

02.08.2023

Wartime Repressions Report. July 2023

Русская версия

Russia's full scale war against Ukraine has been continuing for more than 500 days. Seventeen months ago, just after the anti-war protests having taken place in the first days of the invasion, an unprecedented wave of repression began inside Russia.

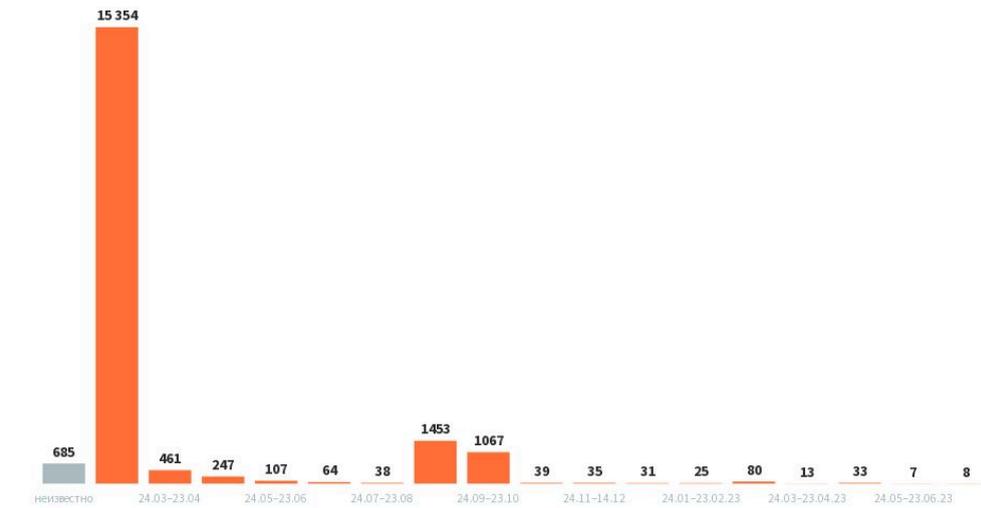
OVD-Info continues collecting and analyzing data on prosecutions for anti-war position in Russia and on the territory of the annexed Republic of Crimea.

RESTRICTION OF THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

 19747 Detentions for anti-war stance between 24 February 2022 and 20 July 2023

We are aware of 19 062 detentions during rallies and of additional 325 ones after. 360 arrests were made for posts in social media, private discussions, display of symbols, etc.

Number of Detentions for Anti-War Stance in Russia and on the territory of the annexed Republic of Crimea by Month



Data OVD-Info - As of July 21, 2023

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We continue recording cases of violence by security officials as well. This month, the Saint Petersburg activist Vitaly Ioffe was beaten up during the apprehension: the activist told that, when **apprehended**, he had been handcuffed, and one of the police officials had used force against him, namely, had hit him at least twice to the liver area.



REPRESSIONS AT THE LEGISLATIVE LEVEL



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This month, a legislative draft criminalizing «public propaganda and justification of extremism» was **brought** into the State Duma. If the amendments are adopted, one can face up to five years in jail for «justification» and «propaganda» of extremism in the media or Internet. After criminal proceedings are initiated against a person, they may be included in the register of extremists and terrorists, maintained by Rosfinmonitoring (Russian financial monitoring body), and their personal bank accounts may be blocked.

A draft law on deprivation of birthright citizenship following conviction for crimes creating a «threat to national security» was **introduced** as well. The list of such crimes includes, for

