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Political repression: Sentences to prison terms in January 2025 (EN/ RU)

Dr Ievgeniia Gidulianova

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[Krasnoyarsk resident sentenced to two years in a colony because of calls to overthrow the government in Russia](#)

[Красноярца приговорили к двум годам колонии из-за призывов свергнуть власть в России](#)

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[The defendant in the "Baymak case" was sentenced to a real term. She will serve her sentence later](#)

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[Jehovah's Witness from Primorsky Krai Sentenced to Three Years Probation](#)

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[A pensioner from Moscow was sentenced to eight years in a colony because of a letter to the Prosecutor General](#)

[Пенсионера из Москвы приговорили к восьми годам колонии из-за письма генпрокурору](#)

[An emigrated Russian woman was sentenced in the second case of military "fakes"](#)

[Эмигрировавшей россиянке вынесли приговор по уже второму делу о военных «фейках»](#)

23.01.2025

[Jehovah's Witness from Kostroma sentenced to five years of strict regime in a new case](#)

[Свидетеля Иеговы из Костромы приговорили к пяти годам строгого режима по новому делу](#)

[A St. Petersburg woman was sentenced to three years in a colony because of a video calling for the liberation of Russia from Putin](#)

[Петербурженку приговорили к трем годам колонии из-за видео с призывом освободить Россию от Путина](#)

[A court in Moscow sentenced Ukrainian journalist Yanina Sokolovskaya in absentia to seven and a half years](#)

[Суд в Москве заочно приговорил украинскую журналистку Янину Соколовскую к семи с половиной годам](#)

21.01.2025

In Belgorod, the programmer who set fire to the letter Z was sentenced to 6.5 years in the case of possession of explosives

В Белгороде программиста, поджегшего букву Z, осудили на 6,5 лет по делу о хранении взрывчатки

A former military man from St. Petersburg was punished in the case of "fakes" about the army

Бывшему военному из Петербурга ужесточили наказание по делу о «фейках» про армию

20.01.2025

Two 66-year-old Jehovah's Witnesses Sentenced to Five-and-a-Half-Year Probation

Двух 66-летних Свидетельниц Иеговы приговорили к пяти с половиной годам условно

Jehovah's Witness from Karachay-Cherkessia Sentenced to Suspended Sentence

Свидетельницу Иеговы из Карачаево-Черкесии приговорили к условному сроку

In Karachay-Cherkessia, Jehovah's Witness Sentenced to Six Years Probation

В Карачаево-Черкесии Свидетеля Иеговы приговорили к шести годам условно

Pskov activist sentenced to a year of probation in the case of repeated discrediting of the army

Псковского активиста приговорили к году условно по делу о повторной дискредитации армии

17.01.2025

Three of Navalny's lawyers were sentenced to terms of up to 5.5 years in a colony

Троих адвокатов Навального приговорили к сроками до 5,5 лет колонии

A resident of the Kuban, detained because of the arson of the banner "We do not leave our own", was sentenced to 13 years

Жителя Кубани, задержанного из-за поджога баннера «Своих не бросаем», осудили на 13 лет

Sochi engineer sentenced to five and a half years in the case of anti-war posts

Сочинского инженера приговорили к пяти с половиной годам по делу об антивоенных постах

A butcher from Tajikistan was sentenced to seven years in a colony in the case of "fakes" and hooliganism

Мясника из Таджикистана приговорили к семи годам колонии по делу о «фейках» и о хулиганстве

14.01.2025

Jehovah's Witnesses from Crimea Sentenced to Six Years in a colony
Свидетелей Иеговы из Крыма приговорили к шести годам колонии

[A court in Moscow sentenced the mayor of Dnipro in absentia to nine years in prison because of posts about the war](#)

[Суд в Москве заочно приговорил мэра Днепра к девяти годам колонии из-за постов о войне](#)

[A human rights activist from Zlatoust was sentenced to a suspended sentence in the case of discrediting the army](#)

[Правозащитницу из Златоуста приговорили к условному сроку по делу о дискредитации армии](#)

13.01.2025

[A motorcyclist blogger from the Perm Territory was sentenced to 6 years because of posts about the explosion of the Crimean bridge](#)

[К 6 годам приговорили блогера-мотоциклиста из Пермского края из-за постов о взрыве Крымского моста](#)

[The defendants in the case of arson of the military registration and enlistment office in Goryachy Klyuch were sentenced to 12 and 13 years in prison](#)

[Фигурантам дела о поджоге военкомата в Горячем Ключе назначили 12 и 13 лет заключения](#)

The first prisoner exchange of 2025 after the 11 swaps in 2024. EU 'out of the game'

By Willy Fautré, director of Human Rights Without Frontiers and Dr Ievgeniia Gidulianova

HRWF (31.01.2025) - On 15 January, **[25 soldiers](#)** and civilians **[returned to Ukraine](#)** from Russian captivity. The same number of prisoners was handed over to Russia.

