



Human Rights
in
Mental Health

Political Abuse of Psychiatry in Russia 2023



FOREWORD

”

They are looking for those who are crazier than themselves.

Investigators often try to find signs of mental illness in the behavior of persons involved in criminal cases — an attempt to go against the majority is perceived as a mental disorder. And psychiatrists often support this perception and churn out psychiatric assessments, in fact they consider an oppositional attitude to be a sign of mental disease.

At the same time, they show mental hospitals to the intractables so that people are afraid to get there — anyone who has been in a mental hospital, even just for assessment, will always prefer prison to it.

From the Telegram channel of lawyer Alexey Pryanishnikov @A_Reserve

**ROBERT
VAN VOREN**



In the ocean of misery that is caused by Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine and the reign of terror that Putin has unleashed against anybody in his country who dares to protest, the issue of political abuse of psychiatry maybe seems a minor one. Indeed, more individuals are sentenced to Stalinist sentences of several decades than thrown into a psychiatric hospital for compulsory "treatment". It is a logical turn of events: why use a "sophisticated method" such as psychiatry when you can easily sentence a person to twenty years, send as punishment to an almost certain death at the front in Ukraine, or give a push from the balcony?

Yet the political abuse of psychiatry is not important because of numbers. It is important because it shows that in Russian psychiatry nothing has changed. The psychiatric profession is, or has again become, totally subjugated to the wishes of the political elite. The basic principles of the Hippocratic Oath have no value in Russia of today. While most of the countries that were part of the Soviet Union made important strides in developing mental health care services that are based on ethical norms and in respect of the rights of patients, in Russia we see a trend in the opposite direction: the psychiatric profession keeps silent when it is used to terrorize persons who dare to oppose the Putin regime, the legal framework that provided at least some defense of human rights continues to be further eroded, and gradually a situation develops that is not much different from Soviet times, when the Hippocratic oath had been replaced by the Oath of the Soviet Doctor in which first allegiance was to the Party rather than medical ethics.

In September 2023 the World Psychiatric Association (WPA) will hold its World Congress in Vienna. Exactly forty years earlier, Vienna was also host to a WPA World Congress. That conference was dominated by the issue of Soviet psychiatric abuse. The Soviet All-Union Society of Psychiatrists and Neuropathologists (AUSPN) had left the WPA earlier that year, knowing full well that otherwise it would be expelled because of the political abuse. The discussions in Vienna circled around the conditions under which this AUSPN could be allowed to return. These conditions would be concretized six years later at the World Congress in Athens, when the Soviet Bloc was already disintegrating, and they included a promise to end the systematic abuse of psychiatry and democratize the AUSPN. Also, the Soviets were forced to acknowledge that a system of political abuse of psychiatry existed. The statement was read out by Dr. Pyotr Morozov, then a young Soviet psychiatrist who would later develop into an open apologist of Soviet psychiatry and who eventually became even

General Secretary of the WPA until his death in 2022, not long after his country invaded Ukraine. The abuse came to an end, but the AUSPN never became democratic. It disintegrated, but the Moscow nomenklatura of psychiatry remained in charge, and is still in charge today.

After eighteen months of war in Ukraine, in which tens of thousands of civilians have been killed by relentless and deliberate bombardments of civilian targets, the Russian Society of Psychiatrists is still a full member of the WPA. Attempts to have its membership suspended have been frustrated with bureaucratic argumentations.

Eleven out of twenty five cases of politically motivated abuse of psychiatry described in this report concern anti-war activists. In some cases, the activists were not hospitalized for long periods, but the threat of being hospitalized and/or violence towards them affected all of them. In short, psychiatry is used as a tool to threaten and punish anti-war activism in Russia. Russian psychiatrists involved in this practice do it willingly and obediently, which makes them participants in the aggressive war in Ukraine.

Meanwhile, the Russian Society of Psychiatrists has not once spoken out against the political abuse of psychiatry. By doing so, it violates the standards that have been laid down in the WPA Code of Ethics for Psychiatry.¹ The question is how long the WPA can avoid taking the decisive step to suspend the membership of an association that has become an obedient tool of repression in a country that is yet again under totalitarian rule.

The 2021 report included a thorough analysis of the political abuse of psychiatry during the Putin regime. We have added this important document as an appendix to this new report.

¹ https://www.wpanet.org/_files/ugd/842ec8_1d812c6b8a4f4d24878ee1db8a6376f6.pdf

CURRENT CASES OF POLITICAL ABUSE OF PSYCHIATRY



**EGOR
BALAZEIKIN**

Egor Balazeikin is a schoolboy from Otradnoye (Kirovsk district of Leningrad region), a student of the humanitarian gymnasium in St. Petersburg.

Yegor's family supported Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, his uncle went to war as a volunteer and was soon killed. It was very hard for Yegor to accept the death of his uncle. At the same time, he started to read the news about the war. And soon he began to argue with his parents, proving to them that Russia was doing wrong.

On February 28, 2023, Balazeikin was detained in the city of Kirovsk (Leningrad region) for attempting to set a military

enlistment office on fire: Molotov cocktail bottles did not break, the building was not damaged. According to Yegor, the FSB officers, who interrogated him, threatened him that he would be beaten and raped in the pre-trial detention center, that they would send him for compulsory psychiatric treatment. "You can do whatever you want, I will not change my position," he replied. He was placed in a pre-trial detention center.

At first, Yegor was accused of intentionally destroying or damaging property (Article 167 of the Criminal Code), but then, after interrogations by investigators, who, according to relatives, skillfully brought him to the

right wording, the article was changed to an attempt to commit a terrorist act (part 1 of Article 205 of the Criminal Code and Article 30 of the Criminal Code). In addition to the attempted arson of the military enlistment office in Kirovsk, the fact of which Egor does not deny, he is charged with two more episodes of arson — in Kirovsk and in St. Petersburg.

In June 2023, Balazeikin was sent for mental health assessment to psychiatric hospital No. 6, where he spent several weeks. The conditions of detention in the hospital were acceptable, he was

even allowed to see his parents several times.

On July 26, 2023, the Kirovsk City Court extended Balazeikin's arrest until the end of August.

Balazeikin suffers from autoimmune hepatitis, he needs to constantly take medications and undergo routine medical examinations.

Egor's parents support and fight for him. The father was fired from his job — apparently because of the criminal case against Egor.



**ALEXANDER
GABYSHEV**

The case of Alexander Gabyshev has become the most famous in the country, and it clearly demonstrates the political abuse of psychiatry in today's Russia.

Alexander Gabyshev was born in 1968 in Yakutsk, a Yakut by nationality, a historian by education, although for ideological reasons he worked his whole life as a simple worker. In the early

noughties, Gabyshev began to study shamanism, still practiced in remote places of Yakutia. In the summer of 2018, Gabyshev set out on a cross-country trek to Moscow with the goal of peacefully expelling President Vladimir Putin from power by performing a shamanic ritual on Red Square. According to Gabyshev, Putin is a demon that nature does not like. Where he appears, cataclysms

subsequently occur — in this way nature cleanses itself of his influence. Only a shaman can cope with a demon. Gabyshev calls himself a shaman-warrior, he considers his task to restore democracy and harmony in the country.

The first pilgrimage to Red Square ended very soon – Gabyshev's dog got hit by a car and needed treatment. In the spring of 2019, Gabyshev started a new march to Moscow. He was walking along the side of the highway with a cart loaded with necessary things, including a yurt.

Gabyshev's march to Moscow raised a wave of interest – both in the media and social networks, and on the ground, dozens of people began to join him on the way. In the cities, where the “shaman” appeared, rallies spontaneously gathered, at which Gabyshev made political statements. As Gabyshev outlined his plans, he intended to act exclusively by peaceful methods: to expel Putin, he would light a bonfire on Red Square, right in front of the Kremlin wall. According to Yakut traditions, he would pour koumiss into the fire and throw horsehair in it, he would knock on a leather tambourine and pray, after which Putin will come to his senses and calmly resign. As Gabyshev stated, “democracy should be without fear. Now people are afraid to talk, they are afraid that they will be fired, deprived of salaries. It's just that our state power is lawless, demonic.”

In September 2019, Gabyshev was detained by the police at the border with the Irkutsk region and was sent back to Yakutsk. There he underwent a psychiatric assessment and was recognized mentally ill (October 2019). At the same time, as Gabyshev's lawyer

Olga Timofeeva pointed out, no criminal charges were brought against him at that time.

In December 2019, Gabyshev started his journey to Moscow again. Two days later, he was detained (10 of his supporters were detained too) and charged with disobeying police officers. Later, Gabyshev's lawyer filed a complaint with the European Court of Human Rights on the illegality of his detention and violation of the right to a fair trial.

On May 12, 2020, Gabyshev was again deprived of liberty — he was detained in his own house, after which he was forcibly hospitalized in the Yakut Republican Neuropsychiatric clinic. Employees of the psychiatric ambulance and at least 20 employees of the Rosgvardiya participated in his detention. Despite the fact that the law requires a court decision on compulsory hospitalization no later than in 48 hours, the decision was made only three weeks later. The court justified its decision by “the overestimating (by Gabyshev) his personality.” The then Mayor of Yakutsk Sardana Avksentieva, Vice-speaker of the State Assembly of Yakutia Viktor Gubarev and deputy of the State Duma of the Russian Federation from Yakutia Fedot Tumusov criticized Gabyshev's forced hospitalization. At the same time, Gabyshev was recognized as a political prisoner by the Memorial Human Rights Center. Gabyshev was released in July 2020. During the two months of hospitalization, Gabyshev was never allowed to leave the building for a walk.

