

Information and Analytical Brief on Security Risks for Children in the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine When Obtaining Education and Engaging with the Ukrainian Information and Cultural Space

The purpose of disseminating this brief is to draw the attention of state authorities, international organisations, and other actors involved in maintaining contact with children and young people in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine (hereinafter – TOT) to the need to systematically take security risks into account when implementing educational, informational, humanitarian, and communication initiatives, as well as to uphold the principles of “do no harm” and the “best interests of the child” in the development of public policy and public communication.

1. Introduction

In the context of the ongoing and protracted temporary occupation of parts of Ukraine’s territory, some school-age children continue to receive education under Ukrainian state standards. For many of them, distance learning in Ukrainian general secondary education institutions remains the only way to maintain a connection with the Ukrainian education system and the Ukrainian cultural space.

At the same time, children residing in the TOT and studying under Ukrainian educational programmes face a specific legal and security environment. In these territories, the legislation of the Russian Federation is de facto applied, while educational, law enforcement, and other institutions operate under occupation administrations. Under such conditions, the use of Ukrainian educational materials, participation in distance learning, joining Ukrainian online platforms, the use of state symbols or Ukrainian cultural content, as well as expressing views in support of the territorial integrity of Ukraine, may be regarded as grounds for administrative or criminal prosecution.

Legal and security risks for children arise not only from the public display of symbols or political statements, but also from the very fact of receiving education under Ukrainian state standards. The use of educational materials from the Ukrainian curriculum, discussions of historical events, cultural phenomena, or socio-political processes may fall under the broad interpretation of Russian legislation concerning the “discrediting of the armed forces”, “extremist activity”, “distribution of extremist materials”, or other related offences. An analysis of the Russian regulatory framework and its enforcement practices indicate a tendency towards an expansive interpretation of the concepts of “extremism” and “disloyalty”, including within the educational environment.

At the same time, under conditions of constant control over the information space in the TOT, even interaction with Ukrainian educational resources, the use of Ukrainian online platforms, viewing or sharing Ukrainian cultural content, participation in distance learning, or taking part in online educational activities may attract the attention of the occupation administrations and create additional risks for children.

In this context, adherence to the principle of “do no harm” becomes particularly important in the development of public policy relating to public communication, educational practices, information campaigns, the use of Ukrainian online platforms and digital services, as well as cultural and educational content. Any actions involving children residing in the TOT must take into account not only educational, informational, or communication objectives, but also the potential security consequences for the children and their families.

In this regard, particular attention should be paid to content distributed to children who continue to reside in the occupied territories, taking security risks into account. Special attention should also be given to the way in which issues relating to children in the TOT are publicly covered, in particular preventing the dissemination of information that could directly or indirectly contribute to their identification, reveal communication channels, patterns of participation in the Ukrainian educational process, the use of specific digital resources, or other data that could affect their safety.

The brief is addressed to **the state authorities of Ukraine, primarily central executive authorities, Committees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, law enforcement bodies, the Office of the Prosecutor General and prosecution authorities, the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as international organisations and specialised institutions whose activities are related to the protection of children’s rights and ensuring the right to education during armed conflict and temporary occupation.**

The brief may also be useful for international institutions and organisations, embassies, civil society organisations, expert communities, research institutions, and other actors involved in the development and implementation of educational, informational, humanitarian, and communication initiatives for children and young people from the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

Limitations of the Analysis

This information and analytical brief is based on the analysis of open sources, public reports from the media and human rights organisations, as well as examples of law enforcement practices in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

At the same time, it should be taken into account that access to official information regarding the activities of occupation administrations, judicial bodies, and law enforcement structures in these territories is limited. Some cases of persecution or pressure against minors may remain non-public or be documented only in individual reports by human rights organisations.

In this regard, the examples provided do not reflect the full picture of law enforcement practices; however, they make it possible to identify the main trends and potential risks that may arise for children receiving education under Ukrainian state standards under conditions of temporary occupation.

2.

Legal Risks Associated with Distance Learning in the Temporarily Occupied Territories

Legal risks for children residing in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine and receiving distance education under Ukrainian state standards may arise in various situations within the educational process. These risks are associated not only with the public use of Ukrainian symbols or the expression of civic views, *but also with the use of educational materials, discussions of historical events or cultural content, and participation in educational activities* that may be interpreted as manifestations of Ukrainian identity.

