
MONITORING REPORT ON LGBTIQ RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION (APRIL–JUNE 2026)

In the second quarter of 2026, repressive practices intensified. Shifting away from isolated restrictions, courts began issuing indictments for the mere fact of supporting activist networks. Concurrently, administrative pressure on the media and the cultural sector culminated in large-scale nationwide censorship.

I. Criminal Prosecution (Articles 282.2, 330.1, 242, 354.1 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation)

In the second quarter of 2026, courts transitioned from keeping defendants isolated in pre-trial detention centers (SIZO) to handing down the first sentences in cases related to the activities of the banned "international LGBT movement". Prison sentences for administering themed spaces and projects reached up to 7 years in a correctional colony.

Custodial Sentences and Severe Judgments

The "Pose" Club Case (Orenburg) – Art. 282.2 of the CC RF On 29 June 2026, the Central District Court of Orenburg delivered the first sentences in Russia concerning the organization of the activities of an extremist LGBT association against employees of an entertainment venue. The bar owner, Vyacheslav Khasanov, was sentenced to 7 years of imprisonment; the administrator, Diana Kamilyanova, to 6 years and 3 months; and the art director, Aleksandr Klimov, to 2 years and 3 months in a general-regime correctional colony. The court ruled that hosting drag shows and managing the internal operations of the establishment constituted "leadership of and participation in the activities of a banned organization".

The Tatyana Zorina Case (Chita) – Art. 282.2 of the CC RF On 29 June 2026, the Zabaykalsky Krai Court, ruling on appeal, upheld the prosecution's motion and increased the sentence of the 23-year-old owner of the closed club "Jackson". The 4-year prison term previously imposed by the court of first instance (in March 2026) was increased to 6 years and 2 months of imprisonment. The court accepted the prosecution's argument that establishing a commercial entertainment space with a strict door policy amounted to "providing the infrastructure for the functioning of an extremist cell".

The Konstantin Layfer Case (Saratov) – Art. 282.2 of the CC RF On 3 June 2026, the Kirovsky District Court of Saratov sentenced the human rights defender and LGBTIQ activist in absentia to 4 years and 6 months in a general-regime correctional colony. The formal basis was an accusation of involvement in Alexei Navalny's organizations. However, during the trial, the prosecution focused heavily on his long-standing human rights work in defending the rights of queer individuals. Previously, in January 2026, Rosfinmonitoring had included Layfer in its registry of terrorists and extremists.

Pre-trial Proceedings and Bizarre Criminal Cases

The Pavel Ivanov Case (formerly of Popcorn Books) – Art. 282.2 of the CC RF On 29 June 2026, during closing arguments at the Basmanny District Court of Moscow, the prosecutor requested a 4-year suspended prison sentence for the former sales director of the Popcorn Books publishing house, alongside the confiscation of 2.7 million rubles in commercial revenues. Ivanov is accused of "assisting the activities of an extremist organization" through the distribution of queer literature (including the novel "Summer in a Pioneer Scarf"). The defendant entered into a pre-trial cooperation agreement and testified against the top management of the parent holding company, Eksmo-AST.

Raid and Criminal Investigation in Karachay-Cherkessia – Art. 282.2 of the CC RF

On 27 April 2026, law enforcement officials in Cherkessk conducted a series of searches, detaining 16 members of a local LGBTIQ dating group on the "VKontakte" social media network. Those brought to the regional department of the Investigative Committee were forced to hand over passwords to their personal smartphones to allow the copying of chat histories. An instance of torture was recorded: one detainee who refused to cooperate was interrogated in handcuffs and subsequently left the office bearing marks of physical abuse. Ultimately, most of the detainees were released with the status of witnesses; however, criminal proceedings under Part 1 of Article 282.2 of the CC RF (organization of the activities of an extremist organization) were initiated against the creator (administrator) of the online platform. Human rights defenders are withholding the individual's name for security reasons. This precedent is notable as it marks the first time the status of an "extremist formation" has been applied to a purely virtual dating platform.

