



**Pekka Kallioniemi** @P\_Kallioniemi

Mar 19, 2025 · 19 tweets · [P\\_Kallioniemi/status/1902351629258547584](https://twitter.com/P_Kallioniemi/status/1902351629258547584)

In today's Vatnik Soup, I'll continue the "Degenerate Russia" series. In it, we look behind the Kremlin propaganda and see the real Russia – an authoritarian country that doesn't care about its people and desperately tries to hold on to its imperialistic past.

1/18



The Kremlin loves to brand Russia as the last defender of “traditional values” against the “decadent” West. But in reality, Russia is plagued by crime, violence, corruption, and even neo-Nazi groups. Let's break down the hypocrisy.

First part:

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**Pekka Kallioniemi**   
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In today's *Vatnik Soup*, I'll start a new series titled "Degenerate Russia". In it, we look behind the Kremlin propaganda and see the real Russia – an authoritarian country that doesn't care about its people and desperately tries to hold on to its imperialistic past.

1/22



12:03 PM · Mar 18, 2025



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## BREAKING NEWS

Ukraine's Zelenskyy says he plans to speak to President Trump today to hear more about his call with Russia's Putin.

## WORLD NEWS

# Putin calls for a project to promote 'traditional Russian values' overseas



Russian President Vladimir Putin listens to Speaker of the State Duma, the Lower House of the Russian Parliament, Vyacheslav Volodin and Speaker of the Federation Council, the Upper House of the Russian Parliament, Valentina Matviyenko during their meeting at the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia, on Monday, Aug. 5, 2024. (Gavril Grigorov, Sputnik, Kremlin Pool Photo via AP)

Updated 3:12 PM GMT+2, August 6, 2024

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## Russian convicts released to fight with Wagner accused of new crimes

10 August 2023

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Arsenii Sokolov, Tim Whewell & Nina Nazarova  
BBC World Service



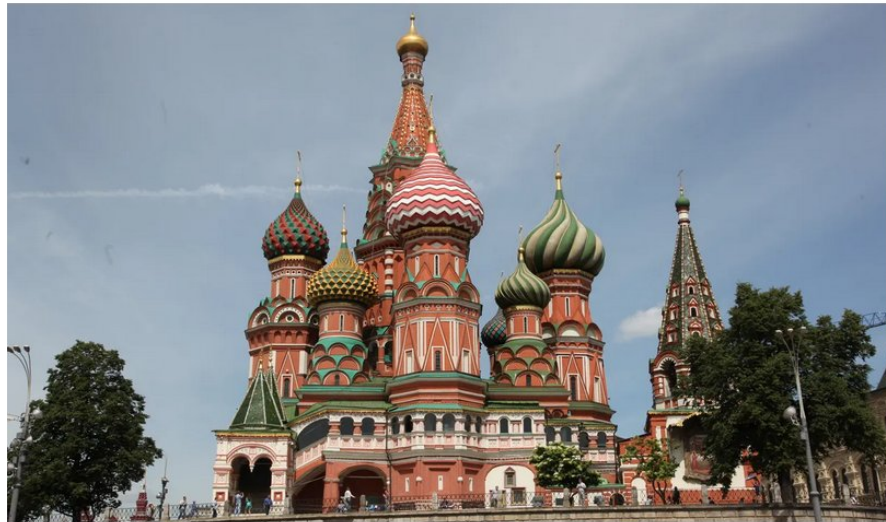
**A prisoner believed to have been released early to fight with Wagner mercenaries in Ukraine has been accused of committing a double murder in Russia after returning home from the war.**