An analysis of the situation in the TOT makes it possible to develop a preliminary classification of the grounds for persecution and pressure:

Grounds for persecution and/or pressure	Documented examples
<p>Use of Ukrainian state symbols (flag, coat of arms, anthem).</p>	<p>In occupied Mariupol (TOT of Donetsk Region), in 2022 the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation arrested teenagers for singing the Ukrainian national anthem. In the same city, in 2023, other minors were detained for possessing the flag of one of the units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (following a conflict in the street). The occupation authorities classified their actions as an offence under paragraph “b”, part 2, Article 213 (“Hooliganism motivated by political, ideological, or national hatred or enmity, or by hatred or enmity towards any social group”) of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (punishable by up to seven years’ imprisonment).</p>
<p>Public performance or listening to Ukrainian songs</p>	<p>In 2022, in Simferopol (TOT of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea), five individuals aged between 17 and 21 were prosecuted under Article 20.3.3 of the Code of Administrative Offences of the Russian Federation, “Public actions aimed at discrediting the use of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation for the purpose of protecting the interests of the Russian Federation and its citizens, maintaining international peace and security, or the exercise by state authorities of the Russian Federation of their powers for these purposes”. According to the occupation authorities, the alleged offence consisted of singing songs by Okean Elzy and chanting “Glory to Ukraine”, which was interpreted as “Nazi slogans of Ukrainian nationalists”.</p>

<p>Dissemination of materials recognised by Russian authorities as “extremist”.</p>	<p>At the end of 2025, in temporarily occupied Mariupol (TOT of Donetsk Region), the occupation authorities detained three ninth-grade pupils accused of “disseminating extremist materials”. According to Russian security services, the teenagers had allegedly “created a negative image of Russia” (including by “mocking” St George ribbons and the Russian tricolour) and distributed “nationalist symbols” (the insignia of the Azov Battalion) in a closed group on Telegram.</p>
<p>Public statements in support of the territorial integrity of Ukraine, recognition of the occupied territories as part of Ukraine, including their visual depiction as Ukrainian territory.</p>	<p>In May 2023, in temporarily occupied Yalta (TOT of Crimea), Russian law enforcement authorities prosecuted a 17-year-old pupil in the final year of a local school after a video featuring his statement was published on a Telegram channel. In the video, when asked by a passer-by about his views on the Ukrainian counteroffensive, the boy stated: “We support Ukraine”. Following the monitoring of social media, criminal investigation officers identified him and filed an administrative protocol against the minor for allegedly “discrediting the use of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation”. Thus, the public expression of a pro-Ukrainian position became the basis for the administrative prosecution of a child in the temporarily occupied territory.</p>
<p>Public discussion (including teaching) of historical events or literary works containing political parallels.</p>	<p>In March 2024, a 17-year-old girl from Crimea was persecuted by the occupation authorities over publications in which Crimea was depicted as part of Ukraine, as well as accusations that she had listened to so-called “Nazi songs”. Following the intervention of the security services, the minor was forced to issue a public apology.</p>

The cases documented by the NGO Centre for Civic Education “Almenda” are also corroborated by materials from the analytical report of the East SOS Charitable Foundation, “[Violations of International Humanitarian Law in Education in Ukraine \(February 2022 – May 2025\)](#)”, which includes interviews with participants in the educational process. According to the findings presented in the report, the above-mentioned risks primarily affect pupils.

In particular, according to testimony from a teacher from Kherson Region, the occupation administration in the temporarily occupied territories systematically monitors the digital devices used by children in order to identify those receiving distance education in Ukrainian schools. As the respondent explained: *“Simply getting in touch with a child through digital devices just to talk – no, everything there is very tightly controlled. They even check phones, monitor internet traffic: what time do they go online? And this may be checked almost every day, almost every other day. In cities – every day, and in villages – twice or even three times a week.”*

3. Regulatory Framework of the Russian Federation on “Extremism” and “Discrediting the Armed Forces”, and the Practice of Its Application to Minors in the Temporarily Occupied Territories, Including Through the Educational Environment

3.1. Regulatory and Legal Framework Governing Liability for “Extremism” and “Discrediting” in the Legislation of the Russian Federation

It should be understood that neither the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation nor the Code of Administrative Offences of the Russian Federation contains provisions establishing liability for a “pro-Ukrainian position” as such. Instead, Russian legislation defines grounds for liability through broader categories, including “discrediting the armed forces”, “extremist activity”, “public calls”, “display of prohibited symbols”, “hooliganism”, and others.