On January 27, 2021, Gabyshev was again forcibly detained at his home and sent to the Yakut Republican

Neuropsychiatric Clinic. A few days before that, Gabyshev had announced the resumption of his march to Moscow. More than 50 employees of Rosgvardiya participated in the storming of his house. As one of them reported at the trial, the issue of Gabyshev's murder during detention was also considered. He said that they had a permission to kill Gabyshev, but they decided not to do it themselves, because Gabyshev was “gifted and public.”

On January 29, 2021, several cultural figures issued an appeal in which they demanded the release of Gabyshev. They noted that you could treat Gabyshev's decision to go to Moscow as you like, but freedom of movement for Russian citizens had not been canceled. The authors of the letter appealed to “everyone who could help Gabyshev's release and draw attention to the resumption of the practice of political abuse of psychiatry.” The appeal was signed by 19 people, among whom the Nobel laureate Svetlana Alexievich, writer Alexander Gelman, poet Lev Rubinstein, film critic Anton Dolin, actress Elena Koreneva, politician Lev Shlosberg and others.

In February, the court granted the claim of the doctors of the Neuropsychiatric Clinic about the forced hospitalization of Gabyshev. Justifying its claim, the clinic pointed out that Gabyshev “began to make loud statements in the media again.” Later, a criminal case was initiated on the “use of violence against a representative of the authorities” (during the detention of Gabyshev), and thus the case passed from administrative jurisdiction to criminal. According to the charge under Article 318 of the Criminal Code, when detained in his house,

Gabyshev wounded an employee of the Rosgvardiya with a homemade cold weapon (a ritual shaman's sword; the material evidence are the trousers of an employee of the Rosgvardiya, torn by a sharp object. There were also traces of blood in the house, but no examination took place to determine whose blood it was). At the same time, Gabyshev was charged under Article 280 of the Criminal Code (“calls for extremist activity”). In March, a forensic psychological and psychiatric assessment commission at the same Yakut neuropsychiatric clinic found Gabyshev insane in relation to the charges.

Unlike previous hospitalizations, in 2021, Gabyshev was “treated” with large doses of neuroleptics. A relative who visited him on April 2 reported that Gabyshev, after hospitalization, complained of insomnia and frequent loss of consciousness. During one of the visits, he began to tremble so violently that the orderlies had to carry him in their arms to the ward. The relative also reported that Gabyshev had a short haircut, contrary to his will and to the Yakut religious tradition.

In June, Gabyshev's sister said that Gabyshev's phone was “lost” in the psychiatric clinic – while that was the only way to contact him (due to the pandemic, visits were not allowed). After his sister brought him a new phone, she was able to talk to Gabyshev. He said that he was not even allowed to go for a walk, and the phone could only be used once a week. At the same time, the doses of neuroleptics were increased: in the first conversation, Gabyshev said that he was being given a “double dose”. He constantly complained of weakness, dizziness and drowsiness.

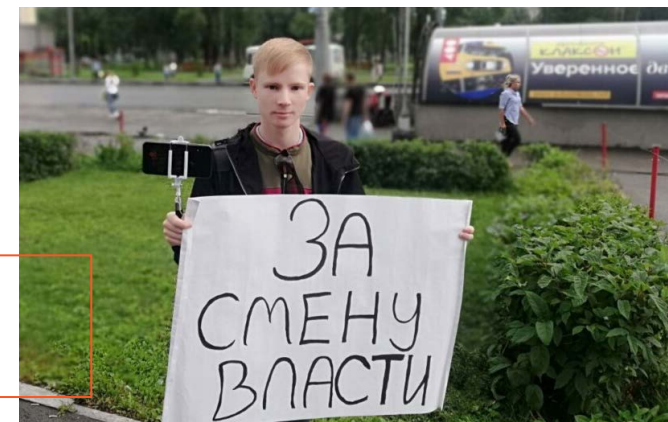
During the court session on July 8, Gabyshev became ill, he was dizzy and had a strong tremor, an ambulance was called to the courthouse, which stated a sharp drop in blood pressure. The court session was postponed.

On July 26, a meeting of the Yakutsk City Court was held, which declared Gabyshev insane and ordered to send him to a psychiatric hospital with intensive supervision for compulsory treatment (STIN, the modern name of psychiatric prisons, which in the USSR were used to imprison dissidents). The court also ordered to detain Gabyshev before delivery to the STIN, he was handcuffed and sent to the Yakutsk pre-trial detention center. After that Gabyshev was sent to the STIN of the city of Novosibirsk.

In February 2022, the Zaeltsovsky District Court of Novosibirsk softened Gabyshev's regime of compulsory treatment from STIN to a hospital of a special type. He ended up in a psychiatric hospital in the city of Ussuriysk. In December 2022, lawyer Alexey Pryanishnikov, representing the interests of Gabyshev, reported that he could not go out for walks because they refused to give him a down jacket and winter shoes. According to Pryanishnikov, Alexander was "in a kind of robe three sizes bigger and in completely ugly boots, from which he fell out." According to the lawyer's description, Gabyshev "had a very painful appearance: pale, very reddened eyes, he lost weight."

In June 2023, the Ussuriysky District Court of Primorsky Krai ordered to transfer Gabyshev to a milder type of treatment in the Yakut neuropsychiatric clinic. Lawyer Pryanishnikov noted that Alexander was declared insane in Yakutsk, where he was "treated" with haloperidol. However, on June 28, the Primorsky Regional Court overturned the decision to mitigate the regime.

IGOR (INGVAR) GORLANOV



A resident of Novokuznetsk (Kemerovo region), Ingvar Gorlanov is a graduate of an orphanage and activist who previously opposed punitive psychiatry in orphanages, as well as for the rights of orphans who cannot receive the apartments they are entitled to after leaving the orphanage.

On December 27, 2019, Ingvar went to the building of the Presidential Administration of Russia in Moscow for a picket in defense of political prisoners. He was detained and taken to the police station, where, according to him, psychiatrists were called. One of the doctors punched him hard in the jaw and under the ribs, after which he was injected intramuscularly with some kind of drug, after which Gorlanov did not remember anything.

Gorlanov was taken from the police station to a psychiatric hospital named after Gannushkin, where they tied him to the bed. On December 30, the Preobrazhensky Court of Moscow ordered to prescribe compulsory treatment – although Gorlanov had

never applied to psychiatrists before and was not registered as a psychiatric patient. Before the court session, Gorlanov received an injection of a neuroleptic, so he could not remember how the trial took place, or even where it took place (according to Gorlanov, the trial took place in the hospital itself, however, according to the documents, it took place in the courthouse).

According to one of the acquaintances who visited Gorlanov in the hospital, "he has changed dramatically: his will was completely suppressed, he had a detached, distracted look, experienced a memory loss, the inability to recall any details, a complete lack of emotions, alienation. Speech was very slow."

Soon Gorlanov was transferred from the hospital named after Gannushkin to the Kemerovo psychiatric hospital, and a week later he was sent from there to the Novokuznetsk psychiatric hospital. At the end of January 2021, he was released. On May 28, on appeal, the Moscow City Court declared Gorlanov's placement in a mental hospital illegal.

Ingvar has not stopped engaging in political activism. In particular, he published negative reviews about law enforcement officers in his Telegram channels “Seized by the State” and “Gorlanov”. For example, he talked about his experience of interacting with police officers who tried to send him to a psychiatric hospital.

For this activity, he was placed under administrative arrest twice in March 2022: once for 5, once for 15 days — on charges of inciting hatred towards police officers (Article 20.3.1 of the Administrative Code).

On March 6, 2023, Gorlanov’s name appeared in the Rosfinmonitoring list of persons involved in extremist and terrorist activities. As it turned out, the reason was the criminal case initiated

against him on the re-initiation of social hatred against judges and police officers (part 1 of Article 282 of the Criminal Code). According to investigators, Ingvar in his publications in the Telegram criticized the judges and called the police officers rats.

As part of the criminal case, Ingvar was assigned a compulsory inpatient psychological and psychiatric examination, and from March 29 to May 2, 2023, he was again in a psychiatric hospital. As lawyer Alexey Pryanishnikov, who represents Gorlanov’s interests (he also defends Alexander Gabyshev), said on this occasion, “Once you get there, it’s very difficult to get away from the psychiatric hospital”.



**IRINA
GRIGORIEVA**

A resident of Krasnodar, Irina Grigorieva is a lawyer and activist of the International public Movement “Public Control of Law and Order”. Grigorieva represented the interests of Krasnodar residents in the courts, and also recorded public trials on video and posted them on her channel. According to Irina Ivanova, the chairwoman of the Public Control of Law and Order movement, Grigorieva’s activities “irritated judges and prosecutors.”

On October 26, 2021, Irina was summoned to the Investigative Committee for questioning in the case of defamation of a judge (part 1 of Article 298 of the Criminal Code). She was detained, and two days later she was forcibly hospitalized in a psychiatric hospital under the pretext that she allegedly “may pose a danger to herself and others.” In December, due to compulsory mental health assessment the decision was appealed

and Grigorieva was released.

