480

#### Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

| Bilagsnr.:                      | 480                                |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Land:                           | Ukraine                            |
| Kilde:                          | Freedom House                      |
| Titel:                          | Freedom in the World 2024 - Crimea |
| Udgivet:                        | 29. februar 2024                   |
| Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet: | 20. februar 2025                   |



FREEDOM IN THE WORLD 2024

## Crimea\*

2

NOT FREE /100

| Political Rights | <b>-2</b> /40 |
|------------------|---------------|
| Civil Liberties  | 4/60          |

## LAST YEAR'S SCORE & STATUS 4/100 Not Free

Global freedom statuses are calculated on a weighted scale. See the methodology.

\* Indicates a territory as opposed to an independent country.



## Note

Freedom in the World reports assess the level of political rights and civil liberties in a given geographical area, regardless of whether they are affected by the state, nonstate actors, or foreign powers. Disputed or occupied territories are sometimes assessed separately if they meet certain criteria, including boundaries that are sufficiently stable to allow year-on-year comparisons. For more information, see the report **methodology** and **FAQ**.

### **Overview**

In early 2014, Russian forces invaded the autonomous Ukrainian region of Crimea and quickly annexed it to the Russian Federation through a referendum that was widely condemned for violating international law. The occupation government severely limits political and civil rights, has silenced independent media, and employs antiterrorism and other laws against political dissidents. Many Ukrainians have been deported from or otherwise compelled to leave Crimea. Members of an Indigenous minority group, the Crimean Tatars, many of whom had vocally opposed the Russian occupation, have faced acute repression by the authorities.

# **Key Developments in 2023**

- Ukrainian journalist and activist Serhiy Tsyhypa was reportedly abducted by the Russian military in Kherson Region and forcibly transferred to occupied Crimea, where he was sentenced to 13 years in prison on espionage charges.
- The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) documented more than 100 additional cases of the forcible transfer of individuals detained in other occupied parts of Ukraine to Crimea between July 2022 and June 2023. Occupation authorities were opening new pretrial detention centers that the Crimean Human Rights Group (KHP) said were for victims of enforced disappearances.
- Persecution of Crimean Tatars on trumped-up terrorism charges continued.
   In August, 23 Crimean Tatars were detained and charged with unlawful protest after they attempted to attend a court hearing for Crimean Tatar activists facing terrorism charges.
- In July, Russia enacted a law—which under the occupation was enforceable in Crimea—to prohibit "medical interventions aimed at changing the sex of a person." In November, Russia's Supreme Court declared the "international

LGBT public movement" to be an "extremist organization" and banned its activities in Russia, a measure that was similarly enforceable in Crimea.

# **Political Rights**

## A. Electoral Process

**A1** 0-4 pts

Was the current head of government or other chief national authority elected through free and fair elections?

0/4

Under the administrative system established by Moscow, the Crimean Peninsula is divided into the Republic of Crimea and the federal city of Sevastopol, a port of more than 500,000 residents. Sevastopol's political institutions largely mirror those of Crimea proper.

The head of the Republic of Crimea is elected by its legislature, the State Council of Crimea, for up to two consecutive five-year terms. Lawmakers choose the leader based on a list of nominees prepared by the Russian president. In October 2014, the legislature unanimously elected Sergey Aksyonov as the head of the republic in a process that did not conform to democratic standards. (Aksyonov had led Crimea since February 2014, when a group of armed men forced legislators to elect him prime minister at gunpoint.) He was unanimously reelected in 2019.

Tightly controlled Russian presidential balloting was organized in Crimea in 2018, but residents have not been able to participate in Ukrainian presidential elections since the Russian occupation began in 2014.

**A2** 0-4 pts

Were the current national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections?

0/4

The State Council consists of 75 members elected to five-year terms. Two-thirds of the members are elected by party list and one-third in single-member districts.

Legislative elections held in 2014 and 2019 under the Russian-organized Crimean constitution were contested exclusively by candidates who backed the Russian occupation, and Ukrainian parties were banned. The ruling party in Russia, United Russia, lost some support in 2019, taking 60 seats, down from 70 previously. The ultranationalist Liberal Democratic Party of Russia secured 10 seats, and the Communist Party won 5.

Undemocratic elections for Russia's State Duma were held in Crimea in 2016 and 2021, but residents have not been able to participate in Ukrainian parliamentary or municipal council elections since the Russian occupation began in 2014. Crimea's 12 seats in the Ukrainian parliament have been left vacant.