At the same time, enforcement practice demonstrates that these provisions may be used to hold individuals, including minors, liable for public statements, the use of symbols, or the dissemination of materials interpreted as expressing support for Ukraine or criticism of the actions of the Russian Federation.

Thus, *the risk is associated not with the existence of a direct prohibition on a “pro-Ukrainian position”, but with the possibility of broad and arbitrary interpretation of statements and materials under existing provisions relating to discrediting, extremism, and related offences.* Formally, such measures are justified by the need to ensure state security and public order. At the same time, in practice - both within the territory of the Russian Federation and in the temporarily occupied territories - they may be applied against individuals, including children, for manifestations of Ukrainian cultural, linguistic, historical, and national identity.

The scale and nature of such regulation are evidenced by the large number of provisions in the **Criminal Code of the Russian Federation and the Code of Administrative Offences of the Russian Federation** establishing liability for extremist- and terrorist-related offences. Penalties range from fines, arrest, and compulsory labour to imprisonment. The boundaries for the application of these types of punishment remain vague.

For example, Article 20.29, “Production and Distribution of Extremist Materials”, provides for administrative liability in the form of a fine ranging from 1,000 to 3,000 roubles or administrative arrest for up to 15 days, together with the confiscation of extremist materials and equipment used for their production, in the case of individuals.

3.2. Federal Lists of “Extremist Materials” and Prohibited Organisations

In the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Justice maintains a Federal List of Extremist Materials, which includes a broad range of books, publications, and other information materials. The possession or dissemination of such materials may be interpreted as an offence even in the absence of criminal intent.

As of April 2026, the list of prohibited materials published on the website of the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation contained **5,496 entries**, ranging from religious literature and opposition publications to popular science texts on political topics.¹

Examples include the textbook *National Security of Ukraine: Essence, Structure and Directions of Implementation* (Kharkiv, 2002); the book *Moscow Poison* (Kyiv, 2015); the volume *Russian Occupation and the De-occupation of Ukraine: History, Contemporary Threats and Present-Day Challenges* (Proceedings of the All-Ukrainian Scientific and Practical Conference, Kyiv, 2016); and the collection of geopolitical essays by A. Shkil, *Wind of the Empire* (Lviv, 1997), among others. It should be noted that this list is constantly expanding.

Particular attention should be paid to the fact that the risks faced by minors, teachers, and others are not limited to the use of Ukrainian state symbols or materials officially included in the Federal List of Extremist Materials maintained by the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation. In Russian judicial practice, public statements or interpretations of literary works may also serve as grounds for liability if they are regarded as criticism of the current authorities or as “discrediting” state institutions.

In particular, George Orwell’s “1984” and “Animal Farm” are not prohibited in the territory of the Russian Federation and are not included in the Federal List of Extremist Materials. At the same time, their public discussion in a political context or the drawing of direct parallels with the current state authorities of Russia may be interpreted as a form of political expression which, under certain circumstances, creates potential risks for minors. Accordingly, risk assessment should take into account not only the formal existence or absence of a prohibition, but also the possibility of arbitrary interpretation of content within a specific political context.

Separately, the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation maintains a list of organisations whose activities are prohibited as extremist, while a unified federal list also exists for organisations recognised as terrorist.

In particular, a number of Ukrainian organisations have been classified as prohibited: the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) have been included in the list of extremist organisations; Right Sector has been recognised as an extremist organisation, while the Azov unit has been designated as a terrorist organisation. In this regard, the public display of their symbols, the dissemination of related materials, or statements that may be interpreted as expressing support for these organisations may give rise to liability under Russian legislation.

