



## SOVA Center for Information and Analysis

Phone/Fax: +7 (495) 517-9230

E-mail: [mail@sova-center.ru](mailto:mail@sova-center.ru)

News and publications: <http://sova-center.ru>

### Ultra-nationalism, hate crimes and counteraction to them in Russia.

#### Brief review on half part of 2013 and statistics for 2004-2013

In the first half of 2013 nationalist organizations no longer focused on participating in the general opposition movement. They shifted to a combined strategy of using oppositional organizations for their own purposes along with increasing their own public presence. Nationalist participation in general protest marches and rallies remained at very low levels, but they were able to influence the Coordinating Council of the Opposition into adopting the resolution on visa regime with Central Asia, important to nationalists.

Their own actions, while not record-setting in terms of attendance, were, nevertheless, quite visible, and in the case of the visa campaign, right-wing radicals managed to attract significant media attention. In the first half of the year, nationalists put a lot of effort into the “promotion” of various violent incidents using the “Kondopoga technology,” but, fortunately, they failed to set off any major ethnic riots.

Ultra-right activists were also unsuccessful in their attempts to reformat their movements into political parties. “The Russians” Association (*Ob’edinenie “Russkie”*) achieved almost no progress in this respect, and, in addition, split up; Konstantin Krylov’s National Democratic Party (NDP) and Valery Solovey’s New Force (*Novaya Sila*) were denied registration; For Our Motherland (*Za nashu rodinu*) party has lost its registration. Only two parties are eligible for participation in the elections on September 8 so far: Alexey Zhuravlev’s Motherland (*Rodina*) party (the political vehicle of Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin) and Sergei Baburin’s Russian All-People’s Union (*Rossiiskii obshchenarodnyi soiuz*, ROS), rooted in the 1990-s style “old nationalism.”

Among the non-political nationalist initiatives, the informal “hunting” campaigns for “illegal immigrants” and pedophiles gained a wide notoriety. Although the ultra-right activists usually steered clear of openly breaking the law in the course of their raids, the Shield of Moscow (*Shchit Moskvy*) actions in June demonstrated criminal potential of such activities.

The level of the far-right criminal activity still remains high. According to our preliminary data, the level of racist violence dropped slightly, compared to the same period a year earlier, but, most likely, this difference is due to the delayed arrival of the information rather than to an actual decrease in far-right activity.

A qualitatively new phenomenon this year was the change in the attack targets. While, during the previous year, “ideological enemies,” i.e. mainly young left-wingers, topped the assault statistics (partly due to general increase in political activity), the number of such victims has been small so far in 2013. Meanwhile, over the past six months, we saw a significant increase in the number of victims among the groups, targeted by the new repressive laws. The victims of religious hatred, primarily from the new religious movements (NRM) constituted the most numerous group. Accordingly the acts of vandalism targeted primarily the Orthodox sites and the NRM buildings. Representatives of the LGBT community constitute the next largest group of victims. Most

frequently, the incidents involved attacks on their public actions, with police protection being insufficient or absent. Yet another new legislative initiative – the “foreign agents” law – motivated Syktyvkar nationalists to attack and threaten human rights defenders.

Traditional attacks against “ethnic outsiders” also continued in the past six months; natives of Central Asia and the Caucasus represent the third and the fourth largest groups of victims respectively. The majority of those murdered in the first six months of 2013 are the natives of Central Asia.

Criminal prosecution for racist violence declined slightly, compared to the previous year; however the neo-Nazi skinheads from the Ulyanovsk group Simbirsk White Power and members of the Sverdlovsk neo-Nazi group Volksturm were convicted during the review period. The preparations are under way for new major trials - of Ilya Goryachev, the former leader of the Russian Image (*Russkii obraz*) party and Mikhail Volkov, a former member of the skinhead group OB-88, were apprehended in Serbia and Ukraine respectively.

For the first time, a right-wing group was banned specifically as a terrorist organization (not simply as an extremist organization). In June, the Moscow City Court banned the Autonomous Combat Terrorist Organization (*Avtonomnaia boevaia terroristicheskaia organizatsiia*, ABTO), whose members were responsible for a series of attacks against the law enforcement officers and the natives of the Caucasus.