**A3** 0-4 pts

Are the electoral laws and framework fair, and are they implemented impartially by the relevant election management bodies?

0/4

The Russian occupation authorities have tailored the electoral system to ensure maximum control by Moscow. Legislators electing the chief executive are limited to candidates chosen by the Russian president. In the legislative elections, legitimate opposition forces are denied registration before the voting begins, leaving voters with the choice of either abstaining or endorsing pro-Russian candidates.

# B. Political Pluralism and Participation

**B1** 0-4 pts

Do the people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, and is the system free of undue obstacles to the rise and fall of these competing parties or groupings?

0/4

Ukrainian political parties are banned, allowing United Russia and other Kremlinapproved factions to dominate the political system. The Russian Federal Security Service (FSB), local police, and pro-Russian "self-defense" units use intimidation and harassment to suppress any political mobilization against the current government or the Russian annexation of Crimea.

Political activists who support Ukrainian sovereignty in the territory or are aligned with Russian opposition figures like Aleksey Navalny have experienced police surveillance, arrests, and sentencing to lengthy terms in Russian penal colonies. In 2022, the Russian parliament enacted new laws that criminalized "false" or critical speech about the Russian military, effectively outlawing opposition to the war and exposing political dissidents to another form of repression. In March 2023, the State Council of Crimea adopted an amendment under which officials are to be dismissed if they are designated as "foreign agents" under Russian law. The amendment also prohibits designated foreign agents from making political donations.

**B2** 0-4 pts

Is there a realistic opportunity for the opposition to increase its support or gain power through elections?

0/4

Because Ukrainian political parties are not allowed to compete in elections and Russian authorities tightly control the political and electoral systems, there is no opportunity for a genuine political opposition to form, compete, or take power in Crimea.

#### **B3** 0-4 pts

Are the people's political choices free from domination by forces that are external to the political sphere, or by political forces that employ extrapolitical means?

0/4

Chief executive Sergey Aksyonov was originally installed by Russian security forces, and subsequent elections have been carefully controlled by the Russian government, whose agents use pressure and intimidation to drive residents to the polls. Among other abuses, during the 2018 Russian presidential election and 2019 local elections, public employees were threatened with termination if they did not vote. During the 2021 State Duma elections, school principals were expected to pressure their subordinates to register to vote and cast ballots for United Russia.

Do various segments of the population (including ethnic, racial, religious, gender, LGBT+, and other relevant groups) have full political rights and electoral opportunities?

0/4

Occupation authorities deny full political rights to all Crimea residents, but Crimean Tatars and ethnic Ukrainians are regarded with particular suspicion and face greater persecution than do ethnic Russians.

The headquarters of the Mejlis, the Crimean Tatars' representative body, was closed by the occupation authorities in 2014. The Mejlis's incumbent chairman, Refat Chubarov, and Crimean Tatar leader Mustafa Dzhemilev have since been banned from the territory. The Mejlis was officially banned by Crimea's Supreme Court in 2016. Some figures associated with the Mejlis have been prosecuted in absentia by Russian-controlled courts, while others have been arrested and imprisoned. In 2022, Mejlis first deputy chairman Nariman Dzhelialov was sentenced to 17 years in prison.

The prohibition on Ukrainian political parties leaves ethnic Ukrainians with limited options for meaningful representation, and the intensified repression surrounding Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 made public expressions of Ukrainian political identity even more dangerous.

Women formally have equal political rights, but they remain underrepresented in leadership positions in practice, and government officials demonstrate little interest in or understanding of gender-equality issues. After the 2019 elections, women held 21 percent of the seats in the State Council.

Russian authorities disseminate anti-LGBT+ propaganda and regularly threaten LGBT+ people with aggressive homophobic rhetoric; violent attacks against LGBT+ people and people perceived as LGBT+ have been reported. In November 2023, Russia's Supreme Court declared the "international LGBT public movement" to be an "extremist organization" and banned its activities in Russia, including occupied Crimea. As a result, LGBT+ activists and anyone who would represent their political interests have been driven underground or into exile.

# C. Functioning of Government

**C1** 0-4 pts

Do the freely elected head of government and national legislative representatives determine the policies of the government?