3.3. State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Field of Countering “Extremism” in the Context of the TOT

The main document defining the population groups considered in the Russian Federation to be susceptible to terrorism and extremism is the **Comprehensive Plan for Countering the Ideology of Terrorism in the Russian Federation for 2024–2028**. In particular, this document **classifies children and young people, as well as the population of the so-called “new subjects of the Russian Federation” — that is, residents of the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine — as belonging to such groups.**

1 <https://minjust.gov.ru/ru/extremist-materials/>, archive: <https://archive.ph/DolbM>

More broadly, the general approaches of state policy in this area are defined by the **Strategy for Countering Extremism in the Russian Federation**, adopted by Presidential Decree of the RF No. 1124 of 28 December 2024, which sets out the objectives, tasks, and principal areas of activity of state authorities in the field of countering extremism.² Among the principal sources of extremist threats, the Strategy identifies both internal and external threats, **including the ideas of Nazism, neo-Nazism, radical nationalism, radical groups from Ukraine** allegedly supported by external forces, as well as the activities of foreign NGOs, support for “colour revolutions”, the **“falsification of Russian history”**, and others. The Strategy for Countering Extremism also defines such terms as “Russophobia”, “xenophobia”, “radicalism”, “the ideology of violence”, and “extremist ideology”, which form the basis for measures aimed at countering extremism.

3.4. Educational and Youth Policy of the Russian Federation as a Mechanism for Shaping Loyalty and Countering “Extremism”

Education and state youth policy in the Russian Federation are identified as key areas for implementing state policy in the field of countering extremism. The relevant strategic documents provide for a range of preventive measures carried out through the education system and the instruments of state youth policy. These measures include, in particular, fostering loyalty among children and young people towards state policy, promoting official historical narratives, monitoring the information environment within educational institutions, and introducing specialised educational and upbringing programmes. Such measures include:

- publication of educational and methodological materials aimed, inter alia, at fostering a culture of interethnic and interfaith communication, patriotism, civic responsibility, and pride in the history of Russia;
- the formation of an all-Russian civic identity among children and young people at all stages of the educational process;
- **conducting monitoring in educational institutions of information and telecommunication networks, including the internet, used for educational purposes, in order to prevent the dissemination of extremist ideology and extremist materials, including those containing justification of extremist or terrorist activity or calls for the preparation and commission of terrorist acts;**
- interaction between bodies involved in countering extremism and youth public associations, sports federations and clubs, sports supporters’ organisations, individual young people, and youth groups for the purpose of preventing extremist activity within youth and sports environments”;
- improvement of measures aimed at preventing extremist activity within educational institutions;
- **support for learners belonging to risk groups (including those identified as showing signs of difficulties in psychological and personal development), implementation of preventive measures involving learners affected by extremist ideology and members of their families, and involvement in this work of representatives of religious, public, and sports organisations;**

2 <http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/document/0001202412280115?ysclid=m5aysfziuq379203810>,
archive <https://archive.ph/wip/bFcoR>

- introduction into educational activities, for the purpose of the patriotic upbringing of adolescents and young people, of a **unified course on the history of Russia**, objectively covering and assessing the most important events connected with the formation and development of our country as a state, as well as revealing external and internal threats to the existence of Russia during various historical periods; and others.

An analysis of the Strategy for Countering Extremism in the Russian Federation³ (quotations from the original document are provided below) suggests that children and young people are regarded as **one of the key vulnerable groups which, from the perspective of state policy in the Russian Federation, require “protection” from external influences**, including the internet, foreign organisations, and information resources. In the document, Ukraine is presented as an **“unfriendly state” allegedly using extremist or terrorist organisations to conduct a hybrid war against the RF, while the so-called “Ukrainian crisis” is portrayed as a tool for “inciting Russophobia” around the world**. Within the educational sphere, the Strategy provides for the formation of an “all-Russian identity” and loyalty to state policy of the RF through instruments of “patriotic” upbringing, control of the information space, and supervision of pupils classified as belonging to a so-called “risk group”. In this context, the concept of “extremism” is effectively used as an ideological instrument for shaping the worldview of children and young people, including in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

Thus, in the context of the current legislation of the Russian Federation and its enforcement practice, children residing in the temporarily occupied territories who receive education under Ukrainian state standards may face additional legal and security risks. Manifestations of Ukrainian civic and cultural identity, the use of Ukrainian educational materials, or participation in distance learning may be arbitrarily interpreted by the occupation authorities as indications of “extremism” or “discrediting state institutions”.

Selected Provisions of the **Strategy for Countering Extremism in the Russian Federation**:

11. Некоторые государства используют экстремистские и террористические организации в качестве средства для ведения гибридных войн против внешнеполитических противников и достижения своекорыстных геополитических целей, в том числе за счет вмешательства во внутренние дела других государств в целях дестабилизации общественно-политической обстановки в этих государствах, нарушения их территориальной целостности или развязывания в них гражданских войн, инициирования “цветных революций”, а также для создания обстановки “контролируемого хаоса” в отдельных регионах мира.