The Aleksandr Dolgoplov Case – Art. 354.1 of the CC RF In June 2026, the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation initiated criminal proceedings for the "rehabilitation of Nazism" against the stand-up comedian, who resides outside Russia. The case was triggered by an excerpt from a 2024 performance containing satire regarding the Great Patriotic War. According to the investigators, the joke shows signs of "desecrating symbols of military glory and insulting the memory of the defenders of the Fatherland".

Sentences in Absentia, Wanted Lists, and Blogging Prosecutions

The Yulia Tsvetkova Case (Komsomolsk-on-Amur) – Art. 330.1 of the CC RF On 9 April 2026, a magistrate found the artist and feminist activist guilty in absentia of evading the duties imposed on a "foreign agent" (she was added to the Ministry of Justice registry in June 2022). The court imposed a criminal fine; however, the exact amount was redacted from the public version of the judicial decision following a motion by the prosecution.

The Aleksey S. Case (Veliky Novgorod) – Art. 242 of the CC RF On 7 April 2026, the Novgorodsky District Court sentenced the author of an intimate blog, Aleksey S., to a 3-year suspended prison term and a fine of 775,000 rubles. The criminal case concerning the production and distribution of pornographic materials on the internet was initiated following the targeted monitoring of his personal accounts on commercial platforms by pro-government activists.

The Vadim Vaganov Case (Project "Parni+") On 20 May 2026, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia placed the journalist and gay activist Vadim Vaganov on a federal wanted list. In official supporting documents from the Ministry of Justice and investigators, Vaganov was explicitly termed a "participant and functionary of the banned international LGBT movement", representing the first instance where this status has been used as the formal justification for search operations.

II. Administrative Pressure in the Media, IT, and Commercial Sectors (Articles 6.21, 6.21.2, and 13.41 of the Code of Administrative Offences of the RF)

In the second quarter of 2026, Roskomnadzor and prosecution authorities intensified the application of administrative legislation against major tech platforms, streaming services, and regional businesses. The legal basis for enforcement rested upon the

provisions of the Code of Administrative Offences (CoAO) of the RF banning the "propaganda and demonstration of non-traditional relations", taken together with the stipulations of Presidential Decree No. 809 on ensuring national security through the protection of "traditional Russian spiritual and moral values".

1. International Technology Platforms and AI Services

Roblox Corporation (USA) – Art. 6.21 of the CoAO RF On 20 April 2026, the Tagansky District Court of Moscow found the company guilty under two administrative protocols drawn up by Roskomnadzor. The court imposed fines of 4 million rubles for each proceeding (totaling 8,000,000 rubles) for the "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations". The enforcement action was based on institutional monitoring from September 2025, which allegedly identified a "positive portrayal of LGBTIQ themes" within user-generated in-game content. The platform had already been fully blocked within the territory of the RF in December 2025.

Character Technologies, Inc. (USA, Character.AI service) – Art. 6.21 and Art. 13.41 of the CoAO RF On 27 April 2026, the Tagansky District Court of Moscow held the AI platform developer liable in two cases, imposing fines totaling 7,500,000 rubles. A fine of 4 million rubles was imposed under Part 3 of Article 6.21 of the CoAO RF (propaganda), and 3.5 million rubles under Part 4 of Article 13.41 of the CoAO RF (failure to delete restricted information). Roskomnadzor cited the chatbot's generation of "role-play interaction within an LGBT environment" scenarios on 20 January 2026, and the company's subsequent failure to comply with an administrative order to delete these algorithms.

Google LLC (USA) – Art. 13.41 of the CoAO RF In April 2026, a ruling by the Tagansky District Court of Moscow imposing a fine of 3,800,000 rubles on the corporation under Part 2 of Article 13.41 of the CoAO RF entered into legal force. The penalty was based on the company's refusal—confirmed by an appellate court—to restrict access in the Google Play store to the gamified application LGBT Paint by Number and to several mobile queer dating platforms, as well as its failure to remove links to resources listing extremist literature from the Google Maps service.