Our research below shows that the new exchange took place again with the support of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the EU was again "out of the game" despite repeated public statements that the EU is "deeply involved" in the repatriation of Ukrainian prisoners of war and deported children. Their last statement was made at the 28 January session of the Subcommittee for Human Rights of the European Parliament in Brussels.

Ukrainian President Zelensky said that among those released there were defenders of Mariupol and Azovstal, as well as Kharkiv, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson. He also noted that they were seriously injured and ill.

Among the returnees there was also a civilian. The occupiers seized him in the Kyiv region and illegally detained him. The Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War said that all repatriated servicemen were soldiers, including sailors. The youngest released is 24 years old and the oldest 60.

The injured have, in particular, vision loss, limb amputations, complex wounds caused by bullets and land mines. Among the diseases are tuberculosis, oncology, gangrene...

Overview of the 11 exchanges of prisoners of war (POW) in 2024

December 2024

Source : [Hundreds of soldiers freed in the latest prisoner exchange between Russia and Ukraine \(AP\)](#)

Approximate date: End of December

Approximate numbers:

According to Kyiv: 189 Ukrainians
87 soldiers from the army including 14 officers, 43 from the national guard, 33 border guards, 24 from the navy and two civilians.

According to Moscow:
150 Ukrainians/ 150 Russians

Facilitator of the exchange: U.A.E.

October 2024

Source : [95 at large: LIST of those released from captivity 18 October 2024 Russia, Ukraine conduct prisoner swap, exchange of bodies](#)

Approximate date: 18 October

Approximate numbers:

According to Kyiv: 95 Ukrainians
Among those released from captivity: National Guardsmen, military sailors, soldiers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, border guards, representatives of other units of the Security and Defense Forces. 69 soldiers and sergeants and 26 officers.

According to Moscow: [The Ministry of Defense reported on the exchange of prisoners of war between the Russian Federation and Ukraine in the "95 for 95" format](#)
95 Ukrainians/ 95 Russians

Facilitator of the exchange: U.A.E.

September 2024

Source : [For the second day in a row. Ukraine exchanged another 103 soldiers](#)

Approximate date: 14 September

Approximate numbers:

According to Kyiv: 103 Ukrainians
Among them: privates and sergeants, 21 officers, and there were also two Chernobyl guards.

According to Moscow [The Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation announced the return of 103 soldiers captured in the Kursk region](#)
103 Ukrainians/ 103 Russians

Facilitator of the exchange: U.A.E.

Source : [Defenders of Azovstal and not only. Ukraine returned another 49 soldiers from captivity](#)

Approximate date: 13 September

Approximate numbers:

According to Kyiv: 49 Ukrainians
Among the released are 23 soldiers and sergeants, 19 officers, 7 are civilians. Among them were 23 women, including Ukrainian civilians, who were illegally detained by the Russians. It was also possible to release women who were subjected to inhumane treatment, in particular, due to forced participation in the so-called "trial" of the defenders of Mariupol. Crimean activist [Nienia Umerova](#), who was captured by the Russians while crossing the border of Georgia, was released.

According to Moscow: [Russia and Ukraine exchanged prisoners](#)
49 Ukrainians/ 49 Russians

Facilitator of the exchange: U.A.E.

August 2024

Source : [On August 24, Ukraine exchanged prisoners of war with the Russian side with the assistance of the United Arab Emirates. 115 Ukrainian soldiers returned home](#)

Approximate date: 24 August

Approximate numbers:

According to Kyiv: 115 Ukrainians
These were soldiers of the National Guard, the Armed Forces, the Navy, the State Border Guard Service

According to Moscow: [The Ukrainian side returned 103 Russian soldiers captured in the Kursk region, the same number of servicemen of the Armed Forces of Ukraine were handed over to Kyiv](#)

115 Ukrainians/ 115 Russians

Facilitator of the exchange: U.A.E.

July 2024

Source : [Exchange with the Russian Federation: 95 prisoners of war returned to Ukraine](#)

Approximate date: 17 July

Approximate numbers:

According to Kyiv: 95 Ukrainians
These were soldiers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the National Guard and border guards.

According to Moscow: [The exchange of prisoners between the Russian Federation and Ukraine on July 17 was the fifth since the beginning of 2024](#)
95 Ukrainians/ 95 Russians

Facilitator of the exchange: U.A.E.