0/4

All major policy decisions are made in Moscow and executed by Russian president Vladimir Putin's representatives in Crimea or the local authorities, who were not freely elected and are beholden to the Kremlin.

**C2** 0-4 pts

Are safeguards against official corruption strong and effective?

0/4

Corruption is widespread in Crimea and occurs at the highest levels of government. Efforts to investigate and prosecute corruption are inadequate. Some elements of the Russian-backed leadership, including Aksyonov and the speaker of the State Council, Vladimir Konstantinov, reputedly have ties to organized crime.

In recent years, the Russian FSB has arrested a number of Crimean officials as part of an ostensible antigraft campaign. Many of the arrests were related to allegations that local authorities embezzled Russian funds meant to support the occupation. However, some have also been linked to infighting between Crimean and Russian officials over control of the peninsula's assets. In July 2023, the former Crimean minister of culture was convicted by a Moscow court of accepting a bribe while in office; she was sentenced to 10 years in prison. The same month, the deputy head of the Federal Penitentiary Service in Crimea and two employees were detained on suspicion of accepting bribes from a Russian company in connection with a procurement deal.

**C3** 0-4 pts

Does the government operate with openness and transparency?

0/4

With strict controls on the media and few other means of holding officials accountable, residents struggle to obtain information about the functioning of the government. Budget processes are opaque, and input from civil society, which is itself subject to tight restrictions, is limited.

Since the launch of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Russian authorities have restricted access to basic information about the war, including accurate casualty figures. Crimean mobilization and conscription data are not made public. There is little available information about sanatoriums and summer camps where Ukrainian children from the occupied territories are held; information about medical facilities where wounded soldiers are treated is similarly restricted.

#### Add Q

Is the government or occupying power deliberately changing the ethnic composition of a country or territory so as to destroy a culture or tip the political balance in favor of another group?

**-2** 

Since the occupation began, the Russian government has taken steps to solidify ethnic Russian domination of the peninsula and marginalize the ethnic Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar communities. The elimination of the Ukrainian language from school curriculums and the closure of most Ukrainian Orthodox churches since 2014 are indicative of this attempt to Russify the population.

Political persecution has contributed to an outflow of ethnic Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars, and many who chose to retain Ukrainian citizenship after 2014—when Moscow instituted a policy of mass Russian naturalization for all residents of Crimea, in violation of international law—have since been deported.

Russian and local pro-Russian officials' policies and actions in Crimea have led to an influx of hundreds of thousands of people from Russia, including Russian troops, civilian personnel, and their families. People displaced by fighting and deprivation in eastern Ukraine—home to many ethnic Russians—have also come to Crimea. Meanwhile, tens of thousands of Crimeans have been forcibly conscripted into the Russian armed forces since 2014, and many have been

deployed far from the peninsula, all in contravention of international law regarding occupied territories.

In September 2022, the Russian president signed a decree initiating a partial mobilization of reserve troops, consisting of former conscripts and contract soldiers who had completed their original terms of service, and the order extended to Crimea. Consequently, an unknown number of mobilized ethnic Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars were sent to fight and die in mainland Ukraine.

### **Civil Liberties**

# D. Freedom of Expression and Belief

D1 0-4 pts

Are there free and independent media?

O/4

Media freedom is severely curtailed in Crimea. In addition to other restrictive Russian laws, a penal code provision prescribes imprisonment for public calls for action against Russia's territorial integrity, which has been interpreted to ban statements against the annexation, including in the media. In March 2022, Putin signed a measure imposing penalties of up to 15 years in prison for discrediting or spreading "false" information about the Russian military and its activities.

Independent and pro-Ukraine media outlets do not openly function on the peninsula. The occupation authorities have cut Crimea off from access to Ukrainian television, and Crimean internet service providers must operate under draconian Russian media laws. Russian authorities continued to block a number of Ukrainian news sites and interfered with Ukrainian radio signals by transmitting Russian programming on the same frequencies in 2023.

In recent years, a number of independent and citizen journalists have been sentenced to time in prisons and penal colonies on baseless charges, sometimes after being "disappeared" by authorities. In 2021, citizen journalist Amet

Suleymanov was convicted of terrorism for allegedly belonging to Hizb ut-Tahrir, a pan-Islamist movement that seeks to establish a caliphate but does not advocate violent methods to achieve it, and which is banned in Russia but not in Ukraine. He had been placed under house arrest in light of a heart condition, but in April 2023 he was taken into custody and reportedly placed in a Russian penal colony. His family claimed that he was being denied medicine and treatment, and that the transfer amounted to a death sentence.