12. Реальную угрозу представляет политика некоторых иностранных государств по искажению истории, фальсификации роли СССР во Второй мировой войне и преуменьшению его вклада в победу над гитлеровской Германией и милитаристской Японией, возрождению идей нацизма и фашизма, активизации идей реваншизма, героизации нацистов и их пособников. Деструктивные силы содействуют опасному росту экстремистского и террористического потенциала преступных группировок, разделяющих человеконенавистническую идеологию нацизма и неонацизма.

11. Certain states use extremist and terrorist organisations as instruments for waging hybrid wars against geopolitical opponents and pursuing self-serving geopolitical objectives, including through interference in the internal affairs of other states for the purpose of destabilising the socio-political situation in those states, violating their territorial integrity or provoking civil wars within them, instigating “colour revolutions”, as well as creating an environment of “controlled chaos” in certain regions of the world.

12. A real threat is posed by the policy of certain foreign states aimed at distorting history, falsifying the role of the USSR in the Second World War and diminishing its contribution to the victory over Nazi Germany and militarist Japan, reviving the ideas of Nazism and fascism, intensifying revanchist ideas, and glorifying Nazis and their collaborators. Destructive forces contribute to the dangerous growth of the extremist and terrorist potential of criminal groups that adhere to the inhumane ideology of Nazism and neo-Nazism.

13. Серьезнейшие угрозы экстремистского характера исходят от широкого распространения идей неонацизма, усиления радикальных националистических вооруженных формирований (в том числе на Украине), поддерживаемых внешними силами, которые поощряют совершение на территории России преступных действий, включая диверсионно-террористические акты в отношении людей и гражданских объектов, с вовлечением в эти преступные действия российских граждан. Риски, связанные с экстремизмом на Украине, распространяются на соседние страны и регионы. Укрепляются связи украинских неонацистов с транснациональными организованными преступными группами и международными террористическими организациями. Украинский кризис используется недружественными государствами для развязывания гибридных войн против Российской Федерации и разжигания агрессивных русофобских настроений в мире. В связи с этим одними из ключевых задач становятся ликвидация источника угроз экстремистского характера, исходящих с территории Украины, и предотвращение проникновения на российскую территорию представителей иностранных и международных экстремистских и неонацистских сообществ.

13. The most serious extremist threats arise from the widespread dissemination of neo-Nazi ideas, the strengthening of radical nationalist armed groups (including in Ukraine) supported by external forces that encourage the commission of criminal acts on the territory of Russia, including acts of sabotage and terrorist attacks against people and civilian objects, involving Russian citizens in these criminal activities. Risks associated with extremism in Ukraine extend to neighbouring countries and regions. Connections between Ukrainian neo-Nazis, transnational organised criminal groups, and international terrorist organisations are being strengthened. The Ukrainian crisis is being used by unfriendly states to wage hybrid wars against the Russian Federation and to incite aggressive Russophobic sentiment throughout the world. In this regard, among the key tasks are the elimination of sources of extremist threats emanating from the territory of Ukraine and the prevention of the infiltration into Russian territory of representatives of foreign and international extremist and neo-Nazi communities.

22. Участились случаи привлечения в ряды экстремистских организаций несовершеннолетних лиц, поскольку они не только легче поддаются идеологическому и психологическому воздействию, но и при определенных обстоятельствах не подлежат уголовной ответственности.

22. Cases of involving minors in the ranks of extremist organisations have become more frequent, since they are not only more susceptible to ideological and psychological influence, but may under certain circumstances not be held criminally liable.

32. Распространение экстремистской идеологии на территории Российской Федерации осуществляется с применением различных форм и способов. Экстремистская деятельность маскируется под реализацию гуманитарных, образовательных, просветительских и религиозных проектов, под предлогом продвижения которых радикально настроенные лица проникают в органы публичной власти, политические партии, общественные и иные объединения, фонды, обладающие правом подготовки, внесения и рассмотрения проектов нормативных актов по данным направлениям общественных отношений либо принятия таких нормативных актов.

32. The dissemination of extremist ideology within the territory of the Russian Federation takes place through various forms and methods. Extremist activity is disguised as humanitarian, educational, awareness-raising, and religious initiatives, under the pretext of which radically minded individuals infiltrate public authorities, political parties, public and other associations, and foundations involved in drafting, submitting, considering, or adopting normative acts in these spheres.