NEWS FEED, RUSSIA, UKRAINE, MOLDOVA, ANTI-CORRUPTION, CORRUPTION, EUROPEAN UNION

## Russia records worst-ever ranking in key corruption index

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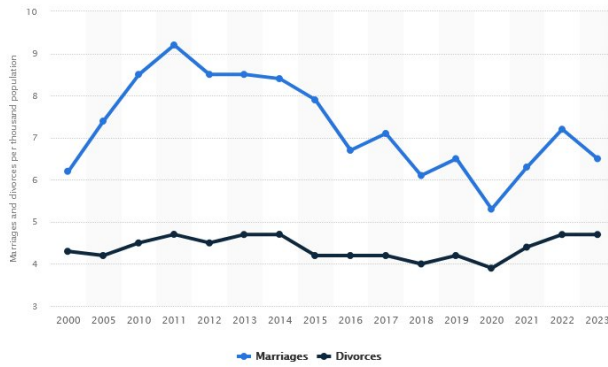
by Tim Zadorozhnyy and The Kyiv Independent news desk · February 11, 2025 2:22 PM · 2 min read



A general view of Saint Basils Cathedral in the Red Square on June 28, 2017, in Moscow, Russia. (Pallava Bagla / Getty Images).

Russia has one of the highest divorce rates in the world. In 2021, it had a divorce rate of 4,3 per 1000 people, among the highest globally. While Putin criticizes Western liberalism, over 60% of Russian marriages end in divorce. So much for being a “family values” society.

### Number of marriages and divorces per 1,000 population in Russia from 2000 to 2023



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Release date

February 2025

Region

Russia

Survey time period

2000 to 2023

Supplementary notes

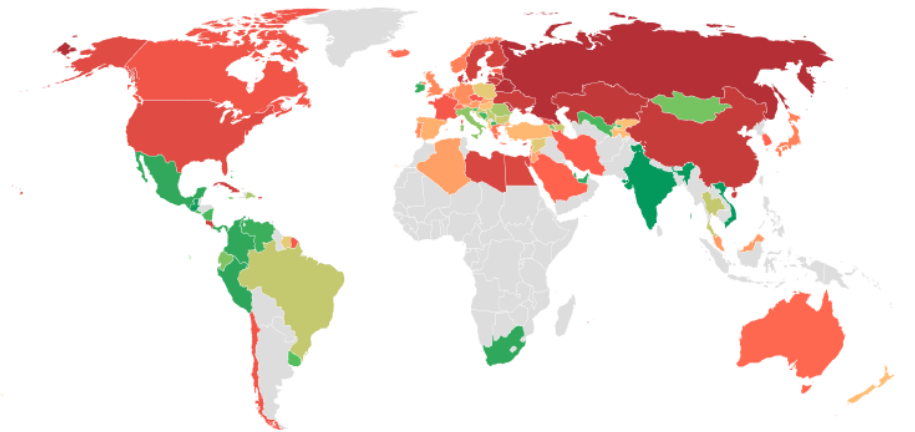
Figures have been rounded.

Citation formats

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### World Divorce Rates

The odds of getting divorced based on your country



Source: CASINO ALPHA - Embed - Created with Datawrapper

Domestic violence is rampant in Russia. A 2019 study estimated that 14,000 Russian women die annually from domestic abuse. Yet in 2017, Putin decriminalized some forms of domestic violence, making it even harder for victims to get protection from the state.

## Activists Accuse Russian Authorities Of Turning A Blind Eye To Domestic Violence



Moscow protesters against the 2017 partial decriminalization of domestic violence hold a placard reading: "Violence is not our tradition!"

Earlier this month, a pregnant woman in Makhachkala, the capital of Russia's North Caucasus region of Dagestan, complained to police about her abusive husband. She told them he beat her, stole her money, and threatened to kill her.

"The officers responded by saying they don't come between a husband and his wife," the woman told RFE/RL.\*

### Related



Chechen Teen Flees Russia  
Complaining Of Domestic  
Violence

### Russia parliament votes 380-3 to decriminalize domestic violence

[DOUG STANGLIN](#) | USATODAY

Russia's parliament voted 380-3 on Friday to decriminalize domestic violence in cases where it does not cause "substantial bodily harm" and does not occur more than once a year.

The move, which eliminates criminal liability in such cases, makes a violation punishable by a fine of roughly \$500, or a 15-day arrest, provided there is no repeat within 12 months.

The bill now goes to the rubber-stamp upper chamber, where no opposition is expected. It then must be signed by President Vladimir Putin, who has signaled his support.