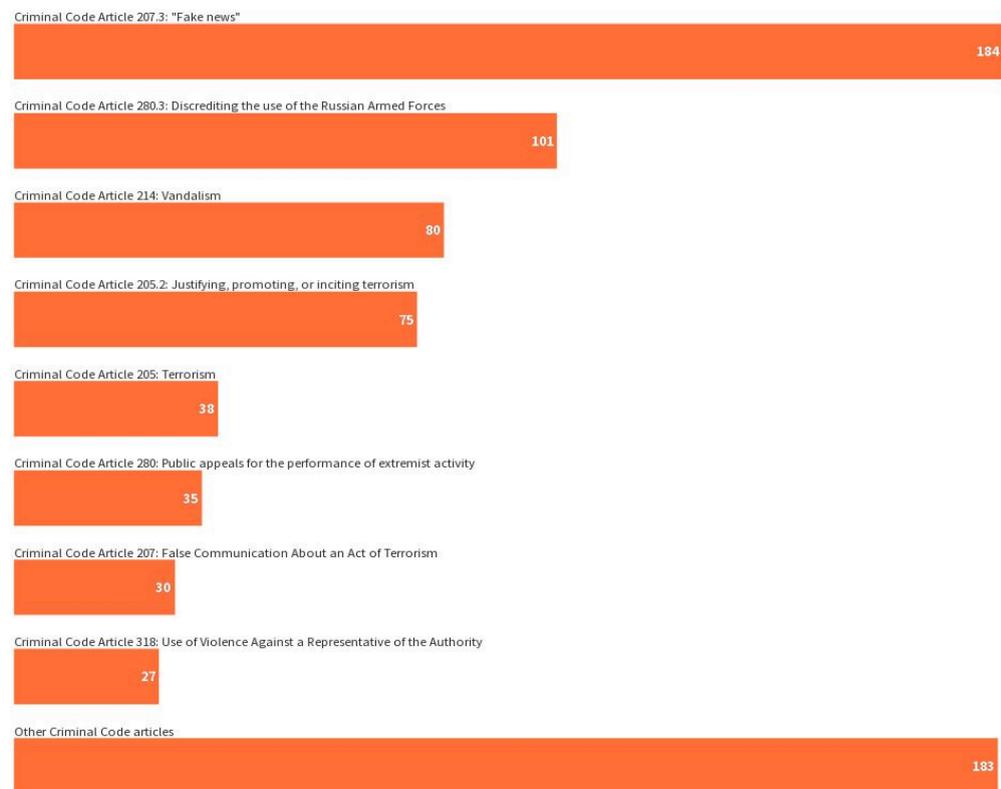
example, desertion, discreditation of the Military Forces of the Russian Federation, and calls for extremism.

CRIMINAL CASES

 636 defendants in criminal lawsuits against anti-war activity since 24 February 2022

We have learned about 26 new defendants in «anti-war» criminal cases this month; penalties were imposed on 14 more people.

Number of Defendants in “Anti-War” Cases Prosecuted Under Each of the Articles Since 24 February 2022



Data [OVD-Info](#) • As of June 21, 2023

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People prosecuted with regard to such cases regularly experience violence and threats. Valentin Khoroshenin, defendant in the Vesna case, is facing threats while being held in a pre-trial detention center and is fearing for his life.

He has health issues but **does not receive** proper medical assistance. Ian Ksenzhepolsky, another person involved in a new case of Vesna, **claimed** that security officials have been trying to recruit him.

Artem Kamardin, a defendant in the Mayakovsky case, also **informed** about physical and mental issues while being held in a pre-trial detention facility.

Sasha Skochilenko, jailed in SIZO-5 (pre-trial detention center No. 5) in St. Petersburg under the case of «anti-war price labels», has had four searches **conducted** in her ward in two weeks. She is also forbidden to receive books. Former municipal deputy Alexei Gorinov, convicted of publication of «fake information» on the Russian army, has **written** about being tortured through interruption of sleep.

You can read more about the sentences to defendants in «anti-war» cases **here**.

This month, 45 OVD-Info lawyers helped 64 defendants in 53 criminal «anti-war» cases in 36 locations. Our defenders were also present during 6 interrogations.

