

# 3.1.2. Supporters of Alexei Navalny and Anti-Corruption Foundation

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Following a 2021 court ruling that classified Alexei Navalny's-established ACF, the Foundation for the Defence of Citizens' Rights (Russian: *Fond zaschity prav grazhdan*, FZPG), and the Navalny regional headquarters as extremist organisations, Russian authorities initiated legal action against people involved in these organisations,316 including for activities carried out before the 2021 ruling. As a result, regional activists, lawyers, and journalists who were involved in or collaborated with Navalny's organisations became subjects of criminal prosecution for organising or participating in an extremist organisation317 or an extremist community.318 The reprisals continued after Navalny's death in February 2024.319

According to Reuters, OVD-Info recorded 695 detentions for expressing support for Alexei Navalny between February 2024 and February 2025, with 442 detentions taking place 'at makeshift memorials' in the days following his death. Additionally, nearly 100 people were arrested at Navalny's funeral in Moscow. From mid-March 2024 to February 2025, OVD-Info recorded 35 Navalny-related detentions.320

As noted by the Memorial, at least 45 people were prosecuted for participation in an extremist organisation, or an extremist community related to Navalny's organisations, and 13 people were imprisoned on these charges as of 30 July 2025.321 In June 2025, a military court in Moscow convicted in absentia Leonid Volkov, who led the ACF between 2021 and 2023 overseeing Navalny's regional offices and election campaigns, to 18 years in prison. Volkov was charged with 40 offenses, 'including justifying terrorism, organizing and financing an extremist group, rehabilitating Nazism, and creating a non-governmental organisation that violated citizens' rights.'322 In April 2025, the FSB reportedly searched Leonid Volkov's father's home in Yekaterinburg and opened a criminal case against him for alleged donation to the ACF.323

In addition, authorities have also initiated criminal prosecutions on charges of financing an extremist organisation (Article 282.3 of the Criminal Code) for donations to the ACF.324 In August 2025, Mediazona reported that since spring 2024 FSB has been routinely prosecuting people for donating to Ukraine, irrespective of the amount donated.325 People prosecuted for donating to the ACF include people from all professions, as legal proceedings have been triggered solely by a donation made through a Russian bank card. However, as noted by Mediazona, to support charges of financing an extremist organisation, investigators also collect additional evidence, such as donations made to the ACF before April 2021, political views of the

accused, including through private correspondence, and their social media activity.[326]

Overall, the SOVA Research Center documented 32 criminal cases initiated for donations to the ACF in 2024.[327] On 5 August 2025, Mediazona reported that at least 75 criminal cases were initiated across 38 regions in Russia over donations to the ACF made between August 2021 and March 2022, when Visa and MasterCard ceased operations in Russia. According to Mediazona, there was a sharp increase in prosecutions since January 2025, with 33 cases reaching courts in the first half of the year.[328] As of October 2025, there were around 100 known criminal cases initiated against people who had donated to the ACF.[329]

According to the SOVA Research Center, at least 13 people were convicted in 2024 for making donations to the ACF.[330] As of the beginning of August 2025, Mediazona reported that courts found 49 persons guilty for the donations, with 10 of them sentenced to imprisonment, and 39 given other forms of punishment. A further 27 cases were still pending in courts. Regarding the judicial outcome, Mediazona noted that regional courts generally impose heavy fines, usually between 100 000 and 600 000 rubles [1 025 – 6 150 euros]. In contrast, courts in Moscow impose prison sentences, usually ranging from three to four years.[331] In December 2024,[332] a Moscow cardiac surgeon was sentenced to four years in prison solely for donations to the ACF. [333] The appellate court confirmed the verdict. [334] In February 2024, a former municipal deputy was sentenced to 3.5 years in a penal colony, after prosecutors appealed his initial punishment of 350 000 rubles [3 587 euros].[335]

In February 2025, a court in St. Petersburg ruled that displaying a photograph of Alexei Navalny – as well as mentioning his name[336] – amounts to endorsing extremism.[337] As reported by RFE/RL, although the law does not formally categorise photographs of persons accused of extremism as extremist symbols, several people have been detained or fined for displaying Navalny's image in 2024 – 2025. [338] According to Reuters, in February 2025, a woman who filmed a one-person protest in support of Navalny was arrested, fined 20 000 rubles [205 euros], and detained for 15 days for displaying extremist symbols.[339] The same month, as reported by RFE/RL, a man was arrested for two days for putting up posters with Navalny's portrait.[340]

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