotism**”, ranging from instinctive attachment to active engagement in the interests of Russia. A key mechanism is the campaign “We Are Citizens of Russia!”, implemented with the participation of “Movement of the First”, within which children from the age of 14 are issued with Russian passports. This constitutes a gross violation of the Geneva Convention prohibition on changing



116 <https://news-zp.ru/society/2025/10/29/566309.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/2ArV0>

117 <https://dobro.ru/organizations/10064078/info>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/KdY8p>

118 <https://www.rusprofile.ru/id/1239000006596>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/N7FzV>

119 Rosmolodyozh is the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs of the Russian Federation, responsible for implementing state youth policy and coordinating government-funded youth programmes and movements.

120 <https://surl.li/qbfiti>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/C7s4G>

citizenship in occupied territories. The system of influence encompasses the so-called “ten facets of patriotism”, covering family (promotion of Russian “traditional values”), education (an expanded course of Russian history and the “Pushkin Card” project for visiting the “Golden Ring of Russia”), media (claimed effectiveness of 89.4 percent through television and the internet, including a “state order” for positive content about Russia), and sport (the cultivation of a healthy lifestyle framed as preparation for military service).

A particularly dangerous component is **the strand titled “Service to the Fatherland”, which represents the most militarised element** of the so-called system of “patriotic upbringing”. It directly cultivates readiness among children and young people to participate in war through an ideology of self-sacrifice. This is articulated as follows: “Service to the Fatherland is not just words; it is a manifestation of true patriotism. **Readiness to defend its interests and even to give one’s life for its benefit is what distinguishes a true patriot**”. The materials explicitly emphasise that service to the Fatherland is associated with military service or work within security and law enforcement bodies. One of the key mechanisms for achieving this objective is the “raising of the prestige of service in the Russian Army” through the organisation of military sports camps, games such as “Zarnitsa” (“Summer Lightning”) and “Orlyonok” (“Eaglet”), competitions and championships, as well as the “restoration of patronage links between military units and military patriotic associations”. This ensures the direct involvement of active military units of the RF in work with children, normalises war, and transforms Russian servicemen fighting against Ukraine into “heroes” and “role models”.

In practice, this is implemented through the activities of the “Young South” movement and its partner organisations, including “Young Army”, the “Voluntary People’s Squad” (training in the use of UAVs, tactical medicine, and live fire shooting), and the programme “I Serve the Fatherland” (preparation of young men for service in the army). It also involves the coordination centre “WE ARE TOGETHER”, which has reportedly transferred 100 tonnes of humanitarian aid to servicemen of the RF and organises the delivery of letters from children and young people to Russian soldiers.



The image shows the stages of personal socialisation during which influence is exerted on the formation of patriotism. Screenshot from the methodological guidelines “Patriotic and Moral Upbringing of Youth”. Source: <https://surl.li/dwzhgh>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/C7s4G>

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EDUCATION

ZAPORIZHZHIA OBLAST

MINISTRY FOR YOUTH POLICY OF ZAPORIZHZHIA OBLAST

#YOUNGSOUTH

The prospective development of patriotic and moral upbringing in Zaporizhzhia Region envisages the creation of a step-by-step system for raising citizens, integrated into the key stages of human development from an early age and extending throughout the entire life course. Within this framework, stages of personal socialisation are directly aligned with stages in the development of patriotism and are intended to proceed in parallel.

OLDER AGE

YOUTH

ADOLESCENCE

CHILDHOOD

The instruments for implementing the system of patriotic upbringing of citizens of the Russian Federation include the education system (pre school, primary general, basic general, secondary general, secondary vocational, and higher education) and the actors of state youth policy.

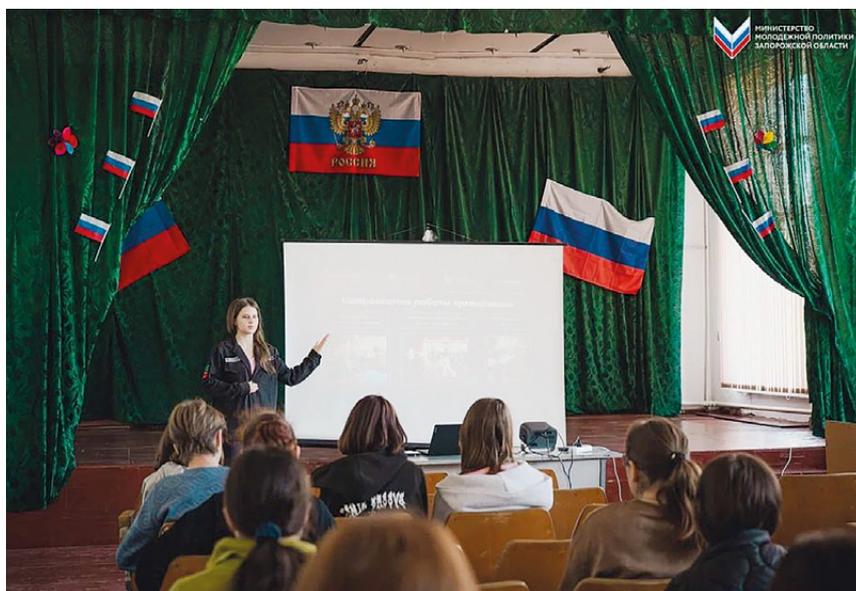
The methodological guidelines also confirm the involvement of religious institutions in the so-called “patriotic” conditioning of children and young people. In particular, they state that the Russian Orthodox Church contributes to the **“promotion of the idea of the necessity of service to the Fatherland (Russia) and the defence of its territorial integrity”**.