In September 2022, the Oktyabrsky District Court of Krasnodar ordered to send Grigorieva for psychiatric re-assessment. Irina challenged this decision, but on November 17, even before the complaint was considered, she was forcibly taken from her home to the hospital, her 74-year-old mother was beaten.

According to Grigorieva, the re-assessment was carried out with serious violations, practically in torture conditions (the activist was handcuffed), without mandatory documentation of the methodology and registration of the assessment process. Irina unsuccessfully tried to challenge the results of the assessment in court.

In December 2022, it became known that a guardian had been appointed to Grigorieva. By law, the appointment of

a guardian to a person occurs only after he or she is declared incapacitated, but at the time of writing this report, nothing was known about such a decision.

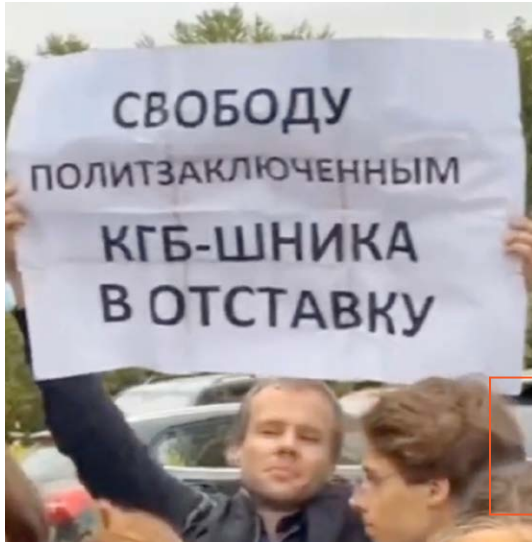
As Irina told the journalists of the “Caucasian Knot” media resource, “they decided to convict me under the article “Slander” against a judge, and under this article one can get a fine, not a prison term. But fine is not enough for them, they need to isolate me from helping people. For this purpose, a mental hospital was needed and a “guardian”, who cannot open her mouth to explain to me what her guardianship is about, and is silent all the time, she refuses to communicate with me. Their next goal is to convict me under Article 298 of the Criminal Code and, since I am recognized by local psychiatrists as “mentally ill”, to send me to compulsory treatment <...> I am of course afraid. I am a human being.”

**TEONA
KELEKHSAYEVA**

A resident of Vladikavkaz (North Ossetia).

On May 20, 2022, the Industrial District Court of Vladikavkaz fined Teona 30 thousand rubles for an anti-war video on Instagram. She was accused of discrediting servicemen and the leadership of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation (Part 1 of Article 20.3.3 of the Administrative Code).

On May 23, 2023, the same court found Kelekhsayeva guilty under the criminal article on the repeated discrediting of the Russian army (Part 1 of Article 280.3 of the Criminal Code). According to the court, she “carried out public calls to prevent the use of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation during the SVO” on Instagram and V Kontakte. She was fined 100 thousand rubles and was sentenced to compulsory outpatient treatment by a psychiatrist.



**ANDREY
KIZELVATER**

An opposition activist from Mozhaik (Moscow region). At least once he was detained by the police for a picket in support of the politician Ilya Yashin, convicted of an anti-war position.

On April 9, 2022, he was detained on charges of vandalism motivated by political hatred (Part 2 of Article 214 of the Criminal Code). According to investigators, he poured yellow and blue paint on a poster hanging on one of the administrative buildings with the image of the St. George ribbon in the form of the letter Z and the inscription "We don't leave ours behind." The court chose a restraining measure for Andrey in the form of travel ban and a ban on certain actions.

After the psychiatric assessment, the experts recommended compulsory treatment, but did not answer the mandatory questions concerning the reasons for the impossibility of outpatient treatment for Kizelvater.

On April 24, 2023, the magistrate of the 123d judicial precinct in Mozhaik changed the restraining measure for Andrey and ordered to apply compulsory measures to him in the form of inpatient treatment in a psychiatric hospital.



**ALEXEY
KORELIN**

Medical student at Nizhny Novgorod State University. Adheres to left-wing views. After the start of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, he published articles on the university's website condemning the propaganda that was imposed on students at the university instead of regular classes, and also attended one of the university's online seminars with the flag of Ukraine painted on his face.

On June 16, 2022, during a search of his apartment conducted in the absence of Alexey, a computer and other things disappeared, and at the end of the same month a disciplinary commission was convened at the university, where he was reprimanded. On the same day, when Alexey went outside after a session with a psychologist, with whom he discussed his motivation to study, FSB officers approached him, one of whom began to strongly advise him to change the psychologist and contact Professor Lala Narimanovna Kasimova, head of the Department of Psychiatry of the Nizhny Novgorod Medical Institute.

Korelin did not listen to this recommendation, and on September 7, FSB

officers and a district psychiatrist came to his house. He was offered a choice either to go to a psychiatric hospital voluntarily, having signed a consent for hospitalization, and in this case to come back soon, or to go there, but by a court decision and for at least four months.

Alexey succumbed to pressure, signed consent and ended up in the regional psychiatric hospital named after Kashchenko. There he had to endure bullying from other patients (for example, they put excrements in his bed) and from the staff. Professor Kasimova, whom he was so persistently advised by the FSB staff to turn to, held a consultation with him. According to Korelin, she told him that "she was waiting for him to come to her voluntarily, and asked why he didn't come, because law enforcement officers recommended doing it."

Because of the prescribed neuroleptics, Alexey's coordination of movements was disrupted, he slept a lot. Fortunately, he had a smartphone and could keep in touch with the outside world, including consulting with a lawyer.

After a month of hospitalization, Korelin wrote a statement refusing treatment and was discharged from the hospital on October 11. One of the conditions of discharge was a mandatory visit to a psychiatrist. The equipment seized

during the search was returned. No documents were issued that formalized the search. Korelin returned to his studies and stopped conducting public activities.

VYACHESLAV KOSHELEV

A resident of the city of Volzhsky (Volgograd region); in addition to Russian, he also has Ukrainian citizenship.

On March 26, 2022, Vyacheslav was beaten by unknown people on the street, who did not like his T-shirt with the inscription "30 years of independence of Ukraine". The attackers themselves called the police, and Vyacheslav was arrested. During the arrest, Koshelev allegedly kicked one of the policemen in the leg. Vyacheslav spent the night in the police station, handcuffed, his legs tied, he was beaten with his head against the wall. The next day he was fined for disorderly conduct.

On April 17, Koshelev came to the skyrunning competition in high-rise buildings in Volzhsky. He was wearing a cap with the coat of arms of Ukraine and the same T-shirt with the inscription. The police detained him again, accusing him of shouting "obscene slogans" and interfering with the competition.

The next day he was fined again for disorderly conduct.

But already on April 20, it became known that a criminal case was initiated against Vyacheslav on the use of violence against a representative of the authorities that was not dangerous to life or health (part 1 of Article 318 of the Criminal Code) for allegedly hitting a policeman.

On August 5, the Volzhsky City Court declared Koshelev insane at the time of the commission of the crime attributed to him and ordered to place him in a psychiatric hospital for compulsory treatment.

IVAN KUDRYASHOV



A resident of Tver, Ivan Kudryashov is a loader, opposition and anti-war activist, and vegan.

Ivan participated in protest actions in Tver and Moscow, also in support of Navalny, was once detained and fined. After the start of the full-scale invasion, he took an anti-war position, held an artistic action, the authorship of which he later acknowledged: he removed official propaganda posters from billboards, wrote "Fuck the war" on the reverse side and hung them back with the propaganda side inside.

On September 30, Kudryashov was detained on charges of preparing to set fire to the military enlistment office. During the search, two molotov cocktails were seized from him, while his fingerprints were not found on the bottles, and he himself confessed under torture with electric shocks and the threat of sexual violence.

While in the Tver pre-trial detention center-1, Ivan, a vegan for moral and

ethical reasons, faced difficulties: the administration did not give him parcels with vegan food and ignored his complaints. On June 8, 2023, Kudryashov went on a hunger strike. On June 20, 2023, the 2nd Western District Military Court of Moscow found Kudryashov guilty of preparing for a terrorist act (Part 1 of Article 205 of the Criminal Code and Part 1 of Article 30 of the Criminal Code) and sentenced him to 6 years in prison.

Staying in a pre-trial detention center after the verdict, Ivan held a hunger strike until July 18. Lawyer Maxim Kharchenko, who visited him that day, noted the serious physical condition of the convict, but, as he later said, he did not see any mental issues. On July 27, on the tenth day after leaving the 40-day hunger strike, Kudryashov was suddenly transported to the FSIN regional hospital in Torzhok.

Lawyer Kharchenko was able to visit Ivan only on August 2. It turned out that Ivan wound up in a psychiatric ward.

The lawyer was neither informed of the diagnosis nor the methods of treatment. At the same time, Kudryashov was tied to the bed and did not respond when

spoken to. The escorts told Kharchenko that Ivan had been immobilized due to his violent behavior.



**OLGA
KUZMINA**

A resident of Moscow, Olga Kuzmina is an eco-activist. She opposed the cutting down trees and renovation activities near Babushkinsky Park.