June 2024

Source : [Ukraine returned 90 fighters from Russian captivity, including defenders of Mariupol](#)

Approximate date: 25 June

Approximate numbers:

According to Kyiv: 90 Ukrainians
These were soldiers of the National Guard, Navy, armies, territorial defenders and border guards.

According to Moscow: [Another exchange of prisoners of war was carried out: 90 Russian servicemen were returned](#)
90 Ukrainians/ 90 Russians

Facilitator of the exchange: U.A.E.

May 2024

Source : [Ukraine returned 90 fighters from Russian captivity, including defenders of Mariupol](#)

Approximate date: 31 May

Approximate numbers:

According to Kyiv: 75 Ukrainians
These were sergeants and officers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the National Guard of Ukraine, the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine and civilians. 19 people captured from Zmiinyi Island, 10 defenders of Mariupol and Azovstal, Ukrainian soldiers captured in different locations.

According to Moscow: [Special operation, May 31: Russia and Ukraine exchanged prisoners](#)
75 Ukrainians/ 75 Russians

Facilitator of the exchange: U.A.E.

February 2024

Source (Title and link): [A new exchange of prisoners took place 100 for 100](#)

Approximate date: 8 February

Approximate numbers:

According to Kyiv: 100 Ukrainians

Among the rescued servicemen there were 49 soldiers of the National Guard of Ukraine, 25 border guards, 26 servicemen of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, including 11 territorial defenders.

According to Moscow: [Russia and Ukraine exchanged a hundred soldiers each](#)
100 Ukrainians/ 100 Russians

Facilitator of the exchange: U.A.E.

January 2024

Source: [Ukraine has returned more than 200 people from captivity of the Russian Federation. Here's What We Know](#)

Approximate date: 31 January

Approximate numbers:

According to Kyiv: 207 Ukrainians

These 207 Ukrainians were soldiers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the National Guard, the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, the National Police — private people, sergeants, and officers.

According to Moscow: [How the largest exchange of prisoners between Russia and Ukraine took place](#)
195 Ukrainians/ 195 Russians

Facilitator of the exchange: U.A.E.

3 January 2024

Source: [The largest exchange of prisoners during the full-scale invasion: 230 Ukrainians were released](#)

Approximate date: 3 January

Approximate numbers:

According to Kyiv: 230 Ukrainians

Among them were 130 people – 55 servicemen of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – 38 soldiers of the National Guard – 1 State Border Guard Service - National Police and 6 civilians who were illegally deprived of their liberty.

According to Moscow: [The Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation returned 248 servicemen from Ukrainian captivity](#)

230 Ukrainians/ 248 Russians

Facilitator of the exchange: U.A.E.

Repressions in Russia in 2024, a review of OVD-Info

Introduction

[OVD](#) (16.01.2025) - The year 2024 for Russian civil society, as well as the two previous years, was marked by the unrelying war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. Political persecution continued throughout Russia throughout the year. The main trends of the past years have been preserved - pointing, strikes on vulnerable groups, adoption of repressive laws. In addition, one of the terrible leitmotifs of the year was the death of people deprived of their liberty for political reasons: Alexei Navalny was killed, four more people died in prison, two - from the consequences of being in isolation, one - from the consequences of detention.

One of the most important events in the history of political persecution in 2024 was the "Baymak case" in Bashkortostan, which affected dozens of people. Another is the exchange of prisoners between Russia and Western countries, in which 16 people were released, most of them are prosecuted in politically motivated cases. We also saw a sharp increase in criminal prosecutions of "foreign agents" and a scaling of the persecution of LGBTQ+ people.

The report uses data and analytics of participants of OVD-Info, the [Sova](#) Research Center, the [Exit](#) group, the [Thunderstorm](#) media, the [first department](#) and the [Team against torture](#) human rights projects.

We receive information about politically motivated persecution from different sources - websites of Russian courts and departments, the media, the persecuted themselves and their relatives. Due to the limited information available - in particular, the texts of court decisions - and the resulting impossibility of tracking all prosecutions in real time, our data is obviously incomplete, but we consider it correct and useful to publish the available and contribute to the description of the objective picture of political persecution in Russia.

We also publish data on persecution in the annexed territories of Crimea and Sevastopol - repressions there are carried out by Russian law enforcement agencies, and we have the opportunity to verify this data. As for the occupied territories of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions of Ukraine, we have decided to monitor data on what is happening there only this year, and so far, including due to the difficulty in obtaining and verifying this data, we are not ready to consider and count them on a par with the rest.

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Note: Use the automatic translation if you cannot read Russian