Russia's murder rate remains higher than in most European countries. Organized crime, human trafficking, and corruption thrive under Putin's rule, yet state propaganda pretends Russia is a model of "moral order."

5/18



The screenshot shows the top portion of a news article on the Novaya Gazeta Europe website. The header includes the logo and name 'Novaya Gazeta Europe' on the left, and navigation links for 'NEWS', 'LONG READS', 'OPINION', 'ANALYSIS', 'ABOUT', and 'CONTACT' on the right. Below the header, the article is categorized under 'NEWS • SOCIETY'. The main headline reads 'Russian Interior Ministry forecasts largest spike in violent crime in 15 years'. The byline indicates the article was published at 06:34 PM on May 8, 2024, by Novaya Gazeta Europe. The text of the article states that the Russian Interior Ministry has forecasted that the number of serious crimes in Russia could reach 152,000 in 2024, the highest in over 15 years, according to independent media outlet Verstka. It also notes that in 2022, the department predicted an increase to 133,000 in 2023, but the actual figure was 142,000. A quote from the ministry is provided in a separate box, stating that 2023 saw an increase in terror-related crimes, kidnappings, street murders, rapes, and assaults.

Russian prisons are infamous for their extreme violence and sexual abuse. In 2021, leaked videos showed systemic torture and rape in Russian jails. Prisoners are often brutalized, and some are even recruited for war with the promise of a pardon.

6/18



# 'Unprecedented' Video Leak Shows Rampant Torture at Russian Prisons – NGO

 By Piotr Sauer  
Oct. 6, 2021



Yevgeny Yepanchintsev / TASS

THE WORLD > From the World > Evropa >

## The chilling confessions of prisoners in Russian prisons: I was raped with a broomstick until I lost consciousness



3 years ago



# Wagner Group: Head of Russian mercenary group filmed recruiting in prison

15 September 2022

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**Matt Murphy**  
BBC News



Watch: Russian mercenary group recruits detainees

**The head of Russia's shadowy Wagner mercenary group has appeared in leaked footage attempting to recruit prisoners to fight in Ukraine.**

NEWS FEED, RUSSIA, WAR, PRISONERS, UKRAINE, RUSSIAN ARMED FORCES

## Russia has recruited up to 180,000 convicts for war against Ukraine, Foreign Intelligence Service says

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by Kateryna Denisova · January 3, 2025 9:57 AM · 2 min read



Illustrative image: Russian POWs are seen living in a prisoner of war detention camp lining up for a meal in the cafeteria in Lviv Oblast, Ukraine, on Aug. 3, 2023. (Paula Bronstein/Getty Images)

Russia has sent thousands of convicted criminals, including murderers, rapists, and even cannibals, to fight in Ukraine. These men, many with histories of extreme violence, have committed brutal war crimes against civilians.

Society

# Russian rapist and double murderer freed from prison for second time to fight in Ukraine

ejr | © 28.08.2024, 16:17



A Russian soldier in Crimea. Photo: Pierre Cram/Getty Images

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FACEBOOK

The Russian prison service has freed a dangerous inmate just a week after he was jailed for the brutal rape and murder of an 85-year-old woman, so he can fight on the frontline in Ukraine, the victim's family have said.



NEWS • SOCIETY

# Convicted Russian cannibal released to fight in Ukraine returns home after being wounded

12:54 PM, 23 September 2024, **Novaya Gazeta Europe**



Dmitry Malyshev. Photo: Dmitry Malyshev / OK

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PRESS RELEASES | MULTIPLE MECHANISMS