While officially declaring activities in areas such as “patriotic upbringing of youth”, “humanitarian missions”, and “youth development”, “Young South” in practice functions as an instrument of ideological conditioning and russification of Ukrainian young people, shaping loyalty to the RF and involving them in propagandistic activities. A key strategy is the systematic penetration of the education system through the establishment of branches within schools, colleges, lyceums, and universities, which ensures direct access to young people and enables their large-scale involvement in propaganda.

Key areas of the movement’s activities:

1. SYSTEMATIC PENETRATION OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND LARGE-SCALE INVOLVEMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE

During October and November 2025 alone, the head of the movement, Yuliia Lohosha (Klimenko), signed cooperation agreements and opened “Young South” branches at the following institutions: Kostiantynivka School No. 1 named after P. T. Odynets,¹²¹ Veselivka Agricultural Lyceum,¹²² Yakymivka Vocational Lyceum,¹²³ Dniprorudne Industrial College,¹²⁴ Velyka Bilozerka Vocational Agricultural Lyceum,¹²⁵ and Azov Pedagogical University.¹²⁶ During the presentations, pupils were informed about the “key projects of the organisation”, “opportunities to participate in volunteer projects”, and “support for youth initiatives”. Intellectual games and quizzes were also conducted to encourage involvement in the movement’s activities. At the final congress of the movement in the TOT of the city of Melitopol, ceremonial letters of appreciation were presented to representatives of educational institutions where branches had been established.¹²⁷



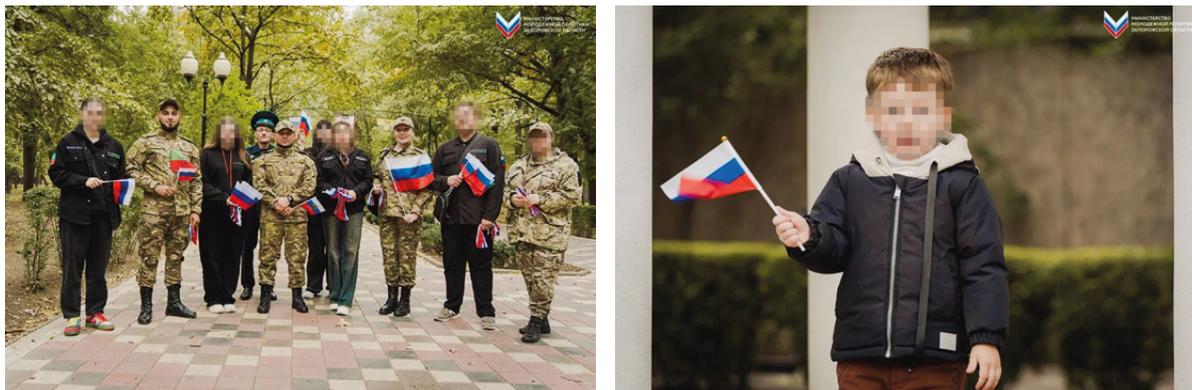
The photo shows Yuliia Lohosha (Klimenko) during a presentation of the movement at Velyka Bilozerka Vocational Agricultural Lyceum. November 2025, TOT of Zaporizhzhia Region. Source: <https://news-zp.ru/society/2025/11/05/569130.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/MwJOR>

- 121 <https://news-zp.ru/society/2025/11/21/576596.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/xif3l>
 122 <https://news-zp.ru/society/2025/11/20/576368.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/8bqVg>
 123 <https://news-zp.ru/society/2025/11/14/573334.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/W9mFC>
 124 <https://news-zp.ru/society/2025/11/07/570141.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/fVgR6>
 125 <https://news-zp.ru/society/2025/11/05/569130.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/MwJOR>
 126 <https://news-zp.ru/other/2025/10/10/556947.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/WunAl>
 127 <https://news-zp.ru/society/2025/11/24/578110.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/TUjK9>

2. PROPAGANDA OF RUSSIAN STATEHOOD AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE OCCUPATION

Activists of the movement carried out a propagandistic campaign titled “A Postcard to the President” in the city of Melitopol (TOT of Zaporizhzhia Region), during which residents were encouraged to write greetings and messages to Vladimir Putin.¹²⁸