On August 9, 2021, she held a protest against the renovation activities and felling trees carried out as part of the renovation program near Babushkinsky Park in Moscow. She climbed a tree and tied herself to it at a height of 20 meters from the ground. At the same time, she was holding a crossbow in her hands to protect herself if she would be forcibly removed from the tree. Later, Kuzmina's defense will prove that the crossbow was faulty, and it was impossible to shoot from it.

10 hours later, the police, wearing bulletproof vests and covering themselves with shields, climbed up a tree on the fire escape and removed Olga from

the tree. She was detained.

On August 10, the Babushkinsky District Court of Moscow found her guilty of failing to comply with the requirements of the police (part 1 of Article 19.3 of the Administrative Code) and left her under arrest for several days. According to the prosecution, she "violated the legal requirements of police officers by <...> climbing a tree to a height that threatened her life and those around her, holding in her hands an object similar to a crossbow with a loaded arrow and aimed at her chest."

In addition, a criminal case was initiated against Olga on hooliganism committed by prior conspiracy with the use of weapons (Part 2 of Article 213 of the Criminal Code). She was placed under house arrest.

On October 11, the Babushkinsky district court ordered to forcibly send Kuzmina to a psychiatric hospital for mental health assessment for up to 30 days. This decision was later challenged by Kuzmina's defense in the Moscow City Court, but to no avail. According to Katerina Tertukhina, Kuzmina's lawyer from the OVD-Info human rights organization, neither at the first nor at the second trial did the investigation provide any clearer justification for hospitalization than an indication of "the ambiguity of the clinical picture."

On this occasion, an appeal was sent to the Moscow City Court on behalf of the Moscow Helsinki Group, which stated that the principle of proportionality and protection from arbitrariness was not observed in the Kuzmina case: "It is worth noting that experts do not mention any suspicions of specific mental disorders that could be checked during an inpatient examination; they do not indicate a possible existence of diagnoses that would indicate the potential incapacity of the accused. The presence of some peculiarities of behavior does not necessarily indicate the presence of mental disorders, and even more so is not an unconditional suspicion of incapacity."

On May 31, 2022, Olga came to the Losinoostrovsky district police station with Sergey Telnov, a lawyer from OVD-Info, to participate in investigative actions. The police detained her and forcibly brought her to the psychiatric hospital of the V. P. Serbsky National Medical Research Center of Psychiatry and Narcology for examination – not inpatient, but outpatient. Kuzmina stated in writing that she refused to interact with doctors, but despite this,

neither she nor the lawyer could leave the hospital building for some time.

On June 23, the Babushkinsky District Court of Moscow granted the request of the investigation to place Kuzmina in a Yakovenko psychiatric hospital (Chekhov district, Moscow region) for conducting a forensic psychiatric examination. And already on July 1, 2022, before the expiration of the ten-day period during which it was possible to appeal against the court decision on compulsory hospitalization, the police came to the apartment where Olga had been serving house arrest for several months. They broke down the door and forcibly took Olga to the Yakovenko Hospital.

In the hospital, Kuzmina had difficulty eating and sleeping: she was not provided with bedding and dietary nutrition. At the same time, compliance with the diet and daily routine is critically important for her health, since she has several chronic diagnoses, in particular, grade 4 lymphedema.

A few days later, Olga was released from the hospital and returned to house arrest. In the medical report, according to OVD-Info, the doctors indicated that Kuzmina suffered from schizotypal personality disorder, posed an increased danger to society and could not be aware of the "actual nature of her actions." She was also credited with "waywardness, mainly oppositional, negative behavior, a tendency to litigiousness and protest reactions, a tendency not to disclose personally significant experiences."

Kuzmina's defense challenged the legality of hospitalization in the Moscow City Court, but again to no avail.

On August 4, 2023, the Babushkinsky District Court of Moscow released Kuzmina from criminal liability and ordered to send her to a psychiatric clinic for compulsory treatment.



**POLINA
MORUGINA**

A resident of Moscow, tattoo model and blogger; she is known on the Internet under the pseudonym Polina-Face.

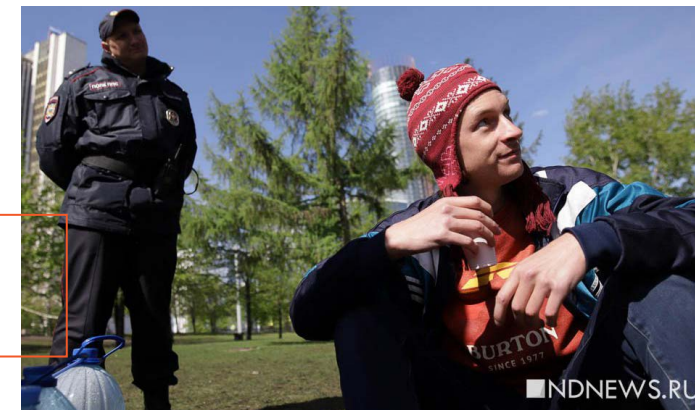
In January 2022, Morugina was accused of public desecration of objects of religious veneration (Part 2 of Article 5.26 of the Administrative Code) - she published her nude photo against the background of the Church of the Intercession in Fili (Moscow). After that, Polina deleted the photo and her social media accounts.

However, the law enforcement agencies did not limit themselves to it, and an investigation was launched against Morugina under the article of the Criminal Code on insulting the feelings

of believers (part 1 of Article 148 of the Criminal Code).

On February 20, 2023, the Golovinsky District Court of Moscow ruled that Polina "suffered from schizotypal personality disorder, so she could not realize the nature of her actions at the time of the photo shoot," and sent her to compulsory treatment in a psychiatric hospital.

**IVAN
NOGOVITSYN**



A civil activist from Yekaterinburg, Ivan Nogovitsyn, was arrested for participating in protests against the construction of a church of the Russian Orthodox Church on the site of a popular park on the embankment near the Drama Theater (as a result of the protests, construction was stopped). Nogovitsyn was accused of calling for mass riots (Article 212.2 of the Criminal Code).

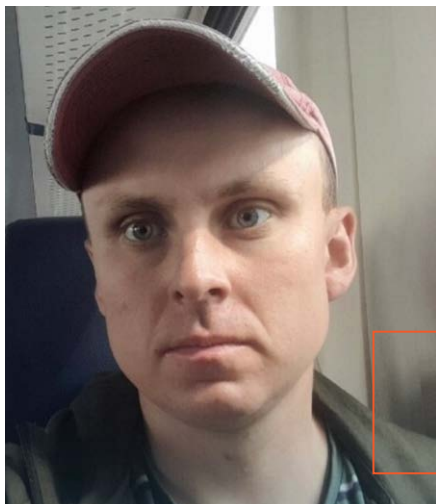
Ivan was arrested in March 2020 and placed in the pre-trial detention center-1 in Yekaterinburg, where he was injected with neuroleptics for protesting against the actions of the administration. According to him, he "could have refused, but agreed because they threatened to tie him to the bed."

In March 2021, Nogovitsyn was sent for inpatient forensic psychiatric examination.

According to lawyer Roman Kachanov, the practice of using psychotropic substances against prisoners of the pre-trial detention center-1 in Yekaterinburg

is used very often. Kachanov describes a case when a prisoner after an injection of neuroleptics began to show hyperactivity and could not sleep, after which he was tied to the bed for longer than 24 hours. At the request of the prisoner, one of the cellmates untied him so that he could go to the toilet, after which they were both punished and tied to the beds.

In November 2021, the Verkh-Isetsy District Court of Yekaterinburg declared Nogovitsyn insane, released him from criminal liability and ordered to send him to compulsory treatment in a psychiatric hospital. The process took place behind closed doors.



**ALEXEY
ONOSHKIN**

Alexey Onoshkin is a political activist, blogger and priest of the “Temple of the Flying Macaroni Monster”, professing Pastafarianism, a parody religion. Lives in Nizhny Novgorod.

Onoshkin repeatedly spoke out against the actions of the Russian Federation in Ukraine on his page on the Vkontakte network and participated in anti-war actions. On March 2, 2022, he was detained at one of such actions, and was fined 40 thousand rubles under the article on discrediting the Russian army (part 1 of Article 20.3.3 of the Administrative Code).

On April 28, 2022, he was forcibly taken to the hospital for psychiatric examination. The reason for it was a denunciation in which it was claimed that Onoshkin said in one of his videos that the Russian state was driving him to suicide, as previously his fellow countrywoman, journalist Irina Slavina. At the same time, at the trial, Alexey claimed that he spoke about suicide only

figuratively. Alexey was able to leave the hospital only three months later.

However, already on August 16, Alexey was detained and placed in a pre-trial detention center, now within a criminal case about “fakes” about the Russian army (paragraph “d” of Part 2 of Article 207.3 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation). The reason was the publication on Onoshkin’s blog on March 16, 2022, in which he told about the shelling of the drama theater in Mariupol.

On October 3, 2022, at the request of the investigation, the Sovetsky District Court of Nizhny Novgorod transferred Alexey from the pre-trial detention center to a psychiatric hospital “until the end of the investigation period.” Onoshkin’s defense did not object this time.

On November 7, 2022, another criminal case was initiated against Onoshkin, this time because of several comments on

the Internet relating to 2020 and 2021. He was accused of calling for terrorism (Part 2 of Article 205.2 of the Criminal Code). Independent human rights project “Protection of political prisoners. Memorial” reports that in the comments “the leaders of the armed struggle for the separation of Chechnya from Russia were mentioned and, among other things, it was said: “Killing is generally bad, but it is even more disgusting to differentiate murderers into your own and others.”