# UN Commission concludes that war crimes have been committed in Ukraine, expresses concern about suffering of civilians

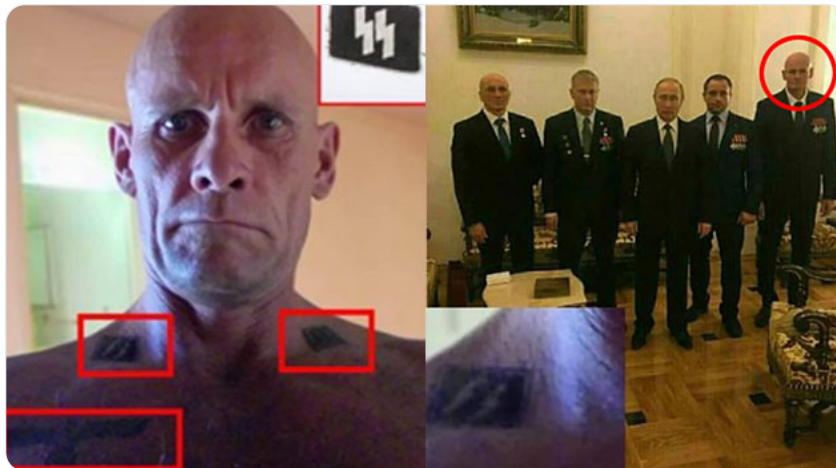
23 September 2022

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Despite claiming to fight “Nazism” in Ukraine, Russia openly uses neo-Nazi paramilitary groups. The Rusich unit, fighting under Russian command, flaunts SS symbols and commits war crimes. Wagner Group also recruited known neo-Nazis.

8/18





Russian neo-Nazi groups aren't just in the military. Groups like Russian Imperial Movement and Atomwaffen Division Russland have flourished under Putin's rule. Russian authorities only crack down on them when they become politically inconvenient.





## Russian 'Terrorists' Training German Neo-Nazi Youth in Combat – Reports

June 5, 2020



Russian news reports have linked Partizan trainees to a terrorist attack in Sweden as well as the separatist conflict in eastern Ukraine and war in Syria.

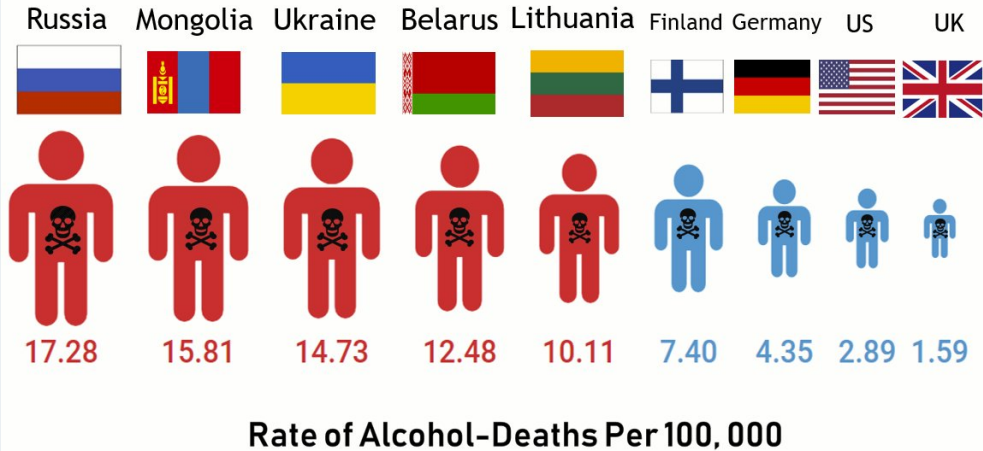
Jens Meyer / AP / TASS

Putin and Russian propaganda claim to defend “Christian values,” but corruption, alcoholism, drug abuse, and prostitution are rampant. Russian elites preach morality while living decadent lives, often in the very West they so much pretend to despise.

## Red Circle of Alcohol-Induced Deaths around Russia



(Countries with top rates of deaths are around Russia)



### Russian sex workers are moving to occupied Ukraine to make six figures servicing soldiers



Initially hesitant due to safety concerns, sex workers began arriving in late 2022, lured by reports of substantial earnings and a sense of security in cities such as Donetsk, Luhansk, Mariupol and Melitopol. / Russian Ministry of Defence



By bne IntelliNews December 12, 2024

Russian sex workers are increasingly relocating to occupied territories in Ukraine, attracted by potential earnings of as much as RUB1.5mn (\$14,000) per week from servicing soldiers.