Booking.com B.V. (Netherlands) – Art. 6.21.2 of the CoAO RF On 22 June 2026, the Tagansky District Court of Moscow registered an administrative protocol under Part 2

of Article 6.21.2 of the CoAO RF against the Dutch booking service. Roskomnadzor identified elements of the "demonstration of non-traditional relations to minors" in the presence of user reviews, corporate inclusivity guidelines, and specific "LGBTQ friendly" tags for hotels on the website.

Blocking of the Fandom and Crushon.ai Platforms On 11 April 2026, Roskomnadzor added the pages of specialized fandom communities dedicated to the games Undertale and the comic Zoophobia to the unified registry of banned websites. Simultaneously, the agency blocked the infrastructure of four interactive chatbots on the Crushon.ai platform, whose text scenarios ("AI femboy", "gay bully") were classified as being aimed at fostering interest in non-traditional relations.

2. Russian Online Cinemas and Video Services

PJSC Vimpel-Communications (Beeline TV service) – Art. 6.21.2 of the CoAO RF

During the reporting period, the operator faced renewed pressure. On 4 May 2026, a new protocol under Part 2 of Article 6.21.2 of the CoAO RF was registered against the company. Subsequently, on 9 June and 2 July 2026, the Tagansky District Court issued two rulings imposing fines of 3,500,000 rubles each (totaling 7,000,000 rubles) for providing access to the films "Angel" and "The Law of the Concrete Jungle" without the mandatory "18+" age rating.

Lifestream LLC (Smotreshka service) – Art. 6.21.2 of the CoAO RF

On 9 June 2026, the Tagansky District Court of Moscow fined the company 3,000,000 rubles under Part 2 of Article 6.21.2 of the CoAO RF. The offense was identified in the broadcasting of episodes 5 and 7 of the second season of the Russian TV series The Law of the Concrete Jungle, which contained scenes that the agency's experts deemed a "demonstration of non-traditional sexual preferences".

Amedia TV LLC (Amediateka service) – Art. 6.21 of the CoAO RF

In April 2026, the Tagansky District Court of Moscow issued a ruling under Part 3 of Article 6.21 of the CoAO RF against a corporate official. A fine of 250,000 rubles was imposed on the company's producer, Aleksey Zinovyev. The court found signs of "propaganda" in the hosting of the animated series Love Across Walls on the platform, justifying the decision by the specific plot details concerning relationships between the characters.

3. Regional Media, Publishing Sector, and Local Businesses

Independent Bookstore "Podpisnye Izdaniya" (St. Petersburg) – Art. 6.21 of the CoAO RF At the end of May 2026, the Kuybyshevsky District Court of St. Petersburg found Podpisnye Izdaniya LLC guilty under Part 1 of Article 6.21 of the CoAO RF and imposed a fine of 800,000 rubles. The enforcement followed an April joint raid by the prosecutor's office and the Center for Combating Extremism (Center "E"), during which fiction literature was seized from the sales floor. In June 2026, a second identical protocol was drawn up against the legal entity, raising the risk of temporary suspension of the business operations.

Eksmo-AST Publishing Group – Art. 6.21 of the CoAO RF In June 2026, the Tagansky District Court of Moscow registered an administrative protocol under Article 6.21 of the CoAO RF against the largest Russian publishing holding. Roskomnadzor accuses the legal entity of distributing and printing works containing queer themes, which forms part of the ongoing pressure on the holding linked to the case against former employees of the Popcorn Books publishing house.