All this time Alexey is in a psychiatric hospital. The court has repeatedly extended compulsory treatment, the latest news about it refers to March 28, 2023, the date of expiration of the period of stay in the hospital, indicated by the court. The chief doctor refused to release Onoshkin without direct instructions from the prosecutor, as he Onoshkin is charged with “bad articles”. His lawyer and mother challenged this decision.



**ROMAN
PAKLIN**

A resident of Surgut (Tyumen region), Roman Paklin is a mechanical technician, anarchist, anti-fascist and co-founder of the libertarian library “Burevestnik”.

In September 2022, Roman was detained on charges of participating in a terrorist organization of anarchists. Together with him, five more people from Tyumen, Surgut and Yekaterinburg were detained. All the detainees knew each other, held similar views, and were interested in leftist literature. They

were accused of creating a terrorist community with the aim of attacking military enlistment offices and police departments and sabotage on the railways, along which Russian echelons with military equipment were traveling to Ukraine. According to the anarchists, they all gave confessions under torture: they were beaten, strangled, poured water on their faces, tortured with electric shocks, and threatened with sexual violence.

According to the investigation, Paklin held “secret meetings and conversations,” and was also a co-author of a certain “manifesto of an anarchist.” He was charged with participation in a terrorist community (Part 2 of Article 205.4 of the Criminal Code) and preparation for a terrorist act (part 2 of Article 205 of the Criminal Code with the application of Part 1 of Article 30 of the Criminal Code).

In November 2022, it became known that Roman was not receiving proper medical care in the pre-trial detention center. After the torture and beatings, he had problems with blood pressure, vision, mobility of his left arm was impaired, reactions slowed down. The administration of the pre-trial detention center ignored Paklin’s complaints for a long time, and when they finally began to provide him with medical care, it turned out that the pills provided to him even worsened his condition.

In April 2023, Roman was sent to the Yekaterinburg Regional Psychiatric Hospital for a psychiatric examination.

On August 2, 2023, the Central District Court of Tyumen ordered to transfer Paklin from the pre-trial detention center to the Lebedevsky branch of the Regional Clinical Psychiatric Hospital. The reason for it was an earlier examination. Roman will stay in a psychiatric hospital at least until October.

MARIA PONOMARENKO



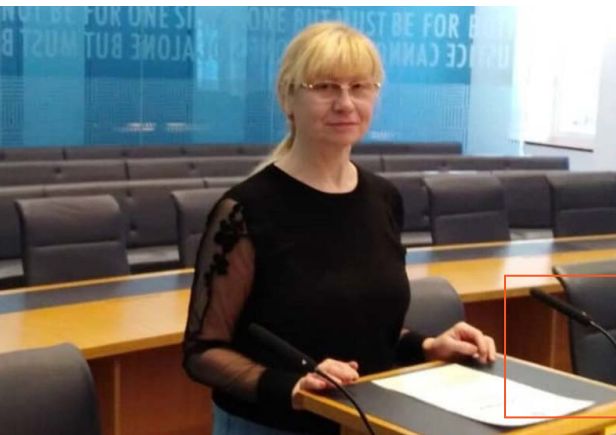
A resident of Barnaul, Maria Ponomarenko is a journalist and political activist.

While living in Barnaul, Maria participated in opposition manifestations, wrote for the RusNews website, ran her own Telegram channel, drew public attention to the problems of orphans and corruption. Even before the start of the war, she was brought to court several times under administrative articles for single pickets.

In March 2022, a repost of a message about the shelling of the theater in Mariupol appeared in Ponomarenko’s Telegram channel “There is no Censorship”, containing accusations against Russian troops. In April, she was detained in St. Petersburg, where she had moved shortly before, having separated from her husband due to domestic violence. She was charged under the article on “fakes” about the Russian armed forces motivated by political hatred (Part 2 of Article 207.3 of the Criminal Code), she was transferred to Barnaul and placed in a pre-trial detention center.

In June 2022, Maria spent a month in the Altai Regional Clinical Psychiatric Hospital for examination. At the hospital, according to Maria, she was injected with some unknown sedatives after she had demanded to provide her with hygiene products, and when she tried to resist, she was forcibly detained by FSIN officers.

On February 15, 2023, the Leninsky District Court of Barnaul sentenced Ponomarenko to 6 years in prison and 5 years of a ban on journalistic activity.



**ELENA
RODINA**

A resident of Moscow, born in Sevastopol, Elena Rodina is a lawyer, anti-war and opposition activist, and blogger.

In her Telegram channel and Instagram, Elena published anti-war and anti-government posts, which were noticed by the staff of the Center for Combating Extremism.

According to law enforcement agencies, calls for resistance to military mobilization in her posts were aimed at "humiliating the dignity of a person and a group of persons," as well as "inciting hatred and hostile actions" against the president and senior officials. In February 2023, Rodina was fined under the administrative article on incitement to hatred (Article 20.3.1 of the Administrative Code).

However, already in March, for the same posts in social networks, a criminal case was initiated against her on public calls to terrorism (Article 205.2 of the Criminal Code). The Tverskoy Court of

Moscow sent her under arrest to pre-trial detention center No. 6.

On July 17, 2023, the 2nd Western District Military Court dismissed the criminal case against Rodina and ordered to send her to a psychiatric hospital for compulsory treatment. This became known from Elena's letters to human rights defenders, including OVD-Info. In the letters, she asked to pay attention to her case: "They want to make me a "vegetable", stab me with drugs in a mental hospital. Perhaps these are my last letters in a bright memory and a firm mind".



**YURI
SAVELYEV**

Yuri Savelyev is a member of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church, which has been declared an "extremist organization" in the Russian Federation since 2017 and is banned. Yuri Savelyev, 66, who lived in Novosibirsk, was arrested in 2018 on charges of "organizing the activities of an extremist organization" (part 1 of Article 282.2 of the Criminal Code). In December 2020, the court sentenced Savelyev to six years in a strict regime colony,

In its statement, the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses regarded Savelyev's sentence as "absurd". Jarrod Lopez, a spokesman for Jehovah's Witnesses, also said the verdict "contradicted international human rights norms."

Savelyev served his term in colony No. 5 in the Altai Territory. In early August, the head of the colony invited him to sign an empty application form with a request for treatment, which Savelyev refused, as he felt quite healthy. Nevertheless, on August 24, he was transferred to the Medical Correctional Institution No. 1 (MCI) in the city of Barnaul. This is a colony that is specially designed for the

compulsory treatment of prisoners from alcoholism and drug addiction. Upon arrival there, Savelyev's notebooks with personal notes and the Bible were taken away.

During Savelyev's stay at the MCI, they repeatedly tried to get him to agree to treatment, but he refused to sign the form. No medical measures were applied to him. In October 2021, he was transferred back to the colony.

On July 19, 2023, Savelyev was released, having fully served his sentence.



**MIKHAIL
SELITSKY**

A resident of Rostov-on-Don, Mikhail Selitsky is a pianist at the conservatory. After the protests in January 2021 related to the arrest of Alexei Navalny, Mikhail joined several open and closed opposition groups in Telegram.

Several members of one of these groups met face-to-face and discussed the current political agenda and plans for protest actions, agitation, and support for political prisoners. In March 2021, someone who called himself a former military man joined the chat. He offered to buy weapons, engage in telephone terrorism, and promised support from a certain PMC. Shortly after that, four chat participants, including Selitsky, were detained by the FSB on charges of intending to commit direct actions: throwing paint and Molotov cocktails at government buildings and putting offensive inscriptions on them. Under pressure from the security forces, who threatened Mikhail and other detainees with violence and prison, he agreed to

record a confession on camera.

As a result, the detainees were only charged with vandalism motivated by political hostility (Part 2 of Article 214 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation). They were charged with graffiti on the walls of residential buildings in Rostov-on-Don. In particular, it was about the inscription "Putin is a thief!"

Selitsky was assigned an examination in a neuropsychiatric dispensary of the Rostov region, as a result of which he was found unable to independently exercise the right to defence and not fully aware of his actions.

On October 24, 2022, the world Court in Rostov-on-Don sentenced Selitsky to one and a half years of restriction of freedom (travel ban) and compulsory outpatient treatment in a psychiatric hospital.



**MARAT
SHARAFUTDINOV**

A resident of Tatarstan, Marat Sharafutdinov is an activist of the Bashkir national movement and defender of Shikhan Kushtau — a small mountain in the Ishimbay district of Bashkortostan.

At the beginning of 2018, local authorities decided to allow one of the soda companies to develop Shikhan Kushtau, which immediately caused protests from residents, eco-activists and activists of the Bashkir national movement. The defenders of Shikhan set up a tent camp on the mountain. After numerous cases of detentions and police pressure, activists unexpectedly achieved the desired result: in 2020, Shikhan was recognized as a natural monument of national significance. However, the activists themselves continued to have problems.