3.5. Application of Anti-Extremism Legislation to Minors

As of 2025, the “List of Terrorists and Extremists” included 12 individuals aged 15–18 (born between 2007 and 2010) from the TOT of Ukraine and territory controlled by Ukraine.

“Countering extremism and terrorism” in the Russian Federation is a multi-level process involving all participants in the educational process.

Educational staff operate in two main areas:

1. identifying pupils considered to belong to a “risk group” and working with them;
2. implementing preventive measures.

To identify individuals considered “susceptible to terrorism and extremism”, the following recommended set of socio-psychological diagnostic tools is used:

- sociometric testing of pupils in each class at least once a year, including the development of sociograms;
- content analysis of written work (essays, creative assignments) on topics related to “destructive ideology”, involving psychologists and linguists, with comparison of the results against sociometric data;
- observation by psychologists, educators, and social pedagogues during classroom activities and thematic meetings in order to assess the actual views of pupils;
- conversations and interviews with informal pupil leaders in order to clarify their views and develop an expert assessment of the values and attitudes prevailing within the class and the school as a whole.

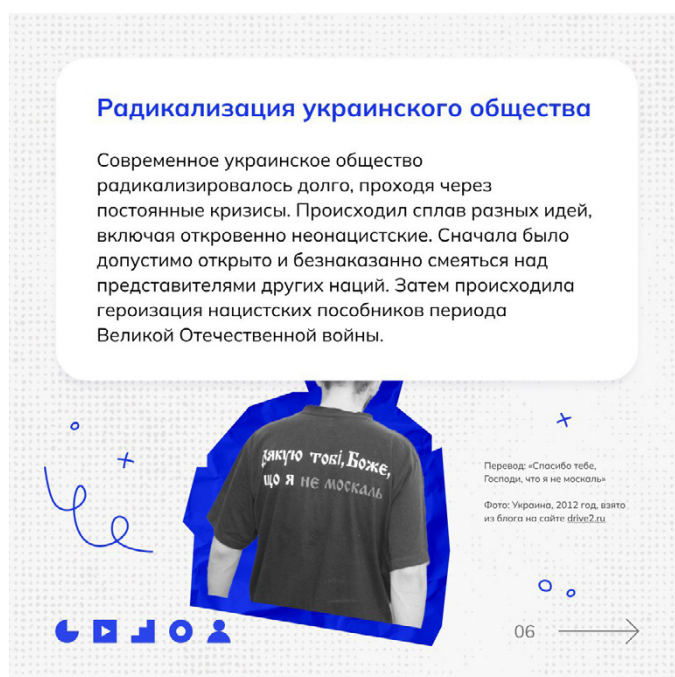
In addition, an important element of these measures is **behavioural monitoring through the systematic review of social media, messaging platforms, and public statements made by participants in the educational process.**

The occupation authorities have developed “*methodological recommendations on preventing the spread of the ideology of terrorism, extremism, and neo-Nazism among young people from the Donetsk People’s Republic, the Luhansk People’s Republic, Zaporizhzhia Region, and Kherson Region*”. According to these recommendations, when examining social media accounts, attention is advised to be paid to the following aspects:

- nickname and status, as sources of additional information about the pupil’s interests;
- subscriptions to online communities, as a source of information about the pupil’s sphere of interests;
- the content of posts and comments for indications of aggression or anxiety;
- posted photographs or stories in which the pupil is tagged;
- audiovisual content and design elements (images, logos, video clips, songs, videos).
- audiovisual content and design elements (images, logos, short video clips, songs, and music videos).

Among the markers identified within the framework of such monitoring are, inter alia, the phrases “Glory to Ukraine — Glory to the Heroes” and “Ukraine Above All”. Other markers include subscriptions to pro-Ukrainian online communities, publications expressing pro-Ukrainian or pro-Western positions, and posts containing informal commentary on the so-called “special military operation” (SMO), including references to its negative impact on the socio-economic sphere of society (living standards in Russia, expenditure on social payments, rising prices, and increased tax rates).