# Italy seizes oligarchs' villas and yachts to put pressure on Russia

By Crispian Balmer and Emilio Parodi

March 5, 2022 6:53 PM GMT+2 · Updated 3 years ago



[1/2] Russian businessman and president of the International Fencing Federation (FIE) Alisher Usmanov attends an awarding ceremony for Russian Olympic medallists returning home from the 2016 Rio Olympics at the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia, August 25, 2016. REUTERS/Maxim Shemetov [Purchase Licensing Rights](#)



## Russian propagandist Solovyov has a "secret family" with US-born children

May 23, 2023, 00:29 4681



**Russia's top propagandist Vladimir Solovyov has a "secret family" with two children born in the United States, according to an investigation by Alexei Navalny's associates published on May 22.**

According to report, besides his wife and eight children from different marriages, Solovyov has a lover – Russian basketball player Svetlana Abrosimova. She owns an elite villa worth RUB 500 million (\$6.2 million) in Sochi, located next to the homes of the wife of General Sergei Surovkin, son of Russia's Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev, and former FSB employee Sergei Shishkin.

Kremlin officials call the West “decadent” and threaten it with nuclear bombs, yet send their own children to live, study, and invest in Europe and the US. They know Russia has no future

but expect ordinary Russians to die for their lies.

11/18

Wednesday, 19 March 2025

# The Brussels Times

BELGIUM

BUSINESS

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EU AFFAIRS

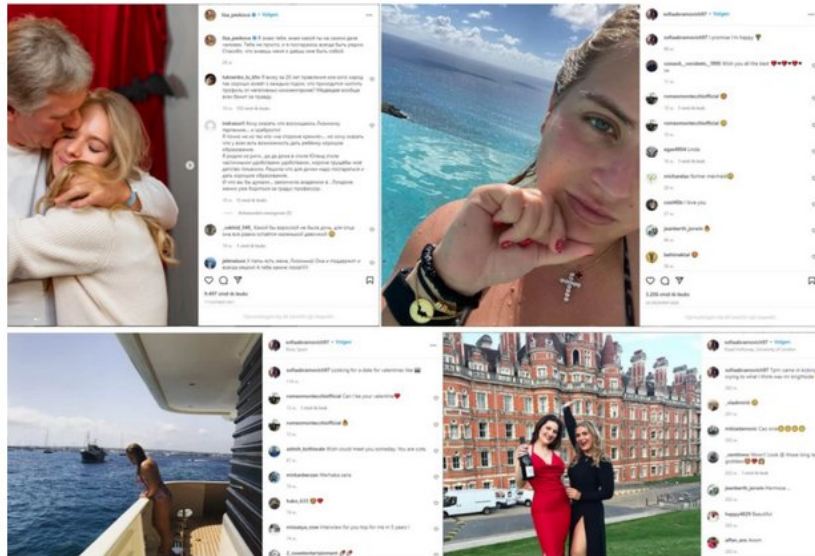
WORLD

BE

## Kremlin kids living it up in the West

Monday, 2 May 2022

By Liv Klingert



Jelizaveta Peskova (left) and Sofia Abramovitch (right). Credit: Instagram

**The children of high-ranking figures in the Kremlin live a life of luxury in the West. Their lives are in stark opposition to the propaganda of their fathers in Moscow.**

Imprisoned Kremlin opposition figure Alexei Navalny, put together a research team that has looked into the lives of the children of Russian President Vladimir Putin's inner circle.



Putin's own daughters have lived and studied in the West. Lavrov's daughter went to Columbia University. The children of Russia's elites own luxury properties in London, Paris, and New York - while their fathers tell Russians the West is evil.

NEWS

# PUTIN'S YOUNGEST DAUGHTER IS SECRETLY LIVING AS A DJ IN PARIS

Luiza Rozova is said to be the daughter of an alleged affair.

WORDS: GEMMA ROSS | 2 DECEMBER 2024



Vladimir Putin's "secret" third daughter Elizaveta Krivonogikh is reportedly living under an alias in Paris where she works as a DJ, per a new investigation.