Shkulev Media Holding (Portals 63.RU and NGS.ru) – Art. 6.21 of the CoAO RF In April and May 2026, entities belonging to the media holding were subjected to a series of substantial fines for publications concerning alternative relationship models (swing culture). On 3 April, a court in Samara fined Internet Technologii LLC (the 63.RU portal), controlled by the holding, 1,000,000 rubles. Later, on 6 and 8 May 2026, the Zheleznodorozhny District Court of Novosibirsk issued two rulings against the same legal entity totaling 2,000,000 rubles each for similar editorial material on the NGS.ru portal (the total volume of penalties exceeded 5,000,000 rubles).

Cosmetics Brand CHA U KAO (NUOLAB LLC) – Art. 6.21 of the CoAO RF On 30 June 2026, the Tagansky District Court of Moscow fined the cosmetics manufacturer 2,500,000 rubles under Part 4 of Article 6.21 of the CoAO RF. The basis was the integration of advertising materials featuring the blogger Aleksey Zhidkovsky. An expert assessment commissioned by the investigators classified the blogger's visual appearance as "stimulating interest in transvestism and destructive gender attitudes".

SarBK Information Agency (Saratov) – Art. 6.21 of the CoAO RF On 14 April 2026, the Oktyabrsky District Court of Saratov fined the legal entity 500,000 rubles, while a magistrate held the agency's IT Director, A. Bashkaykin, liable, imposing a personal fine of 50,000 rubles. The prosecution was triggered by an archived text review of the Canadian drama series Heated Rivalry, the plot of which centers on a romantic relationship between two athletes. The court classified the analysis of the artistic work as "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations".

Cultural and Historical Center "Kaup" (Kaliningrad) – Art. 6.21 of the CoAO RF On 2 April 2026, the Kaliningrad Regional Court upheld a decision imposing a fine of 1,000,000 rubles on the center. The courts found the elements of an administrative offense in the publication of photo reports from closed costume events rated "18+". The justification relied upon assessments by confessional experts who deemed the visual appearance of the participants to be "contrary to traditional Russian values".

Thematic and Community Resources (Mangabuff, Shikimori, "Raduzhnye berushi", Nekrasov Library)

On **12 May 2026**, magistrates in Moscow fined Nikolay K. and Vladislav G., the owners of the specialized anime resources Mangabuff and Shikimori, 200,000 rubles each for failing to display the "18+" age rating on pages featuring amateur manga translations.

On **14 May 2026**, a district court in Moscow (following a lawsuit brought by the prosecution in the interest of Roskomnadzor) declared three key publications in the Telegram channel "Raduzhnye berushi" extremist and banned from distribution within the RF. The channel functioned as a platform for psychological mutual assistance and the sharing of personal stories. Roskomnadzor's expert review identified violations in posts containing: announcements seeking safe practicing psychologists/lawyers; instructions on digital security; and a subscriber's personal story about self-acceptance.

On **4 May 2026**, the Basmany District Court of Moscow registered administrative material under Article 6.21 of the CoAO RF against the N. A. Nekrasov Library for storing uncensored literature within its open-access collections.

Confectionery "mk.studio.kazan"

On 5 April 2026, investigative bodies in the Republic of Tatarstan initiated a preliminary inquiry into Alyya, the owner of a local confectionery brand. The action followed complaints from pro-government activists who identified propaganda in a satirical video clip mentioning a discount for members of the LGBTIQ community.

Ksenia Sobchak (YouTube channel "Ostorozhno: Sobchak")

On 2 June 2026, the head of the "Safe Internet League", Ekaterina Mizulina, submitted a complaint to the Ministry of Internal Affairs demanding an investigation into Sobchak's interview with beauty blogger Igor Sinyak. Mizulina identified "devilry" and "LGBT propaganda" in the video.

III. Liquidation of Human Rights Organizations and Prosecution of Activists

In the second quarter of 2026, the campaign to dismantle the institutional human rights environment in Russia entered a phase of final eradication targeting major non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and initiative groups. Utilizing the November 2023 Supreme Court ruling, the Ministry of Justice of the RF and prosecution authorities successfully petitioned local courts to designate virtually all the country's largest specialized associations as extremist structures. This status automatically criminalizes any subsequent activity by staff and volunteers under Article 282.2 of the CC RF.