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ADMINISTRATIVE CASES

 **7430 cases under Article 20.3.3 Discreditation**

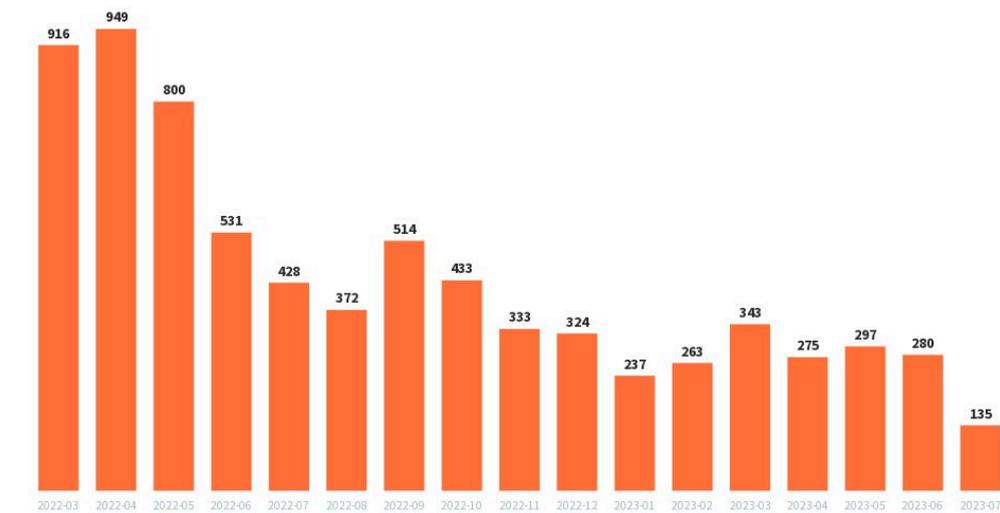
According to «Mediazona» as of 20.07.2023



Konstantin, a resident of Ryazan region, who was fined 30 000 rubles (≈ 320 USD) under article 20.3.3. of the Code of Administrative Code, **said** that the security officials threatened him with a gun. On May 1, Konstantin showed the middle finger to the driver of a car adorned with the letter Z and called him a fascist. A week later, the security forces came to the man's residence and took him to the police station to draw up a protocol — during the process, the FSB officers were telling Konstantin that «the war is necessary and you need to be a patriot and support your country in any situation, » putting a gun to his head.

A retired military officer Timofey Rudenko, who was placed under administrative arrest for the seventh time in a year, **spoke** about torture and threats on the part of the security forces. Rudenko reported that police officers used a stun gun on him, and also stated that he could «atone for his homeland» by joining the Wagner PMC.

Cases Initiated under Article 20.3.3



Data Mediazona • As of July 20, 2023

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During this month, OVD-Info defenders participated in 137 administrative cases in courts and helped 8 detainees. For example, a collaborating lawyer defended those detained on February 24 for laying flowers at the Taras Shevchenko monument; their cases were **dismissed** due to the absence of corpus delicti.

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EXTRAJUDICIAL PRESSURE

 535 cases of extrajudicial pressure since 24 February 2022

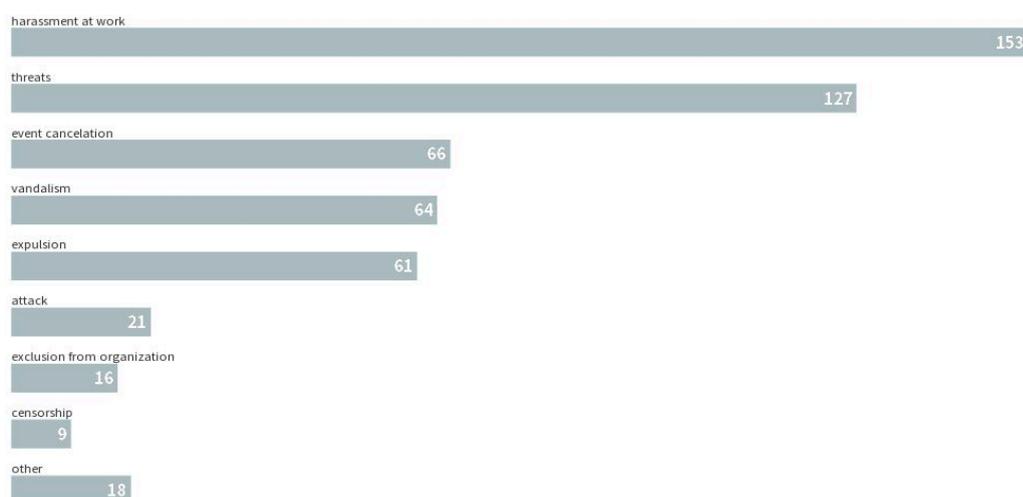
«In the country of my dreams no one wishes for a war» — this was the line that made Novgorod officials stop the performance of *Smena* rock group at *Rokot nad Ilmenem* music festival. According to the group members, before the performance the festival participants were requested to sign an obligation not to promote ‘LGBT, extremism, drugs and other nasty things’.

