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**To read ISW's assessment of how Russian activities in occupied areas of Ukraine are part of a coerced Russification and ethnic cleansing campaign, click [here](#).**

### Key Takeaways:

- **Russian occupation officials are increasing pressure on residents of occupied areas to re-register subscriber identity module (SIM) cards using Russian documents in an effort to expedite passportization process and exercise greater control over communication networks in occupied Ukraine.**
- **Russian occupation authorities are installing “Russkiy Mir” satellite dishes in occupied Ukraine in order to consolidate control over the information space and isolate occupied territories from all but pro-Russian news sources.**
- **Oblast-level offshoots of the Russian Time of Heroes program are installing Russian veterans of the war in Ukraine as local occupation administrators.**
- **Russia continues efforts to implement pro-Russian patriotic and nationalistic curricula in schools in occupied Ukraine as a means of Russifying Ukrainian children and youth.**

**Russian occupation officials are increasing pressure on residents of occupied areas to re-register subscriber identity module (SIM) cards using Russian documents in an effort to expedite passportization process and exercise greater control over communication networks in occupied Ukraine.** Mariupol occupation head Anton Koltsov posted on Telegram on July 12, reminding residents of occupied Mariupol that they must re-register their SIM cards with a Russian passport by November 1.[1] Koltsov noted that re-registration can take place either in person at local United Russia party offices or at post offices, or online. Koltsov also stressed that the occupied Donetsk Oblast-based Phoenix mobile communications operator can re-register SIM cards at the home of residents with limited mobility, suggesting that the occupation administration is making substantial accommodations in order to register as many SIM cards as remotely possible before November 1. Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) Head Denis Pushilin issued an order on July 14 allowing Phoenix to send mobile teams to various enterprises in occupied Donetsk Oblast to verify personal data and re-register SIM cards during on-site sessions.[2] The DNR Ministry of Development claimed on July 14 that over 850,000 residents of occupied Donetsk Oblast have confirmed their personal data with Phoenix, suggesting that these 850,000 residents already hold Russian passports, but did not provide data on how many people were unable to register because they do not have Russian documentation.

Russian occupation officials recently announced that residents of occupied Ukraine must confirm they have Russian documentation in order to continue using Russian SIM cards, or risk becoming disconnected from the mobile communication system by November 1.[3] Occupation officials appear to be using the November 1 deadline to escalate efforts to collect personal data on residents of occupied areas and to coerce passportization. The renewed push for SIM card registration also privileges Russian state-owned or regime-adjacent mobile operators such as Phoenix, which allows these operators a monopoly over mobile communications in occupied Ukraine.

**Russian occupation authorities are installing “Russkiy Mir” satellite dishes in occupied Ukraine in order to consolidate control over the information space and isolate occupied territories from all but pro-Russian news sources.** Kherson Oblast occupation head Vladimir Saldo claimed on July 11 that residents of occupied Kherson Oblast can exchange the recently banned “Gorynych” satellite dish for “Russkiy Mir” satellites for free until November 30, 2025.[4] “Russkiy Mir” is a Russian satellite television project that launched in December 2022 and broadcasts Russian national and local channels, including in occupied Ukraine.[5] Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Chernyshenko announced in June 2023 that Russia plans to install 155,000 “Russkiy Mir” satellite kits throughout occupied Ukraine.[6] Chernyshenko reported that Russian authorities had already set up 89,000 “Russkiy Mir” satellite kits in occupied territories as of October 2023 and claimed that the installation of Russian telecommunication and information infrastructure in occupied Ukraine is one of the most important tasks of Russian integration efforts.[7] Russian officials have reportedly installed over 35,000 “Russkiy Mir” satellite kits in occupied Kherson Oblast over the past two years.[8] Acting Governor of Russia’s Nenets Autonomous Okrug Irina Gekht reported in December 2024 that Russians had installed 38,804 “Russkiy Mir” satellite sets in occupied Zaporizhia Oblast as of November 2024.[9] Luhansk Oblast occupation Minister of Digital Development, Communication, and Mass Media Andrei Yershov reported that Luhansk Oblast occupation officials had installed more than 60,000 “Russkiy Mir” satellite sets as of December 2023. [10] ISW continues to assess that the Kremlin is actively working to consolidate full control over the information space in occupied Ukraine in order to facilitate the spread of pro-Russian propaganda and to manipulate public opinion into favoring Russian occupation.[11]