1. Repression Against Human Rights, Social, and Expert Projects

Queer Media Project "Parni Plus" ("Parni+"): On 23 April 2026, the Zavodskoy District Court of Orel designated the Autonomous Non-Profit Organization (ANO) "Socio-Legal Enlightenment"—the legal entity behind Russia's oldest expert project "Parni+" (founded in 2008)—as an extremist organization and banned its activities within the RF. This decision creates risks of criminal prosecution of the organisation's members and leadership under Article 282.2 of the CC of the RF.

Moscow Community Center for LGBT+ Initiatives (MCC): On 23 April 2026, the Moscow City Court upheld a lawsuit filed by the city prosecution, designating the MCC as an extremist organization. This decision creates risks of criminal prosecution of the organisation's members and leadership under Article 282.2 of the CC of the RF.

Founded in 2015, the center coordinated programs offering free legal and psychological assistance.

Samara Public Organization "Irida": On 24 April 2026, the Samara Regional Court issued a ruling designating the regional association "Irida" as extremist. The court accepted as evidence the fact that activists administered support groups on social media networks and submitted formal appeals to state authorities criticizing discriminatory draft legislation. This decision creates risks of criminal prosecution of the organisation's members and leadership under Article 282.2 of the CC of the RF.

Interregional Public Movement "Russian LGBT Network": On 27 April 2026, the St. Petersburg City Court designated the largest such movement, established in 2006, as extremist and banned it. This decision creates risks of criminal prosecution of the organisation's members and leadership under Article 282.2 of the CC of the RF.

Initiative Group "Tg NSK" (Novosibirsk): On 19 May 2026, the Zheleznodorozhny District Court of Novosibirsk designated the project as extremist. This decision creates risks of criminal prosecution of the organisation's members and leadership under Article 282.2 of the CC of the RF. The initiative provided legal support to transgender individuals.

Human Rights Association "Alliance of Heterosexuals and LGBT for Equality": On 23 June 2026, the St. Petersburg City Court designated the association as an extremist organization. The judicial proceedings were classified as "top secret" and conducted entirely in camera. This decision creates risks of criminal prosecution of the organisation's members and leadership under Article 282.2 of the CC of the RF.

LGBT Resource Center (Yekaterinburg): On 24 June 2026, the Fourth Appellate Court of General Jurisdiction upheld the decision designating the Urals-based project as extremist. This decision creates risks of criminal prosecution of the organisation's members and leadership under Article 282.2 of the CC of the RF.

Charitable Foundation and Project "Sphere": On 19 June 2026, the Ministry of Justice of the RF included the "Sphere" project (operating without a legal entity) in the registry of "foreign agents".

International Association "European Youth Forum" (YFJ) On 23 April 2026, the Prosecutor General's Office of the RF declared the activities of the international organization, headquartered in Brussels, "undesirable" within the territory of Russia.

Dispersal of the "Hippiatnik" Festival (Moscow, Tsaritsyno) On 1 June 2026, police and Russian National Guard (Rosgvardia) forces used batons to shut down the 44th annual festival of informal youth.

2. Personal Prosecution of Activists

Liliya Vezhevatova On 10 April 2026, the Ministry of Justice of the RF added the human rights defender and coordinator of the "Feminist Anti-War Resistance" movement to the registry of "foreign agents". The activist resides outside Russia.

Egor Tkachenko On 5 June 2026, Rosfinmonitoring included the Yekaterinburg-based activist in its registry of terrorists and extremists. His inclusion led to the complete freezing of his Russian bank accounts.