In particular, in January 2021, several activists were detained in connection with charges of attempted hooliganism with the use of weapons (Part 2 of Article 213 of the Criminal Code with the application of Article 30 of the Criminal Code) and illegal acquisition or

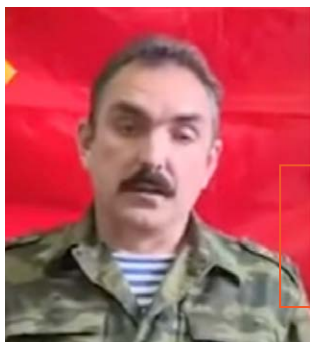
possession of weapons (part 1 of Article 222 of the Criminal Code). It was about a domestic conflict in the Bashkir village of Karmaskaly in November 2020, during which mass clashes almost occurred. Among the detainees was Marat Sharafutdinov, who, according to him, was away on a job at the time of the conflict. Marat's relatives said that the weapon was tossed during the search.

Many of the Kushtau activists and Bashkir national figures from the Bashkort organization suggest that the conflict could have been a provocation of the special services aimed at revenge on activists and discrediting the Bashkir national movement.

Sharafutdinov spent more than six months in a pre-detention center, where he was subjected to psychological pressure, and according to some reports, he was also beaten. On August 18, 2021, the Ordzhonikidze court of Ufa ordered to send Marat for compulsory treatment to the republican clinical psychiatric hospital in Basilevka (a suburb of Ufa) for a period of six months.

After this period, the hospital appealed to the court with a request to continue the compulsory hospitalization of Sharafutdinov, but on February 2, 2022, the Kalininsky District Court of Ufa dismissed this claim and Marat was released. Relatives announced the collection of money for the restoration of his health. As Sharafutdinov's brother

told reporters, "My brother's condition is not very good right now. He doesn't sleep at night, hardly eats, shivers, perhaps this are the consequences of the drugs that were injected into him in the hospital. We are not talking to him yet about what happened while he was in jail, but he has a constant headache, no tooth..."



**MIKHAIL
SHENDAKOV**

Michail Shendakov is a colonel of the reserve, video blogger, nationalist and opposition activist from the Moscow region. Earlier, Shendakov was repeatedly brought to administrative and criminal responsibility for his oppositional and nationalist statements in a video blog, including those containing calls for violence motivated by national hatred, as well as violence against law enforcement officials and officials. In February 2023, Shendakov was arrested due to the fact that his suspended sentence was replaced with a real imprisonment. A psychological and psychiatric examination soon followed, which revealed Shendakov's "persistent delusional ideas" and the need for compulsory psychiatric treatment.

Most probably, one of the main reasons for the persecution of the colonel was a

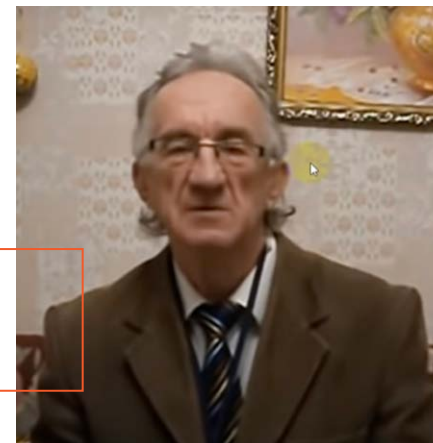
video in which he told an anecdote about an employee of the Rosgvardiya (one of the law enforcement agencies carrying out the forceful suppression of protests in Russia), and called on doctors to act in the same way as described in the anecdote:

"The surgeon speaks to the Rosgvardiya patient after the operation:

- Your balls have already been removed, everything is fine!
- What are you talking about??? I had appendicitis!
- Well, I also told you that I was going home, not to the rally".

On June 15, 2023, the Krasnogorsk City Court (Moscow Region) ordered to send Mikhail to a psychiatric hospital for compulsory treatment.

**IGOR
SIVOZHELEZOV**



A resident of the village of Vesely (Rostov region), Igor Sivozhelezov is a pensioner, video blogger, and supporter of Russian nationalists, and of the informal movement "Citizens of the USSR". Numerous supporters of this movement consider themselves sovereign citizens of Russia, adhere to the conspiracy theory, according to which the USSR de jure continues to exist as a sovereign state and a subject of international relations. The main topic of Sivozhelezov's videos, available on the Internet at the time of writing this text, are various ways of evading payment of illegal, in his opinion, bills for housing and communal services.

In the spring of 2022, Sivozhelezov was accused of publishing videos on the Internet, which, according to the prosecution, contained "calls for a violent change of power and a violent change in the foundations of the constitutional system of the Russian Federation." The videos were declared extremist.

In April 2022, the Bagaevsky District Court of the Rostov region found Sivozhelezov guilty of public calls to extremism (Part 2 of Article 280 of the Criminal Code), but stopped the criminal prosecution and sent him to compulsory psychiatric treatment.

MAXIM SOKOLOV

A resident of the village of Starokushchevskaya, Krasnodar Territory, a lawyer by education, 30-year-old Maxim Sokolov in 2018 was charged under articles of the Criminal Code on libel (Article 128.1 of the Criminal Code) and insulting a representative of the authorities (Article 319 of the Criminal Code). The basis for instituting a libel case was Sokolov's complaints to state authorities about the inaction of the Investigative Committee (IC) staff, who refused to investigate the case of a death threat that Sokolov received on his social network account. After refusing to initiate criminal proceedings, Sokolov accused the investigator of the IC of concealing other crimes committed, in his opinion, on the Internet, in particular, what Sokolov interpreted as child pornography (a new investigation confirmed the fact of the crime, but the criminal case was not initiated for procedural reasons).

In March 2018, Sokolov called the police after some people had come to his house and introduced themselves as Rostelecom employees, they asked for a username and password from the router. Sokolov refused to give the password, after which the people left, but on Sokolov's call, police officers arrived together with the head of the department, a police lieutenant colonel. The officer demanded an explanation from Sokolov why he called the police, the conversation was very rude, however, the police left without detaining Sokolov. Only later, according

to the statement of the police lieutenant colonel, a criminal case of insult was initiated.

In August 2018, Sokolov was sent for inpatient forensic psychiatric assessment to Krasnodar, where he spent 26 days. In the assessment report it was concluded that Sokolov suffered from "sluggish schizophrenia against the background of organic brain damage." Sokolov himself pointed out the contradictions in the assessment report. The brain examination was not carried out, and in the report it was said that his father had suffered from schizophrenia, although Sokolov did not know his father, and nothing was known about him. Sokolov was also registered in the military enlistment office as fit for military service and never turned to psychiatrists.

An independent examination conducted by Vladimir Mendelevich, a professor at Kazan Medical University, did not confirm the established diagnosis.

On December 11, 2018, the magistrate's court ordered to forcibly hospitalize Sokolov, while neither he nor his lawyer were present at the meeting. They were both removed from the courtroom – Sokolov for protests from the seat, the defender on procedural grounds (since Sokolov himself was in court at the beginning of the meeting, the corresponding power of attorney for the defense lawyer was not issued at that time).

During the appeal hearing of the case in February 2019, the Shcherbinovsky District Court overturned the decision of the magistrate's court. The same court in December 2019 ordered to conduct a second inpatient forensic psychiatric examination in St. Petersburg, where Sokolov also spent a month. The new examination confirmed the conclusion of the examination in Krasnodar, after which the Shcherbinovsky district Court in March 2020 ordered the compulsory treatment. On June 4, Sokolov was detained by police officers and sent to the Kushchevskaya Specialized Psychiatric Hospital No. 3 (for socially dangerous mentally ill). By that time, the statute of limitations under Article 128.1 had already expired.

In December 2020, the Kushchevsky District Court extended the term of Sokolov's compulsory treatment until June 8, 2021. According to the latest information available at the time of writing this report, his stay in the hospital has been extended once again until December 2022.

Having been found sane, Sokolov under Article 319 could have been sentenced either to a fine, or to compulsory labor, or to correctional labor for a period of no more than one year. According to Sokolov's lawyer, "he wrote many complaints and, apparently, the local authorities had enough of him. Medical measures applied to him, which in fact are punitive psychiatry, was practiced a lot in the Soviet Union."

SERGEY TOKHTEEV



A resident of Vladivostok, Sergey Tokhteev is a musician, anti-war activist, and former volunteer of Navalny's headquarters.

In May 2022, Sergey was fined 30 thousand rubles for anti-war posts

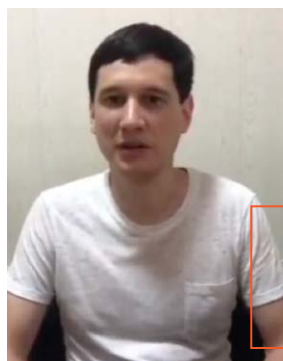
on the Vkontakte network under an administrative article on discrediting the Russian army (Part 1 of Article 20.3.3 of the Administrative Code). He did not pay the fine, but continued to write anti-war posts on the Internet.

In February 2023, five criminal cases were initiated against him under the article on the repeated discrediting of the Russian army (part 1 of Article 280.3 of the Criminal Code), later merged into one. They came to his house with a search, beat him, used a taser and seized all his equipment. He was placed under house arrest.

In May 2023, Tokhteev underwent an outpatient psychiatric examination,

which revealed “signs of a mental disorder” in him.

On June 28, the Primorsky Court of Vladivostok granted the request of the investigation to place Sergey in a psychiatric hospital in the city of Ussuriysk (see Gabyshev) for inpatient examination. Tokhteev must spend a month in the hospital.