At least one journalist has been abducted in newly occupied areas of Ukraine and sentenced in Crimea. KPH and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty reported in October 2023 that journalist and activist Serhiy Tsyhypa had been abducted by the Russian military in Kherson Region and sentenced to 13 years in prison by Crimea's Supreme Court. He was charged with spying for the Security Service of Ukraine and sentenced after a closed-door trial.

**D2** 0-4 pts

Are individuals free to practice and express their religious faith or nonbelief in public and private?

0/4

The occupation authorities forced religious organizations to reregister under new rules after seizing control in 2014, sharply reducing the number of registered religious groups. Authorities have also confiscated numerous properties in Crimea from the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. All 22 Jehovah's Witnesses congregations were deregistered after the Russian Supreme Court ruled in 2017 that the group had violated laws against extremism. In 2020, authorities began issuing prison sentences to adherents for their activity.

Most Muslims in Crimea are Crimean Tatars, and mosques associated with the community have been denied permission to register. Muslims have also faced legal discrimination and accusations that they belong to Hizb ut-Tahrir. Those prosecuted for alleged membership in Crimea are denied due process, with authorities often relying on testimony from anonymous witnesses, including FSB agents. Crimean Tatars continued to face arrest and imprisonment on these grounds in 2023.

# Is there academic freedom, and is the educational system free from extensive political indoctrination?

0/4

Schools must use the Russian state curriculum, and schoolchildren in Crimea are exposed to Russian military propaganda. Some have also received basic military training in recent years.

Instruction in the Ukrainian language has been almost completely eliminated. In a 2017 ruling, the International Court of Justice ordered Russia to ensure the availability of education in Ukrainian, but the authorities did not comply with this order. Access to education in the Crimean Tatar language has been more stable, declining only slightly since 2014.

After the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, occupation authorities began dismissing and prosecuting teachers in Crimea for allegedly discrediting the Russian military, for example by expressing opposition to the war or contradicting official propaganda narratives. In March 2023, a former instructor at Bilohirsk Technical College was fined 100,000 rubles (\$1,100) for "repeatedly discrediting the Russian army" through online posts and actions in the classroom. He had been arrested at least twice and fired in 2022 for similar acts. According to rights groups, he was initially reported to authorities by his students and had been under house arrest since December 2022.

**D4** 0-4 pts

Are individuals free to express their personal views on political or other sensitive topics without fear of surveillance or retribution?

0/4

The FSB reportedly encourages residents to inform on individuals who express opposition to the 2014 occupation of Crimea or the February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, and a climate of fear and intimidation seriously inhibits private discussion of political matters. Social media comments are reportedly monitored by authorities. The FSB frequently opens criminal cases against those who criticize the occupation and the oppression of Crimean Tatars.

After the 2022 invasion began, Russian authorities effectively banned critical discussion of the war or alleged war crimes by the Russian military. The KPH

reported in December 2023 that since the start of the full-scale invasion, it had documented at least 468 cases of administrative court proceedings in Crimea for "discrediting the Russian army"; of those, there had been administrative punishment judgments (fines or administrative arrests) in 418.

# E. Associational and Organizational Rights

Is there freedom of assembly?

O/4

Freedom of assembly is severely restricted. Public events cannot proceed without permission from the authorities, and the Crimean government lists the locations where they can be held. Permission to hold demonstrations is frequently denied, and when protests do proceed, participants are often arrested. Authorities have at times handed activists warning notes threatening them with administrative or criminal prosecution if they hold planned events. Crimean Tatar activists have been known to receive such notes before the anniversary of a 1944 mass deportation and Crimean Tatar Flag Day.

In 2022, demonstrators engaged in a series of small or single-person protests against the war in Ukraine and were detained for allegedly discrediting the Russian military. In August 2023, 23 Crimean Tatars were detained and charged with unlawful protest after attempting to attend the court hearing of several Crimean Tatar activists facing terrorism charges.

**E2** 0-4 pts

Is there freedom for nongovernmental organizations, particularly those that are engaged in human rights— and governance-related work?

0/4

The occupation authorities, including the FSB, repress all independent political and civic organizations. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are subject to harsh Russian laws that enable state interference and obstruct foreign funding.