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3 Investigation launched following alleged sexual assault at Berghain

4 Hiatus Kaiyote robbed of "thousands of dollars" worth of music equipment

# BUSINESS INSIDER

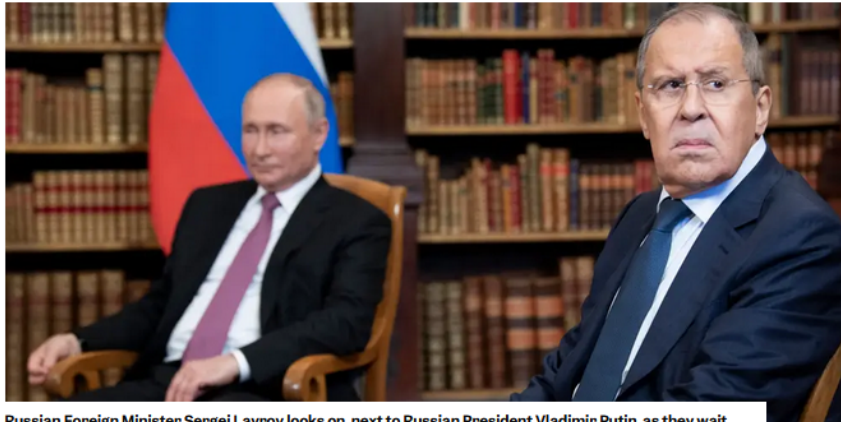
DOW JONES ▼ -0.62% NASDAQ ▼ -1.66% S&P 500 ▼ -1.07% AAPL ▲ +0.53% NVDA ▲ +2.34% MSFT ▲ +0.76% AMZN ▲ +0.78

NEWS

## UK sanctions daughter of Russia's foreign minister, who somehow bought a \$5 million apartment in London in cash aged 21

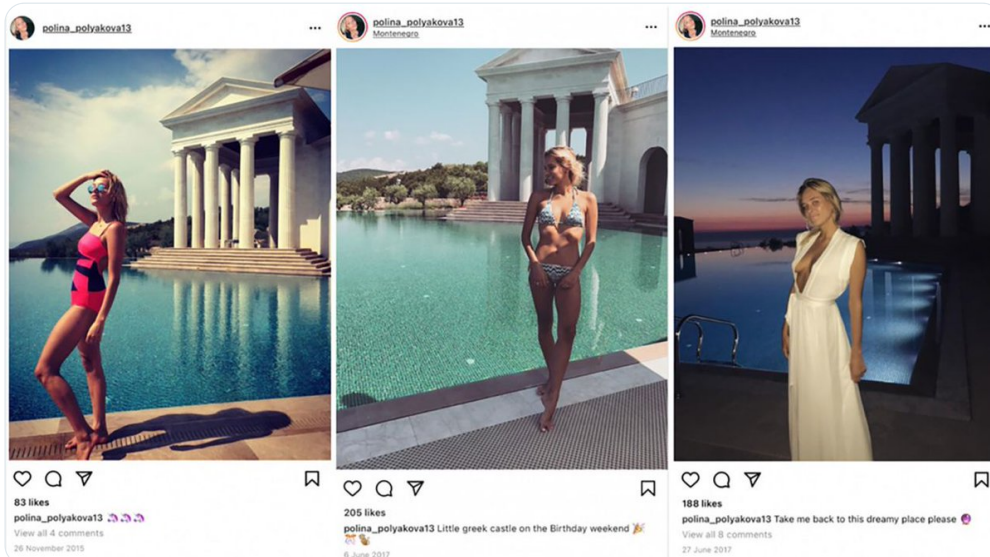
Tom Porter Mar 24, 2022, 3:38 PM EET

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Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov looks on, next to Russian President Vladimir Putin, as they wait for the US-Russia summit at the Villa La Grange, in Geneva on June 16, 2021. Photo by BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI/AFP via Getty Images

- The UK has sanctioned Russian FM Sergey Lavrov's stepdaughter over the war in Ukraine.
- Polina Kovaleva owns a £4 million luxury apartment in an exclusive part of London.
- It comes as part of a new wave of UK sanctions against Russian individuals and businesses



The Russian Orthodox Church is deeply entangled with the Kremlin. Instead of addressing moral decay, it blesses tanks and missiles while supporting war. Patriarch Kirill, who's worth around \$4 billion, even called dying in Ukraine "a spiritual sacrifice."