Due to police efforts, the criminalization of the ultra-right movement becomes increasingly publicly visible - during the review period, several leaders and participants of well-known far-right organizations faced charges for purely criminal offenses, such as robbery, violence and pimping.

The number of xenophobic propaganda convictions continues to grow rapidly, compared to the rate of sentencing for all other “crimes of extremist nature.” Qualitatively, however, the prosecution for propaganda has remained unchanged for the past two years. It primarily targets Internet users (most frequently, the users of the VKontakte social network), who re-post videos and images, and make grossly racist comments in publicly visible groups, i.e. clearly, not the most dangerous purveyors of hatred.

The Federal List of Extremist Materials has also continued to swell up and triggered a number of angry or sarcastic responses. The newly listed materials featured the same number and range of errors as the previous ones. We continue to insist that this cumbersome instrument serves no meaningful purpose.

Thus, the results of the first half of 2013 raise serious concerns. While the traditional nationalist political leaders were unable to achieve any notable level of success, the ultra-right were able to insert their migration-related concerns into the common agenda. Racist violence has shown no decrease in numbers and is qualitatively expanding. Meanwhile, the law enforcement has increasingly followed the path of least resistance, initiating nearly identical cases against the second-tier Internet agitators in ever-increasing numbers, instead of prosecuting really dangerous groups.

**Statistics of Racist and Neo-Nazi Violent Attacks in Russia in 2004 – 20.09.2013 (with categorization of victims)\***

Year	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013 **	
	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B
M - Murdered, B - Beaten or wounded	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>623</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>111</b>
Dark-skinned people	1	33	3	38	2	32	0	38	2	23	2	59	1	26	1	19	0	26	0	4
People from Central Asia	10	23	18	35	17	60	35	82	63	123	40	92	20	86	10	36	7	36	9	25
People from the Caucasus	15	38	12	52	15	72	27	64	27	76	18	78	5	45	7	18	4	14	2	12
From the Middle East and North Africa	4	12	1	22	0	11	2	21	2	13	0	2	0	2	0	5	0	0	0	0
From other countries of Asia	8	30	4	58	4	52	2	45	1	41	14	36	3	19	0	13	0	5	0	5
Other people of “non-Slav appearance”	2	22	3	72	4	69	20	90	11	56	9	62	7	100	1	25	1	15	1	10
Members of youth subcultures, anti-fascists and leftist youth	0	4	3	121	3	119	5	195	4	87	5	77	3	66	1	40	1	54	0	5
Homeless ***	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	0	1	3	3	3	6	2	3	0
Ethnic Russians ***	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	8	1	8	1	9	0	7	0	2
Jews ***	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	3	0	3	2	2	0	0	0	0
Religious groups ***	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	0	22	0	24	0	10	0	23
LGBT ***	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	12	1	22
Others or not known	10	57	5	21	21	107	2	88	6	80	1	24	3	31	1	11	0	9	0	3

\* Excluding North Caucasus and victims of mass brawls. \*\* Data is far from being full yet. \*\*\* Were included to Others before 2009.

**Statistics of convictions for violent crimes with a recognized hate motive and hate propaganda \*\*, 2004 – 20.09.2013**

Year	Number of convictions			Number of offenders convicted and punished			Convicted offenders who received suspended sentences or were released from punishment		
	For violence	For propaganda	For vandalism***	For violence	For propaganda	For vandalism	For violence	For propaganda	For vandalism
<b>2004</b>	9	3	-	26	3	-	5	2	-
<b>2005</b>	17	12	-	56	15	-	5	6	-
<b>2006</b>	33	17	-	109*	20	-	24*	7	-
<b>2007</b>	23	28	3	65	42	5	18	12	2
<b>2008</b>	34	44	2	110	60	2	25	21	2
<b>2009</b>	52	56	9	130	69	18	35	34	7
<b>2010</b>	91	72	12	297	78	21	120	38	5
<b>2011</b>	61	73	8	193	76	15	75	34	4
<b>2012</b>	30	89	6	65	95	7	11	23	1
<b>2013</b>	23	82	5	38	77	6	11	12	1

\* Estimated minimum. \*\* The table based on art.280 and 282 and does not include sentences which we see as open misuse of the law. \*\*\* Art. 214, 244 with hate motivation.