NGO leaders are regularly harassed and arrested for their work. LGBT+ organizations have been officially considered "extremist" since November 2023, and their human rights work in Crimea has become impossible.

**E3** 0-4 pts

Is there freedom for trade unions and similar professional or labor organizations?

1/4

Trade union rights are formally protected under Russian law but limited in practice. Employers are often able to engage in antiunion discrimination and violate collective-bargaining rights. Occupation authorities have threatened to nationalize property owned by labor unions in Crimea.

### F. Rule of Law

**F1** 0-4 pts

| Is there an independent judiciary? |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
|------------------------------------|--|

Under Moscow's rule, Crimea is subject to the Russian judicial system, which lacks independence and is dominated by the executive branch. Russian laws bar dual citizenship for public officials, and Crimean judges were required to obtain Russian citizenship in order to retain their positions after the annexation.

In recent years, Russian judges have been transferred from Russia to work in Crimea. These officials regularly hand down politically motivated judgments against residents who oppose or are suspected of opposing the occupation and the war against Ukraine.

**F2** 0-4 pts

| Does due process prevail in civil and criminal matters? | 0/4 |
|---|-----|
|---|-----|

After the illegal 2014 annexation, Russian authorities replaced Ukrainian laws with those of the Russian Federation. Russian criminal code amendments in 2020

allowed for harsher punishments against those accused of "violating" or "alienating" Russian territorial integrity. Many detainees and prisoners are transferred from occupied Crimea to Russia, in violation of international law, and Crimean residents have faced trial in military courts located in Russia. Similarly, since 2022, there have been some reported cases of activists being seized in newly occupied portions of Ukraine and transported for detention and trial in Crimea.

Arbitrary arrests and detentions, harsh interrogation tactics, falsification of evidence, pressure to waive legal counsel, and unfair trials are common. The OHCHR has noted that prosecutors are heavily favored in military court proceedings, and that state-appointed defense lawyers are often ineffective. There have been several instances of observers being detained while attempting to attend open court hearings involving Crimean Tatar defendants. Independent lawyers who assist victims of human rights violations have faced administrative charges, fines, disbarment, and other forms of reprisal.

**F3** 0-4 pts

Is there protection from the illegitimate use of physical force and freedom from war and insurgencies?

0/4

The Russian occupation authorities commonly engage in torture of detainees and other abuses. A 2023 OHCHR report said the UN body had documented "conflict-related sexual violence" by Russian authorities and penitentiary staff in Crimean prisons, and had heard credible accounts of "severe beatings" of Ukrainian civilian prisoners who had been transferred to Crimea. Victims of torture have little legal recourse, allowing security forces to act with impunity.

Detention centers are often overcrowded and unhygienic, and detainees do not consistently receive medical attention.

During and after Moscow's February 2022 invasion, Crimea was used as a base for Russian military operations in southern Ukraine, which caused extensive destruction and loss of civilian life in Ukrainian population centers. Ukrainian forces responded with a series of drone strikes and special operations aimed at military bases and supplies in Crimea. In October 2022, an explosion that was reportedly caused by a truck bomb killed at least four people and seriously damaged a bridge linking Crimea to Russia via the Kerch Strait. In June 2023, the

destruction by Russian forces of the Kakhovka dam and hydroelectric power station reduced the amount of fresh water available in northern Crimea.

**F4** 0-4 pts

Do laws, policies, and practices guarantee equal treatment of various segments of the population?

0/4

In addition to official discrimination and harassment against ethnic Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars, women face de facto discrimination in the workplace. The legal situation for LGBT+ people has become oppressive under Russian occupation. After 2014, Crimea was subject to Russia's 2013 law banning dissemination of information that promotes "nontraditional sexual relationships" among minors, which tightly restricts the activities of LGBT+ people and organizations. A December 2022 Russian law extended the ban to include the spread of such information among adults, and in November 2023 the "international LGBT public movement" was deemed an extremist organization by the Russian Supreme Court.

# G. Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights

**G1** 0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy freedom of movement, including the ability to change their place of residence, employment, or education?

0/4

The occupation authorities have sought to compel Crimea's residents to accept Russian citizenship and surrender their Ukrainian passports. Those who fail to do so face the threat of dismissal from employment, loss of property rights, inability to travel to mainland Ukraine and elsewhere, and eventual deportation as foreigners.