13/18



## Patriarch's Swiss Watch Does Disappearing Act



The original (right) and the doctored picture of Patriarch Kirill at a meeting with then Russian Justice Minister Aleksandr Kononov in July 2009. Note the watch's reflection still visible in the table top in the doctored photo.

A luxurious Breguet watch has come back to haunt Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill.

Three years after the 30,000-euro (\$39,000) watch was first spotted on Kirill's wrist, sparking an uproar, the Russian Orthodox Church is once again under fire for airbrushing the watch from a 2009 picture.

The church has apologized profusely for the "foolish mistake" of its website's photo editor, who erased the Swiss watch but overlooked its reflection on a polished table top.

### About This Blog

Written by RFE/RL editors and correspondents, Transmission serves up news, comment, and the odd silly dictator story. While our primary concern is with foreign policy, Transmission is also a place for the ideas -- some serious, some irreverent -- that bubble up from our keyboards. The name recognizes RFE/RL's










Russia's demographic crisis contradicts its image as a strong, traditional society. With a quickly shrinking population, high mortality, and low birth rates, Russia is losing hundreds of thousands of people per year. They try to fix this by abducting Ukrainian children.

14/18



January 25, 2025 5:34 PM  
By VOA Russian

## VOA Russian: War plunges Russia deeper into demographic crisis

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FILE - A sculpture of Russian playwright Alexander Griboyedov is pictured in St. Petersburg, Nov. 26, 2024. Russia is facing a demographic crisis as its population shrinks and losses continue on the battlefield in Ukraine.



## Ukraine at OSCE: Russia abducts 19,546 Ukrainian children, 17,000 more considered missing

13.03.2025 23:07

Ukraine is urging the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the OSCE to pay special attention to the illegal deportation and forced Russification of Ukrainian children, which lies at the core of the Kremlin's genocidal policy against the Ukrainian people.

# Trump Administration Ends Tracking of Kidnapped Ukrainian Children in Russia

A Democratic lawmaker is drafting a letter to Secretary of State Marco Rubio asking whether a database on thousands of children has been deleted.

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A regional children's home in Kherson, southern Ukraine, seen in November 2022. Russian authorities have been accused of abducting hundreds of Ukrainian children to Russia or Russian-held territories during its occupation of the area. [Bernat Armangue/Associated Press](#)

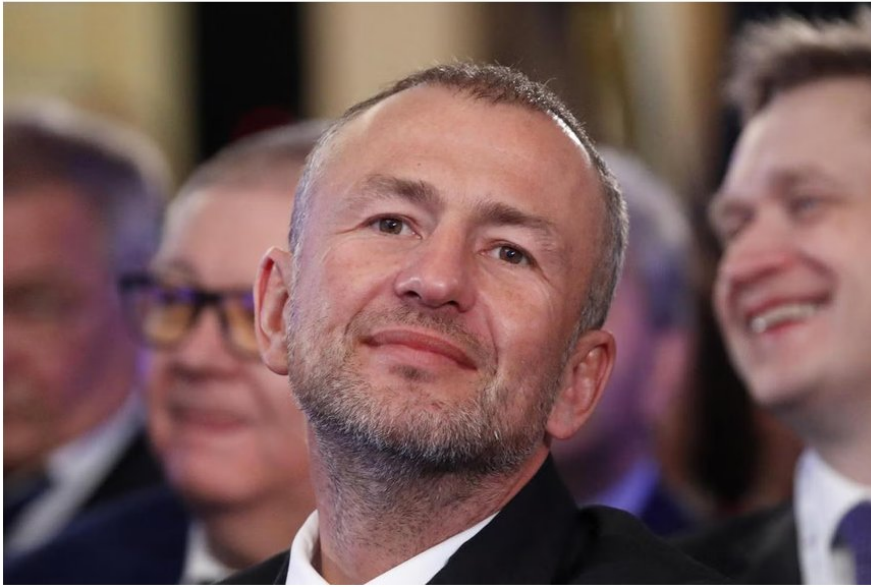


By **Edward Wong** and **Robert Jimison**  
Reporting from Washington

March 18, 2025

Crime and corruption define Russia far more than any “traditional values.” Oligarchs loot the country while ordinary Russians struggle with poverty, low wages, and declining living standards. For many, the only way to survive is to enlist to the meat grinder in Ukraine.

