

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	871
Land:	Rusland
Kilde:	Jamestown Foundation
Titel:	Kremlin Hopes 'Russian Community' Violence will Channel Veterans' Nationalism; Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 22
Udgivet:	27. maj 2025
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	26. juni 2025



Document #2125790

Jamestown Foundation (Author)

Kremlin Hopes 'Russian Community' Violence will Channel Veterans' Nationalism; Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 22

By: Paul Goble

Executive Summary:

- The Russian Community, now the largest Russian nationalist organization, is rapidly evolving from an ideological group supporting Russian President Vladimir Putin and the Russian Orthodox Church into a criminal band ready to engage in violence against the Kremlin's opponents.
- The Kremlin has orchestrated this process because it hopes to use a Russian Community prone to violence against minorities to channel the nationalist passions of veterans returning from Putin's war against Ukraine or other conflicts Russia is involved in.
- Such use of the Russian Community may not only deepen ethnic and religious divides in Russia but create a monster that will threaten the regime, or alternatively transform it further in the direction of fascism.

The Russian Community, today the largest Russian nationalist organization, is rapidly evolving from an ideological group that supports Russian President Vladimir Putin and the Russian Orthodox Church into a criminal band. It is ready to engage in violence against the Kremlin's opponents and is backed and directed by the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) (see [Meduza](#), May 5; [Kavkaz.Realii](#), May 22). Unsurprisingly, given the Putin regime's general approach, the Russian Community is doing so in ways that allow both its leaders and the Kremlin deniability. This allows the group to pass under the radar and become ever more similar to other smaller and more extreme nationalist groups in Russia in the last several years. It has additionally come to resemble groups such as

the Black Hundreds at the end of the tsarist period in Russia or the Freikorps in Germany in the wake of World War I (see [EDM](#), October 15, 2024; [Window on Eurasia](#), April 7). As of now, the Kremlin appears confident it can use the Russian Community to exploit nationalist energy to control the most extreme forms of Russian nationalism, especially among veterans returning from its war against Ukraine and other conflicts abroad. There is a very real risk, however, that it is creating a monster that will further divide Russia's ethnically and religiously diverse population or transform the regime ruling over it in the direction of full-blown fascism. This appears to be a result that many near the top of the Russian political system would like to see (see [EDM](#), January 19, 2024).

Over the last year, there has been an increasing number of violent, even deadly, attacks on minorities of various kinds by individuals and groups, which have sometimes proudly identified themselves as members of the Russian Community ([Kavkaz.Realii](#), September 8, 2024). The organization's leadership have sometimes denied that those involved in these attacks were members, only to take them in and even suggest that those who engage in such violence are the kind of people who should form the core of the Russian Community as it grows ([Telegram/obshina_ru](#), May 8; [Kavkaz.Realii](#), May 22). Russian officials, as is their custom, often refuse to acknowledge that these attacks were motivated by ethnic hatred. Leaders of the non-Russian republics of Chechnya and Ingushetia, whose citizens were among those attacks as well and who had earlier sought to ban the Russian Community, however, have made it clear that they believe these attacks were ethnically motivated ([Telegram/adelimkhanov_95](#), May 8; [Telegram/news_ingushetii1](#), May 8).

Most of these attacks have involved relatively small numbers of attackers and victims, and have been far from Moscow or other major Russian cities, with a few notable exceptions, most recently in St. Petersburg ([Fontanka.ru](#), May 6; [Arminfo.info](#), May 5). As a result, the attacks have not garnered the attention of Moscow's media or experts. As a result, there have been few attempts by Russian analysts to analyze these attacks and suggest the broader implications of the role that the Russian Community is now assuming in the social and political life of that country. Asmik Novikova, the leading Russian specialist on vigilante groups who works at the Public Verdict rights organization, however, is an exception. She says that both the timing and the manner of recent attacks against minorities and the connection of these attacks with the Russian Community deserve careful scrutiny because they highlight how the Kremlin's involvement and how it may be threatened by that involvement ([Telegram/publicverdict](#), May 20).

Novikova argues that these attacks are the work of organized groups and target members of ethnic or religious minorities in almost all cases. Therefore, the organizer, in this case, the Russian Community, meets the characteristics in Russian law of "an organized criminal group" and should

be subject to criminal sanction. That, however, has not happened. Far too often, she points out, those most directly involved are let off with no charges or minimal penalties, and the organization itself is able to continue its work unimpeded. This indicates that the Russian Community and its violence have the support of the Kremlin and the FSB ([Telegram/publicverdict](#), May 20). She suggests that even more compelling evidence for this conclusion is that the Russian Community was founded five years ago, but it has exploded in size only now ([Telegram/publicverdict](#), May 20). The timing and rapid growth can be explained only by one development, given how the Kremlin has increasingly sought to control all nominally independent social groups. The explanation, Novikova continues, is that today,

“[V]eterans of armed conflicts are trickling back into Russian society in thin streams not only from the war in Ukraine but from other conflicts in general. No matter how hard the government tries to contain such people, either by keeping them in war zones or nearby, they are coming back ([Telegram/publicverdict](#), May 20).

That creates a reservoir of people “who are capable of very quickly resorting to violence against others” ([Telegram/publicverdict](#), May 20). Having a group like the Russian Community, which is more than ready to take action against groups the Kremlin dislikes, is a safety valve and a convenience, even though any group powerful enough to take such actions could become one that its creators may soon lose control over.

Re-integrating veterans of Putin’s war against Ukraine was always going to be a serious problem, as Moscow’s experience with veterans of its war in Afghanistan and the experience of other countries with returning veterans suggested (see [EDM](#), April 14, 2022). As more and more veterans have returned, Putin has promoted a much-ballyhooed program to integrate veterans as the new “heroes” of his Russia (see [EDM](#), May 22). That program, however, has not had much success, especially as ever more people are worried about how returning veterans are producing a crime wave in Russia (see [EDM](#), [September 25, 2024](#), [February 25](#)). Up to now, the crimes being committed by the Russian Community have gotten lost in this larger phenomenon. Because the Kremlin and its FSB are behind these groups, however, they are likely to have a greater impact over the longer term. They cannot be stopped by a militia alone, and the transformations they are promoting are goals that at least some of those at or near the top of the political hierarchy share and want to see implemented ([Verstka](#), October 11, 2024).

The question now is whether Moscow will pull the plug on the Russian Community, as some commentators suggest, or whether it will not, either because of its own choices or because it may soon lack the ability to do so without incurring costs far greater than it is prepared to pay ([Radio Svoboda](#), May 10).

ecoi.net description:

Article on the increasing violent attacks committed by the nationalist organisation Russian Community against minorities and opponents of the Kremlin

Country:

Russian Federation

Source:

[Jamestown Foundation](#) (Author)

Published:

27 May 2025

Original link:

<https://jamestown.org/program/kremlin-hopes-russian-community-violence-will-channel-veterans-nationalism/>

Document type:

Special or Analytical Report

Language:

English

Available on ecoi.net since:

2 June 2025

Document ID:

2125790