On the occasion of the so-called “Day of Reunification”, activists distributed more than 500 tricolour ribbons and 500 flags of the RF and of Zaporizhzhia Region under occupation administration control on the city’s central streets, congratulating residents on the “third anniversary of the reunification of Zaporizhzhia Region with the Russian Federation”.¹²⁹



The photo shows participants of the “Young South” movement together with servicemen of the RF, as well as a child holding a Russian flag during a propagandistic event marking the so-called “Day of Reunification”. September 2025, TOT of Zaporizhzhia Region. Source: <https://news-zp.ru/society/2025/09/30/551185.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/79jUj>

During the signing of the cooperation agreement with Dniprorudne Industrial College, Yuliia Lohosha (Klimenko) visited the “first museum in Zaporizhzhia Region dedicated to the feats of participants of the special military operation”, established on the premises of the college.¹³⁰



The photo shows Yuliia Lohosha (Klimenko) together with representatives of Dniprorudne Industrial College during a visit to a museum dedicated to the “feats of participants of the special military operation”. November 2025, TOT of Zaporizhzhia Region. Source: <https://news-zp.ru/society/2025/11/07/570141.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/fVgR6>

128 <https://news-zp.ru/society/2025/10/07/555226.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/7q9q4>

129 <https://news-zp.ru/society/2025/09/30/551185.html>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/79jUj>

130 <https://t.me/klimenkojuliaa/4719>, archive <https://archive.ph/wip/epDwk>

3. Integration of young people from the TOT into the all-Russian space

A group of young people from the TOT of Zaporizhzhia Region took part in the camp session “The Day After Tomorrow”, organised by the Commissioner for Children’s Rights under the President of the Russian Federation, Maria Lvova-Belova, in Moscow Oblast, Russian Federation. During the session, participants attended “educational, sports, cultural and entertainment, and creative activities”. Upon their return, the children were met by representatives of the occupation authorities, who presented them with branded merchandise of the organisation. The trip was organised with the support of the so-called Governor of Zaporizhzhia Region, Yevhen Balytskyi (Russian: Evgenii Balitskii).¹³¹ Through a system of grant-funded projects and trips to all-Russian events, an appearance of opportunities for youth development is created. In practice, however, this functions as a mechanism for deepening the integration of the occupied territories into the Russian cultural and ideological space and for detaching Ukrainian young people from their national identity.

131 <https://t.me/YugMolodj/29118>, archive <https://archive.ph/jNc9C>

CONCLUSIONS

The activities of Russian children's and youth organisations in the TOT of Ukraine constitute a comprehensive system of forced ideological conditioning, russification, and militarisation of Ukrainian children, implemented through a centralised network of structures under the direct control of the senior leadership of the RF.

The 2025 report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) explicitly states that the RF has introduced "patriotic and military upbringing" in the occupied territories of Ukraine, aimed at preparing children for military or "civil service" within RF structures.¹³² The involvement of children in armed formations, military training, or the promotion of war in the interests of the occupying power constitutes a direct violation of the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, as well as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Summary information on the involvement of children and young people from the TOT of Ukraine in Russian movements:¹³³

Name of the movement	Age of participants	Number of participants from the TOT of Ukraine
"Movement of the First"	aged 6 to 25	more than 275,000
"Young Army"	aged 8 to 18	more than 42,000
"Eaglets of Russia"	aged 6 to 11	more than 50,000
"Young South"	aged 14 to 35	more than 1,000

The system of influence on children and young people in the TOT of Ukraine is characterised by three key characteristics:

First, scale and systematic nature. The occupation authorities have established a multi-level infrastructure of influence targeting children from the age of six, operating across schools, colleges, universities, and cultural institutions, and covering all TOT. Coordination is carried out at the highest levels of the RF, with the active involvement of security and law enforcement bodies.

Second, phased implementation and interconnection. The involvement of children unfolds gradually, from the ideological conditioning of primary school pupils to military-patriotic training of adolescents and the formation of readiness among young people for service in the armed forces of the RF. Each level functions as preparatory groundwork for the next stage of militarisation.

Third, institutional support and legal entrenchment. The activities of these organisations are regulated by federal laws of the RF, official military-patriotic upbringing programmes, and decisions of the occupation administrations. The creation of a system of incentives, specialised centres, and the involvement of participants in Russian aggression as mentors underscores the long-term strategic intent of the RF.

¹³² https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/report/auto-draft/2025-03-21-ohchr-report-children-s-rights-in-ukraine.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

¹³³ The information presented covers only those movements whose activities are described in this report.

The implementation of this policy constitutes a gross violation of international humanitarian law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The forced alteration of children's national identity, their involvement in military training, and the creation of conditions for their future conscription into the armed forces of the occupying power constitute systematic crimes against children and generate long-term threats to the de-occupation and reintegration of these territories.

The scale, systematic nature, and institutionalised character of these actions demonstrate a deliberate policy of the RF aimed at the assimilation of Ukrainian children and their transformation into future citizens of the RF prepared to serve the interests of the aggressor state.

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