**Oblast-level offshoots of the Russian Time of Heroes program are installing Russian veterans of the war in Ukraine as local occupation administrators.** Kherson Oblast occupation head Vladimir Saldo reported on July 12 that Vladimir Oganegov, a finalist of the “Heroes of Kherson” program, has taken over the position of occupation head of Nova Kakhovka.[12] Oganegov commanded a Russian assault unit during the seizure of Kherson City in early 2022, and went on to serve as deputy head of the Kalanchak occupation administration. “Heroes of Kherson” is the oblast-level analogue to Russian President Vladimir Putin’s federal “Time of Heroes” program, which seeks to install veterans of the war in Ukraine into various Russian government positions on the local to federal levels.[13] “Heroes of Kherson” began the testing process for service in state and municipal services in late April 2025.[14] ISW previously assessed that the installation of Russian veterans into occupation administrations will further militarize occupied Ukraine and will strengthen the Kremlin’s control over the governance of occupied areas.[15]

**Russia continues efforts to implement pro-Russian patriotic and nationalistic curricula**

## **in schools in occupied Ukraine as a means of Russifying Ukrainian children and youth.**

The Kherson Oblast occupation administration announced on July 10 that Kherson Oblast occupation deputy governor Tatyana Kuzmich heard several presentations on a proposed “collection of patriotic education” for schoolchildren.[16] One of the courses, entitled “Roads of Memory to the Great Victory,” included instructions for teachers on how to teach children about the Great Patriotic War (World War 2). The Russian youth activism organization Movement of the First presented another curriculum entitled “Connection of Generations,” which will present Ukrainian schoolchildren with stories from Soviet veterans of the Second World War and from Russian veterans of the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The Russian Federal Agency of Youth Affairs (Rosmolodezh) funds “Connections of Generations.” Russia is using the mythos of the Great Patriotic War as a means of eradicating Ukrainian historical and sociocultural identities in occupied areas.[17] The Russification of schools in occupied Ukraine notably requires constant oversight from Russian officials. Kherson Oblast occupation head Vladimir Saldo reported on July 10 that Russian “education advisors” will begin working in schools in occupied Kherson Oblast in the coming 2025-2026 school year.[18] Educational advisors will reportedly work in all schools in occupied Kherson Oblast to ensure that schools are teaching “strong life guidelines for children based on traditional values” in accordance with unified Russian education standards. The Ukrainian Resistance Center warned that these educational advisors are primarily meant to ensure that teachers are adhering to Russian-imposed curricula.[19]

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[1] <https://t.me/KoltsovAnton/327>

[2] <https://www.donetsk.kp dot ru/online/news/6470112/>

[3] <https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-occupation-update-july-3-2025>

[4] [https://t.me/SALDO\\_VGA/8391](https://t.me/SALDO_VGA/8391)

[5] <https://rusmirtv dot ru>

[6] <https://tass dot ru/ekonomika/18155405?ysclid=mcz7mkt79559438293> ; <https://satworld dot ru/news/47-sat-tv-news/10724-grafik-ustanovki-russkogo-mira-ot-mintsifry.html>

[7] <https://tass dot ru/ekonomika/19098399>

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[9] [https://t.me/I\\_Gekht/724](https://t.me/I_Gekht/724) ; [https://tass dot ru/obschestvo/22645743?utm\\_source=yxnews&utm\\_medium=desktop&utm\\_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fdzen.ru%2Fnews%2Fstory%2F650f8208-2de4-5fa1-87bc-92546e361b81](https://tass dot ru/obschestvo/22645743?utm_source=yxnews&utm_medium=desktop&utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fdzen.ru%2Fnews%2Fstory%2F650f8208-2de4-5fa1-87bc-92546e361b81)

[10] <https://lug-info dot ru/news/zhitelyam-respubliki-ustanovili-luganska/>

[11] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-november-1-2023-0> ; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-may-7-2024>

[12] [https://t.me/SALDO\\_VGA/8401](https://t.me/SALDO_VGA/8401)

[13] <https://herson.er dot ru/activity/news/v-hersonskoj-oblasti-zapustili-regionalnuyu-programmu-geroi-hersonshiny-analog-federalnogo-vremeni-geroev>;  
<https://www.understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/russian-occupation-update-may-1-2025>

[14] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/russian-occupation-update-may-1-2025>

[15] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/russian-occupation-update-may-1-2025>

[16] [https://t.me/VGA\\_Kherson/32107](https://t.me/VGA_Kherson/32107)

[17] [https://t.me/sprotyv\\_official/7301](https://t.me/sprotyv_official/7301)

[18] [https://t.me/SALDO\\_VGA/8368](https://t.me/SALDO_VGA/8368)

[19] [https://t.me/sprotyv\\_official/7296](https://t.me/sprotyv_official/7296)