After the February 2022 invasion began, it became almost impossible to travel directly from Crimea to government-controlled Ukraine due to ongoing hostilities. After the Russian government began its mobilization of reservists that September, men could leave Crimea only with the permission of the military commissars. The

following month, Putin signed a decree imposing varying degrees of movement restrictions based on the perceived security threat in each region. In Crimea, officials were empowered to forcibly relocate some residents and limit travel to and from the peninsula.

**G2** 0-4 pts

Are individuals able to exercise the right to own property and establish private businesses without undue interference from state or nonstate actors?

1/4

Property rights are poorly protected, and the Russian occupation has resulted in a redistribution of assets in favor of Russian and pro-Russian entities. The properties of Crimean Tatars who returned in the 1990s—after the Soviet-era mass deportation—and built houses without permits are also vulnerable to seizure by Russian authorities.

In 2020, Putin signed an edict banning foreign individuals from owning coastal land in the territory; the measure also included new restrictions on property rights that do not apply for Crimean residents holding Russian passports.

According to the same edict, Ukrainian land documents were no longer valid as of January 2023, and Crimeans were required to reregister their land rights under Russian law.

In October 2022, the State Council of Crimea announced that it would nationalize enterprises and property belonging to Ukrainians; more than 130 enterprises were nationalized the following month. Separately in October 2022, the Russian decree imposing security-related movement restrictions in Crimea also authorized the seizure of private property for military purposes.

**G3** 0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy personal social freedoms, including choice of marriage partner and size of family, protection from domestic violence, and control over appearance?

1/4

Domestic violence remains a serious problem in Crimea, and Russian laws do not offer strong protections. In 2017, Putin signed legislation that partly decriminalized

domestic abuse in Russia, prescribing only small fines and short administrative detention for acts that do not cause serious injuries.

Russian law does not recognize same-sex marriage or civil unions. In July 2023, Putin signed a law that prohibited "medical interventions aimed at changing the sex of a person" as well as changing a person's gender in public records or official documents. In November 2023, the Russian Supreme Court ruled that the "international LGBT public movement" was an extremist organization, with any related participation or financing punishable by up to 12 years in prison. The measures, combined with Russian state-sanctioned homophobia, made open or visible expression of LGBT+ identity in Crimea nearly impossible in practice.

Score Change: The score declined from 2 to 1 because the Russian government implemented new legal restrictions on the personal autonomy of transgender people, and because the Russian Supreme Court effectively banned any expression of LGBT+ identity as "extremist."

**G4** 0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy equality of opportunity and freedom from economic exploitation?

1/4

Economic opportunity has been limited since the occupation due to international sanctions, restrictions on trade via mainland Ukraine, and reliance on trade with Russia. Residents' access to goods and services remains constrained, and vital industries like tourism and agriculture have stagnated. As in both Ukraine and Russia, migrant workers, women, and children are vulnerable to trafficking for the purposes of forced labor or sexual exploitation.

Russian occupation forces began conscripting Crimea residents into the Russian military long before the 2022 full-scale invasion, and the process has escalated since then. The conscription and the related mobilization of reservists both violate international law, amounting to forced enlistment as well as forced labor. Human Rights Watch reported that between 2014 and 2021, Russian forces conscripted nearly 30,000 Crimean men, many of whom were forcibly transferred to Russia, and that by July 2023, Ukrainian officials placed the total number of Crimean conscripts at 42,000 to 43,000.

According to Russian authorities, more than 9,000 children from the occupied Ukrainian regions of Donetsk, Luhansk, and Kherson stayed in some 30 summer camps in Crimea in 2023. Human rights groups reported that the children were forced to participate in training and indoctrination activities meant to prepare them for future service in the Russian military.

Score Change: The score declined from 2 to 1 due to a systematic program of forcible enlistment of Ukrainians into the Russian military.

#### On Crimea

See all data, scores & information on this country or territory.

See More >

#### **Country Facts**

**Global Freedom Score** 

2/100 Not Free

#### Other Years

2023

# Be the first to know what's happening.

Join the Freedom House weekly newsletter

Subscribe

**ADDRESS** 

1850 M St. NW Floor 11 Washington, DC 20036 (202) 296-5101 GENERAL INQUIRIES
info@freedomhouse.org
PRESS & MEDIA

press@freedomhouse.org

@2025 FreedomHouse