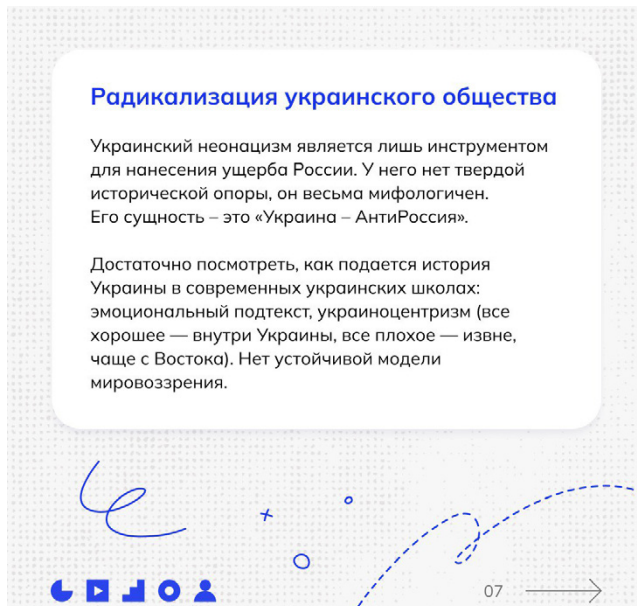
Some materials developed by the occupation authorities for identifying pro-Ukrainian positions among children include:



Radicalisation of Ukrainian Society

Modern Ukrainian society underwent a prolonged process of radicalisation shaped by ongoing crises. Various ideas merged together, including openly neo-Nazi ones. At first, it became acceptable to openly and with impunity mock people of other nationalities. Later came the glorification of Nazi collaborators from the period of the Great Patriotic War.

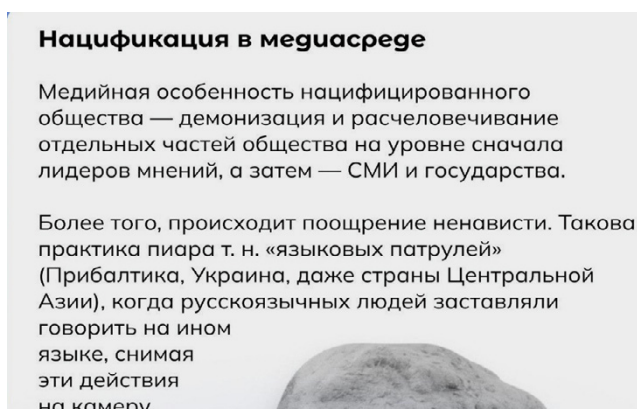
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Radicalisation of Ukrainian Society

Ukrainian neo-Nazism is merely an instrument for causing harm to Russia. It has no solid historical foundation and is largely mythologised. Its essence is “Ukraine as Anti-Russia”.

It is enough to look at how the history of Ukraine is presented in modern Ukrainian schools: emotional framing, Ukrainocentrism (everything good is portrayed as originating within Ukraine, everything bad as coming from outside, most often from the East). There is no coherent worldview model.

Nazification in the Education System

If a range of nationalist myths is instilled in children from their school years onwards, then within one or two generations society may shift significantly in a nationalist direction.

Examples of such nationalist myths include the cult of the Holodomor as a “deliberate genocide” and the portrayal of collaborators with the Nazis during the Great Patriotic War as “fighters for independence”.

Nazification in the Media Environment

One characteristic of a Nazified media environment is the demonisation and dehumanisation of certain groups within society - first by opinion leaders, and later by the media and the state.

Moreover, hatred is actively encouraged. One example is the promotion of so-called “language patrols” (in the Baltic states, Ukraine, and even countries of Central Asia), in which Russian-speaking people were forced to speak another language while being filmed.

Неравенство в обществе

Разделение на «господ» и «подчиненных» может происходить и внутри той группы, которая объявлена доминирующей. Например, уже в современном украинском обществе есть элитная группа военных («новое казачество») и обычные люди, ограниченные в правах (выезда из страны и защиты от принудительной мобилизации).

Source: <https://t.me/ncpti/3395>,
archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/Rz5EQ>

Нацификация в символах

Используются символы нацистской Германии и подразделений СС. Создаются или реанимируются собственные символы (например, черно-красный флаг ОУН-УПА*).

В подражание нацистам появляются собственные ритуалы: например, факельные шествия и ритуалы памяти павших у боевиков из террористического батальона «Азов».

При этом свастика может и не использоваться – из-за однозначно негативной реакции большинства людей.

*Экстремистская организация, запрещена в РФ.