In Novosibirsk Novocollege, a private college whose founder was included in the registry of foreign agents, was **denied** state accreditation. Earlier this college refused to conduct the *Talks about Important Things* sessions for its students.

The Museum of Moscow **evicted** from its premises the Center of Documentary Cinema after the management of the museum asked the Center founder Sofya Kapkova not to discuss war.

Moscow State University **fired** politician and lecturer Mikhail Lobanov citing his foreign agent status.

Extrajudicial pressure on people with an anti-war position since 24 February 2022



As of 21 July 2023

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«FOREIGN AGENTS» AND «UNDESIRABLE ORGANIZATIONS»

This section was previously being used for publishing data on the inclusion in the «foreign agents» registry and the recognition of organisations as «undesirable». These data may now be consulted in the **Repressions Report** and **Inoteka**.

BLOCKING AND CENSORSHIP

 725 resources blocked by Roskomnadzor between 24 June 2023 and 24 July 2023

According to Roskomsvoboda

In particular, the following were blocked this month: the **group** of independent media *Tverdy Znak Tambov* («The Hard Sign of Tambov»), the accounts of OVD-Info in **Zen** and **Odnoklassniki**, and even the group of Perm School No. 12, which had previously refused to hold classes with the participation of Z patriots and military.

Streaming platform Twitch and cloud service Dropbox were **fined** four and two million roubles respectively for «fakes» about the war in Ukraine.

Yandex.Music **removed** the podcast Kavachay about the war in Ukraine by the publication *Kholod* («Cold»).

An administrative protocol was **drawn up** against the *Pskov Province* journalist Vladimir Kapustinsky for discreditation of the army (part 1 of Article 20.3.3 of the Code of Administrative Offences).

PRESSURE ON CIVIL SOCIETY

In St. Petersburg, Sberbank **blocked** the accounts of journalist Galina Artemenko, priest Grigory Mikhnov-Voitenko and other anti-war activists who were collecting donations to support Ukrainian refugees. Earlier, Sberbank had also **blocked** the accounts of the *Zona Solidarnosti* («Solidarity Zone») project. The project supports those charged with direct anti-war actions — mainly arson.

The Perm Centre for Historical Remembrance was **fined** 300,000 roubles for discreditation, the reason being the publication of the anti-war statement by the International

Memorial and the Human rights centre Memorial
on 24 February 2022.

A new protocol was **drawn up** in regards to Ekaterinburg Memorial under the article on discrediting the Russian army (Article 20.3.3 of the Code of Administrative Offences) — in June Ekaterinburg Memorial was already fined twice under the same article, **300,000** (≈ 3223 USD) and **100,000** (≈ 1074 USD) rubles.

LINKS TO OTHER OVD-INFO DATA AND REPORTS

- SWartime repression reports. [June 2023](#), [May 2023](#), [April 2023](#), [March 2023](#), [February 2023](#), [January 2023](#), [December 2022](#), [October 2022](#), [September 2022](#), [August 2022](#), [July 2022](#), [June 2022](#)
- Report in Russian «[No war. How the Russian authorities are fighting anti-war protests.](#)»
- Report in Ukrainian «[No war. How the Russian authorities are fighting anti-war protests.](#)»
- Guide «[The anti-war case.](#)»
- The input of information in reply to the call for submissions: [Challenges to freedom of opinion and expression in times of conflicts and disturbances.](#)
- [The Report on Civil Rights and Freedoms of Children](#)
- Report «[Blocking Internet resources as a tool of political censorship.](#)»
- Project on the law on «foreign agents» — «[Inoteka](#)».
- Report «[How the authorities use cameras and facial recognition against protesters.](#)»
- [Reports](#) of OVD-Info and other organizations on the compliance of the Russian Federation with its international obligations in the field of human rights.
- [Information on the human rights situation in Russia](#) for the OSCE Moscow Mechanism.

Title Image: Nikolai Borisov holding a «This war is at our expense. I am against war. Do you need this war?» sign at a solitary protest in Voronezh, 7 July 2023 / Photo courtesy of Nikolai's acquaintances.

More to read



The strangling of Crimea

Denis Shedov and Dan Storyev explain how the repression in occupied Crimea was structured and how it evolved



Journalism or snitching? Reported to authorities by interviewer

«And then the journalist said, „Are you discrediting the special military operation?“»