## Russian billionaires see total wealth rise 40% to \$674b: Forbes



Forbes named billionaire Andrei Melnichenko, with an estimated worth of US\$25.2 billion, as Russia's richest man. PHOTO: REUTERS

UPDATED NOV 22, 2024, 11:06 AM -





Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation

## Russia boosts army sign-up bonuses amid escalating frontline losses

The Bell  
16 Oct 2024



Russian soldiers are sent to die for an empire that no longer exists, while the elites and oligarchs hoard wealth. Many conscripts are undertrained, poorly equipped, and abandoned when wounded. Some are even executed for retreating.

# LOSSES OF THE RUSSIAN OCCUPIERS IN UKRAINE



from February 24, 2022 to March 19, 2025

Eliminated personnel

**~898070** <sup>+1060</sup>

Aircraft	370
Tanks	10364 <sup>+12</sup>
Helicopters	331
Armored fighting vehicles	21523 <sup>+14</sup>
Cruise missiles	3121
Artillery systems	24704 <sup>+64</sup>
Warship & boats	28
Multiple Launch Rocket Systems	1320 <sup>+1</sup>
Submarines	1
Air defense systems	1107
Vehicles & fuel tanks	41003 <sup>+111</sup>
UAVs	29716 <sup>+100</sup>
Special equipment	3780

From the reports of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine

MILITARY & DEFENSE

## Ukraine war analyst says Russia keeps surprising him with just how bad its soldiers are: 'The bar is very, very low'

Sinéad Baker Sep 18, 2024, 2:21 PM EEST

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Russian soldiers, like the ones seen here firing a 2S7M Malka self-propelled cannon, haven't performed at the level expected of a major power in the war in Ukraine. Russian Defense Ministry Press Service via AP

- The level of training for Russian forces has gotten progressively lower throughout the Ukraine war.
- A war expert said he's surprised by "how poor the Russian individual soldier quality is."
- "The bar is very, very low at this point," he said.

Meanwhile, Russian state TV pushes conspiracy theories that blame the West for Russia's problems. Especially older people rely on TV when it comes to information, and Russia's whole network has been harnessed to increase the support for the "special military operation."







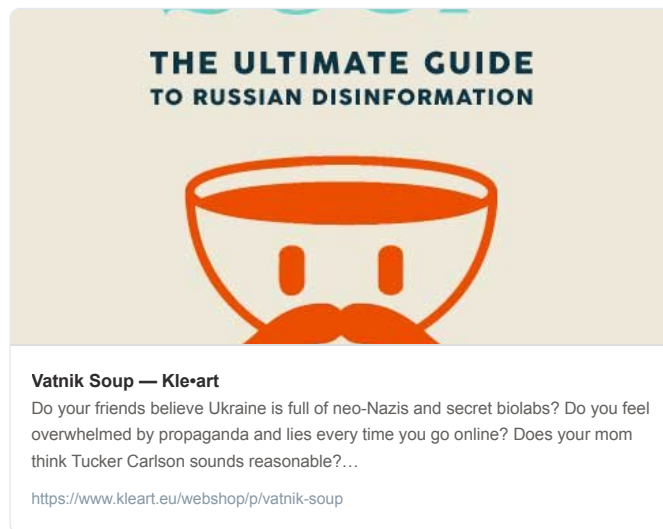
To conclude: Russia isn't a bastion of conservatism or traditionalism. It's an authoritarian state that uses "traditional values" as propaganda while being plagued by crime, corruption, moral decay, and even neo-Nazi groups.

18/18



The 2nd edition of “Vatnik Soup — The Ultimate Guide to Russian Disinformation” is officially out!

You can order your copy here:



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