Source: <https://t.me/ncpti/3395>,
archive: <https://archive.ph/wip/Rz5EQ>

Inequality in Society

The division into “masters” and “subordinates” may also emerge within the group itself that is regarded as dominant. For example, contemporary Ukrainian society is portrayed as consisting of an elite group of military personnel (“the new Cossacks”) and ordinary citizens whose rights are restricted, including the right to leave the country and protection against forced mobilisation.

Nazification Through Symbols

Symbols associated with Nazi Germany and SS units are used. New symbols are created or old ones revived (for example, the black-and-red flag of the OUN-UPA*).

Rituals modelled on those of the Nazis have also emerged, including torchlight marches and commemorative ceremonies for members of the terrorist Azov Battalion.

At the same time, the swastika itself may not be used because it provokes an unequivocally negative reaction among most people.

*Extremist organisation prohibited in the RF.

4. Conclusion

The materials presented in this brief demonstrate the emergence in the TOT of a systemic environment of control in which children and young people become targets of ideological influence and potential persecution for any manifestations of connection with the Ukrainian educational, informational, and cultural space. An analysis of the regulatory framework of the Russian Federation, the way it is applied in practice, and the approaches employed by the occupation administrations demonstrates that mechanisms for countering so-called “extremism” are in fact being used as instruments for controlling the identity, information practices, and educational activities of children and young people in the TOT.

Documented cases of persecution of minors, monitoring of pupils’ digital activity, control over the use of digital devices, and analysis of social media, educational content, and public statements indicate the existence of real risks for children who maintain connections with Ukraine through education, cultural content, or online communication. *This requires the issue of access to education for children from the TOT to be considered not only as an educational or humanitarian matter, but also as a security and human rights issue.*

At the same time, although Ukraine has developed certain security approaches, recommendations, and regulatory mechanisms concerning interaction with children and civilians during war and occupation, it should be noted that there is currently no unified and comprehensive “security protocol” specifically governing interaction with children and young people in the TOT.

At present, this area is regulated through a combination of:

- norms of international humanitarian law and human rights law;
- child protection policies;
- recommendations relating to the principle of “the best interests of the child”;
- security practices developed by state authorities, humanitarian organisations, and human rights institutions, as well as local practices adopted by educational institutions.

Many international and Ukrainian organisations have their own internal child protection policies; however, these are primarily internal organisational documents rather than a unified state standard.

The main problem is that security practices remain fragmented: there is no interagency standard, no unified mechanism for risk assessment, and different organisations operate under their own protocols. There is a particular lack of protocols for educators working with learners from the TOT, rules governing public communication concerning children in the TOT, safe mechanisms for collecting personal accounts and testimonies, and standards for working with young people during reintegration and de-occupation.

In this context, particular importance should be attached to integrating the principle of “do no harm” into the activities of state authorities, international organisations, law enforcement bodies, humanitarian and educational institutions, as well as actors engaged in public communication relating to children in the TOT. Any educational, informational, humanitarian, or communication initiatives involving children and young people in the temporarily occupied territories must be implemented **with due regard**

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for the best interests of the child and accompanied by an assessment of potential risks to their safety, confidentiality, psycho-emotional well-being, and legal status, so as not to create additional threats for children and their families.

In view of this, **there is an urgent need to develop interagency security protocols for interaction with children and young people in the TOT**. Such protocols should be developed with the involvement of executive authorities, law enforcement bodies, the Office of the Prosecutor General, the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, relevant parliamentary committees, international organisations, and experts in the field. Their purpose should be to establish unified approaches to safe communication, the use of digital platforms, the protection of personal data, public communication relating to children in the TOT, and the assessment of risks associated with the implementation of educational, humanitarian, and information initiatives.

Particular attention should also be given to assessing the effectiveness of existing mechanisms for the protection of children during temporary occupation, as well as to establishing continuous interagency monitoring of threats associated with the use of educational, digital, and information tools for maintaining contact with children in the TOT.

An important element of such an approach should also be strengthened monitoring by international organisations and specialised institutions whose activities are related to the protection of children's rights and civilians in situations of armed conflict, particularly with regard to the impact of the occupation policy of the RF on children's safety, access to Ukrainian education, and preservation of their identity in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

Taking the security dimension into account in the development of state policy, international support programmes, and public communication is essential for protecting children's rights, minimising potential risks, and ensuring that children and young people can safely maintain their connection with Ukraine.