**MAXIM
VORONOVSKY**

Maxim Voronovsky, a resident of Magnitogorsk (Chelyabinsk region), is a law student and activist of the public movement “StopHam” (combating traffic violations and illegal parking).

Maxim attracted the attention of the security forces in 2021, when he posted the personal data of one of the employees of the Center for Combating Extremism in the chat of Alexei Navalny’s supporters. Maxim was then detained, he was forced to apologize on camera, and a video with his apology was posted on Twitter by one of the well-known propagandists.

On March 31, 2022, Maxim ended up in a pre-trial detention center on suspicion of justifying terrorism (Part 2 of Article 205.2 of the Criminal Code). The case was initiated because of a comment on a photo published on the Internet by anarchist Mikhail Zhlobitsky, who had blown himself up in the FSB Directorate for the Arkhangelsk Region a few years earlier. In the comment, Zhlobitsky was called a hero (Voronovsky himself denies that he wrote this comment).

On February 22, 2023, the visiting panel of judges of the Central District Military

Court of Yekaterinburg ordered to place Voronovsky for indefinite compulsory treatment in a specialized psychiatric institution. The extension or termination of compulsory treatment should take place by the decision of a medical commission, which meets every six months.

In April 2022, Rosfinmonitoring put Voronovsky on the Federal List of extremists and terrorists.

According to the information available at the time of writing this text, Maxim has only one relative left — his 82-year-old grandmother.

AN UNKNOWN STUDENT

A resident of Smolensk, a student at the Smolensk State Medical University, who wished to keep her name a secret.

On April 27, 2023, a student who, in her opinion, was illegally evicted from the dormitory, tried to get an appointment with the rector. Apparently, she behaved emotionally and persistently, and the university staff called Rosgvardiya to “calm her down”. The staff of the Rosgvardiya refused to take her out of the university building, as she had not committed anything illegal. Then the university called a psychiatric care team, which forcibly took the young woman to the regional psychiatric hospital, where severe drug therapy was applied to her.

The medical institution demanded to approve compulsory hospitalization, and on May 3, the Smolensky District Court granted this claim.

On July 7, 2023, the student’s lawyer successfully challenged this decision in the Smolensk Regional Court. The court, remarkably, with the support of the prosecutor, ruled that there was no evidence of inappropriate behavior of the student in the case materials; eyewitness testimony and procedural documents of law enforcement agencies were not attached.

LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

It seems necessary to pay attention to some changes in Russian legislation on psychiatry that are not directly related to political abuse of psychiatry, but demonstrate a clear bias towards blurring the wording, expanding prohibitions and restricting rights.

“Treatment” of LGBT people

LGBT people in Russia have been subjected to increasing pressure, harassment, and discrimination in recent years. In 2022, new amendments were adopted to the infamous bill which bans “propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations” to people of any age (it used to concern only minors) and also prohibits the dissemination of information that may “cause a desire to change gender.” At the same time, the criteria for what to consider propaganda have remained as vague as before. In addition to the obvious anti-legal nature of this law, it is necessary to note a point concerning the field of psychiatry.

According to ICD 10 (the international classification of diseases) used by Russia, “transsexualism”, that is, transgenderism, is still a psychiatric diagnosis requiring treatment (there is no such diagnosis in the updated ICD 11).

The above-mentioned law, as well as the law that bans all gender transitions adopted in July 2023, directly contradict the guidelines of Russian psychiatrists, albeit outdated from the point of view of world science and law, but still left Russian transgender people some choice. It is not yet possible to judge the law enforcement practice in this area, since not enough time has passed.

Another aspect of discrimination against LGBT people in Russia concerning abuse in the field of psychiatry is conversion therapy. So far, these methods are used only in some private centers in different regions of the country. According to Russian laws, homosexuality does not belong to mental disorders, and official medicine does not have protocols and explicitly formulated plans for the “treatment of homosexuality.”

However, there is reason to fear that this situation may change soon.

On July 1, 2023, the Order of the Ministry of Health of November 14, 2022 No. 668n “On approval of the Procedure for providing medical care for mental disorders and behavioral disorders” came into force. Among other things, the order mentions the introduction of primary psychological and psychiatric care offices in polyclinics and other medical institutions, and also expands the list of diseases for which psychiatric care is provided.

The wording of the order does not contain direct indications of the introduction of the practice of “treatment” of “non-traditional sexual orientation”, however, it sets a fairly wide framework for such abuses.

Firstly, the category of the International Classification of Diseases F99 - “Unspecified mental disorders” is included in the list of diseases for which medical care is needed (including compulsory). Theoretically, anything can fit under this definition.

Secondly, in Appendix No. 16 “Rules for organizing the activities of the office of a sexologist” among the functions of the office of a sexologist, the following points attract attention:

1) Provision of primary specialized medical and sanitary care to persons suffering from mental disorders related to sexual development and orientation, disorders of sexual identification and sexual preference, family and sexual disharmonies, sexual dysfunctions not caused by organic disorders or other diseases and conditions, and sexual dysfunctions of mixed genesis (hereinafter, respectively, persons suffering from sexual disorders; sexual disorders), as well as having a risk of their development.

5) The use, together with a psychiatrist, of compulsory medical measures against persons suffering from sexual disorders.

The introduction of such measures against the general background of legislative and informational harassment of LGBT people in Russia can be unambiguously interpreted as an immediate threat of use of conversion therapy. But there are

also more convincing markers, namely the narrative by which this order was presented in the official media of the Federation Council of the Russian Federation “Parliamentary Newspaper”. In the article describing the new order, the list of diseases treated by sexologists (including compulsory) is mentioned: “frigidity, impotence, or such violations of sexual behavior as fetishism, masochism, sadism, exhibitionism, and even such, to put it mildly, non-standard preferences as autoeroticism, homosexuality, bestiality.”

The prospect of the use of cruel practices dictated not by scientific knowledge, but by prejudices discredits psychiatry in Russia. But there are fears that in the wake of the persecution of LGBT people, the use of psychiatry for punitive purposes against broad groups of Russians may also become tougher. Mikhail Murashko, the head of the Ministry of Health, speaking in June 2023 in the State Duma, said that the president instructed him to create a new institute based on the National Medical Research Center of Psychiatry named after Serbsky, which, among other things, will study the behavior of LGBT people. The media and human rights activists immediately drew attention to this, but it is also interesting that Murashko’s full statement concerned “research” not only of LGBT people, but also “a number of behavioral areas, including social behavior.” According to human rights activist Nef Cellarius, coordinator of the LGBTQ+ transgender peer counseling program for the group Coming Out (Vykhod), “Unfortunately, it can be understood that – if such an institute is created – punitive psychiatry will be applied not only to transgender or homosexual people, but to any

people whose "social behavior" the state does not like – opposition activists, eco-activists... anyone.."

The situation with Psychoneurological social care homes (PNI)

In the summer of 2023, the State Duma adopted amendments to the law "On Psychiatric Care".

According to the social project "Region of Care", there are more than 500 PNI in Russia, with more than 160,000 residents. Their situation has been the object of attention of independent media and non-governmental organizations over the past few years (for detailed information, we recommend, for example, a report by Elena Kostyuchenko in the now closed Novaya Gazeta, <https://novayagazeta.ru/articles/2021/04/30/internat>). The word that independent observers often use to describe life in Russian social care homes is "hell". However, until recently, the law allowed at least some control over what was happening at PNI, there was an opportunity for the organization of independent living of some patients.

The new version of the law effectively abolishes the possibility of independent control, and also leaves it to the discretion of doctors to discharge and temporarily retire patients (for example, on weekends), without providing for any procedure to challenge these decisions.

The bill caused a sharp negative reaction of society — especially given the current domestic political situation of the "scorched earth". The petition against the amendments was signed by

more than 40,000 people and more than 70 non-profit organizations. Against this background, the reaction of the president of the Russian Society of Psychiatrists, Nikolai Neznanov, is striking. Argumenty i Fakty, a popular newspaper loyal to the authorities, quotes him as saying about the usefulness of the new law: "I note that amendments are a big and long-awaited step forward for the entire sector. First of all, the changes are aimed at protecting the rights of patients, which is certainly supported from both patients themselves and their loved ones, as well as from the medical community."

It is difficult to judge why the Russian authorities needed, in the midst of war and domestic political repression, to adopt — and rather hastily — a seemingly non-political law that worsens the situation of people already deprived of civil rights and breaks even imperfect, but working care mechanisms. Philanthropist and social activist Nyuta Federmesser, known for the fact that for the sake of preserving and developing her truly progressive and grandiose charitable projects, she never went into confrontation with the authorities and even entered various state structures, suggested that social care homes would become a kind of Solovki (one of the islands where the Soviet government took disabled people to in order to hide them from the eyes of society). It would be much easier for the government to hide soldiers returning from Ukraine in social care homes forever than to deal with their treatment and prevention of antisocial behavior.

ANNEX I

INTRODUCTION TO THE SEPTEMBER 2021 REPORT

Viktor Davidoff

2021 marks exactly 100 years since a political regime in Russia first accepted psychiatry as an instrument of oppression. Indeed, the oldest known document about the forced internment of a political opposition figure in a psychiatric hospital is dated 1921.

Since then, several political regimes have come and gone in Russia. Yet aside from a few brief intervals, psychiatry continues to be used for political purposes and "social engineering". In 1971, Soviet dissident Vladimir Bukovsky enumerated the reasons why psychiatry is a convenient instrument of repression for authorities. These include:

- A simplified judicial procedure. A person can be placed in a psychiatric hospital either without any charges at all or through an extremely reduced criminal trial: arguments on the merit of the charges are not reviewed; the conclusion of the government forensic psychiatric evaluation cannot be contested; and the judicial proceeding can take place in the absence of the defendant.
- The period of stay in a psychiatric facility is not limited by law.
- Incarceration takes place under conditions of strict isolation: contacts with lawyers and family are restricted; statements and complaints by the prisoner are not reviewed by government agencies.
- Painful medications with destructive effects on the body and mind are routinely administered.

As political regimes became more repressive during the Soviet era, cases of forced hospitalizations grew more and more frequent. And while this type of political repression was declared unlawful during the period of perestroika, such abuses continue today. Indeed, "latent schizophrenia," a condition deliberately invented by Soviet psychiatrists in order to persecute dissidents, is still listed as an official mental illness in Russia. Any healthy person, especially a patient with autism, may be diagnosed this way, even without any symptoms at all.

At present, several methods of punitive psychiatry have been observed in Russia:

- The most widespread form continues to be involuntary hospitalization of citizens in psychiatric hospitals through administrative procedures without filing legal charges. The police detain members of the opposition, civic activists, bloggers, and ordinary citizens who complain about the authorities' abuses, or who try to combat corruption, after which a court rules to hospitalize them involuntarily for a minimum period of one month. Later, a court often extends that term.

The court's decision to hospitalize a person is based solely on police records; witnesses are not summoned to court, and usually, the trial takes place without a lawyer's involvement. Formally, the court is supposed to summon the accused, but that is not always done. A particularly serious rights violation occurs when a hospitalized person – usually

someone already in a psychiatric institution – is given an injection of a strong psychotropic medication in advance of his hearing. As a result, he cannot participate adequately nor perceive what is happening. In the opinion of one lawyer, "a commission made up of three doctors writes whatever they like in a conclusion; a person is pumped up with sedatives to the point where he is drooling, and in such a state he is brought to court. The judge looks at him and makes a decision to hospitalize him."

The procedure itself happens very quickly – in one case, according to the official audio recording, the court ruled in favor of involuntary hospitalization within three minutes and 27 seconds. As a result, the female defendant was detained for more than eight months.

Cases of involuntary hospitalization without medical grounds have become so frequent that even the government news agency RIA Novosti reported on it. In January 2020, they published material describing several cases of unjustified hospitalizations (the last names and places of residence of the victims were omitted). In one case, a 64-year-old woman spent a week in the Alekseyev Psychiatric Hospital in Moscow after she complained that the police refused to investigate the theft of her belongings. In another case, a 26-year-old woman from Karelia sought psychiatric help, but when she demanded to be discharged, the psychiatrists appealed, and the woman spent a year in the hospital (after which she was released to ambulatory care).

As a lawyer familiar with the practice of involuntary hospitalizations stated, "decisions about involuntary hospitalization at the Gatchina City Court (Leningrad Region) are literally churned out; 20-30 of such cases are heard a day, and 10 minutes are spent on each one, no more."

There are also cases of police officers themselves being forcibly hospitalized at the behest of their colleagues when they have a work conflict with their superiors. In such cases, instead of resolving the issue, the police chiefs send the officer for involuntary treatment at a psychiatric facility, after which he is fired "on medical grounds."

- The courts may also order involuntary psychiatric treatment for suspects in politically motivated criminal cases. Usually, this is done when the substance of the charge is difficult to prove in an ordinary judicial procedure, when there is insufficient evidence, or when there are additional factors. For example, people detained for resisting police during opposition demonstrations may be interned and severely beaten. One case is known when the suspect was tortured by electro-shock, after which he confessed (and then subsequently retracted his confession).
- The ordering of an in-patient forensic psychiatric evaluation is often assigned without justification in politically motivated criminal cases. During the evaluation, the accused is held in a special wing of a strict-regimen psychiatric hospital, and the evaluation period may be increased up to 90 days. The living conditions

in these institutions are extremely dangerous; patients are usually suspects in criminal cases who have severe psychiatric problems and are often aggressive. The accused must remain in the hospital for the entire period of the evaluation, unable to leave the premises, with their contacts restricted. Often, even before any diagnosis is given or a ruling is made regarding fitness to stand trial, large doses of neuroleptic drugs are administered.

An especially egregious violation of the rights of the accused is ordering an in-patient evaluation when a person is charged with a crime not usually punishable by imprisonment. In such cases, even if the court pronounces the accused guilty and imposes sanctions, the accused has essentially spent the entire period of evaluation under illegal confinement.

Furthermore, investigators have been known to use the threat of psychiatric evaluation for their own purposes. Cases have been documented when an investigator has openly threatened a suspect with an examination if he does not confess his guilt.

- Involuntary hospitalization of prisoners in psychiatric wings of labor camp (prison) hospitals is also a common abuse. Inmates who have systematically complained to state agencies and the media about the abuse of prisoners, forced heavy labor, and torture, often wind up placed there. These institutions remain extremely secretive, and access is restricted both for lawyers and members of the Public

Observation Commissions. Large doses of neuroleptics are given to patients without justification. Patients spend a long time – days, weeks, even months – tied to cots and have no opportunity to complain or appeal to state agencies.

- The forced sterilization of women in psychiatric institutions has also been known to occur. This practice, like the Nazi program to sterilize women of “inferior races,” is used on women in facilities for the disabled as well. Patients – in one case, a pregnant woman – are sent from the psychiatric institution to a hospital for the operation without any explanation. These women are often threatened and forced to sign their consent for the “voluntary” procedure. At the present time, only one psychiatric facility is known to have used this practice, but there is every reason to suspect that it is being implemented at other hospitals.
- There have also been cases of using psychiatry to “cure” homosexuality. Usually, parents send their adolescent children to psychiatrists, and the teenagers themselves cannot legally refuse such “treatment”.

Although the use of punitive psychiatry is clearly a continuation of Soviet-era practices which used judicial and medical means to silence dissenting voices, it is worth noting the differences between this type of coercion in the USSR and contemporary Russia.

A law passed in 1992, still in force with some amendments, mandates that a judicial decision is necessary to impose involuntary hospitalization, although criminal charges are not required. If in

the USSR, statements from the police (who usually acted on KGB orders) were sufficient for involuntary hospitalization, now such an act involves administrative proceedings and a court ruling. While the decision depends exclusively on one judge’s opinion, many judges are aware of the criticism of the misuse of psychiatry in the USSR and do not believe that they should take part in continuing it. Another important distinction is that a judicial decision may be appealed to a higher court, thus complicating the procedure. This may motivate some judges to dismiss cases without prejudice, rather than getting drawn into prolonged court hearings that can go on for months.

Another very important factor is glasnost or publicity via a few independent media outlets and social media networks that can still express opinions freely. Thanks to these channels, psychiatric abuses can become widely known almost instantly. Moreover, history has shown that when an involuntary hospitalization becomes public, followed by protest actions, the court’s decision is either reversed by a higher court or the person hospitalized is released from the psychiatric hospital before the court-imposed term.

These precedents suggest that shining a light on cases of punitive psychiatry in contemporary Russia, especially when it leads to international outcry, can halt the further deterioration of citizens’ rights, even in the absence of an independent judiciary. Publicity and protests may indeed be the keys to defending political opponents from repressive abuse and the arbitrary deprivation of freedom in psychiatric institutions.

Human Rights in Mental Health – FGIP is an international federation of not-for-profit organizations that promote humane, ethical and effective mental health care throughout the world. The organization aims to empower people and help build improved and sustainable services that are not dependent on continued external support. The defense of human rights in mental health care delivery is the cornerstone of our work. We consider it our prime obligation to speak out whenever and wherever human rights abuses in mental health practice occur, and work with local partners to amend the situation and make sure the human rights violations in question are discontinued. The basis in all our activities is partnership.

Human Rights in Mental Health-FGIP was originally founded in 1980 as the “International Association on the Political Use of Psychiatry” (IAPUP) in response to the systematic political abuse of psychiatry in the USSR. It actively supported victims of such abuses and organized international campaigns to bring these abuses to an end. In 1991 it was renamed as Geneva Initiative on Psychiatry (GIP) and focused much of its work on supporting mental health reform in Central and Eastern Europe and the former USSR. In 2005 it expanded its activities beyond that region, became active in Africa and Asia, and renamed itself into Global Initiative on Psychiatry. At this moment the Federation Global Initiative on Psychiatry has member organizations in Bulgaria, Georgia, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Sri Lanka, Ukraine and the United States.

Since the resumption of political abuse of psychiatry in former Soviet republics, and in particular in Russia, it has published several reports on new cases of political abuse. The latest, “The Return of Political Abuse of Psychiatry in Russia”, covered the period 2017-2021 and focused entirely on Russia, where the number of cases continues to increase. This report is an update with current active cases. The 2021 report can be downloaded from the website of FGIP: <https://www.gip-global.org/home/psychiatry-in-russia-again-a-regular-method-of-repression/>



Human Rights
in
Mental Health

Human Rights in Mental Health-FGIP
www.gip-global.org
rvvoren@gip-global.org