The Case of Sasha Kazantseva (Transnational Persecution) On 12 May 2026, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the RF registered three new administrative protocols against the sex educator and activist Sasha Kazantseva for online "propaganda". Her forced emigration to Vilnius (Lithuania) did not halt the pressure: members of the Russian-linked radical group "Healers" identified her residential address, launching a campaign of blackmail and threats of violence.

Ruslan Savolainen and Aleksandr Voronov (Coming Out Group) A magistrate in St. Petersburg fined the former directors of the organization 300,000 rubles each in absentia under three protocols concerning online "propaganda". Aleksandr Voronov was ordered arrested in absentia in April 2025.

IV. Symbols and Digital Control (Articles 20.3 and 6.21 of the CoAO RF)

In the second quarter of 2026, law enforcement and judicial practices in cases concerning the "display of extremist symbols" (Art. 20.3 of the CoAO RF) and "propaganda" (Art. 6.21 of the CoAO RF) became firmly established around the concept of a continuing offense in the digital environment. Interior Ministry bodies, in

coordination with Roskomnadzor, shifted to the systematic utilization of automated monitoring systems (including specialized AI algorithms for graphic image recognition) to analyze archived public posts by citizens.

1. Prosecutions for Archived Publications and Digital Footprints

The Valeriya Igoshina Case (Vladimir Oblast) – Art. 20.3 of the CoAO RF On 22 June 2026, the Sudogodsky District Court of the Vladimir Oblast found Valeriya Igoshina guilty of displaying the symbols of an extremist organization. The protocol was triggered by two photographs depicting a rainbow flag, which had been saved in the user's photo album on "VKontakte" in 2018. The court dismissed the defense arguments, ruling that the offense was of a continuing nature.

The Vsevolod Azovsky Case (Voronezh) – Art. 20.3 of the CoAO RF On 29 May 2026, the Levoberezhny District Court of Voronezh held Vsevolod Azovsky liable for posting an image of a rainbow flag. The judge ordered the confiscation of the "instrument of the offense"—a deleted digital graphic file (cached copy) retrieved by police officers during their inspection.

The Varvara Luch Case (Volgograd Oblast) – Art. 20.3 of the CoAO RF On 9 April 2026, the Volzhsky City Court of the Volgograd Oblast imposed 5 days of administrative arrest on the 20-year-old activist Varvara Luch. The offense was identified in an archived post featuring a photograph of the singer Olga Buzova against the background of a rainbow flag.

2. Visual Content Monitoring and Broad Interpretation of Norms

The Danil O. Case (Kemerovo) – Art. 6.21 of the CoAO RF In June 2026, the Rudnichny District Court of Kemerovo imposed a fine of 100,000 rubles on local resident Danil O. The basis was the online posting of a satirical image of the cartoon character "SpongeBob SquarePants" wearing a dress.

Prosecutions for Publications in Tyumen – Art. 20.3 of the CoAO RF On 25 April 2026, the Leninsky District Court of Tyumen fined a local resident 1,000 rubles under Part 1 of Article 20.3 of the CoAO RF for the publication of a photograph showing two women kissing.

The Football Fan Case (Tambov) – Art. 6.21 of the CoAO RF On 4 April 2026, the Leninsky District Court of Tambov found a supporter of the "Fakel" football club guilty of promoting non-traditional relations. He was accused of putting up stickers where the emblem of a rival club ("Sokol") was overlaid with a rainbow palette.

3. Monitoring of Messaging Apps and Prosecution of Minors

The Dmitry Dyukov Case (Moscow) – Art. 20.3 of the CoAO RF In May 2026, the Cheremushkinsky District Court of Moscow held blogger Dmitry Dyukov administratively liable for posting an image of a rainbow flag within a private Telegram channel.

Extrajudicial Pressure on a Minor (Juvenile Affairs Unit – PDN) On 22 May 2026, internal affairs bodies in the Volga region concluded an inquiry concerning a 13-year-old schoolboy who had shown his peers an internet image containing LGBTIQ symbols. The child was placed on a preventive registry with the PDN, and child protection authorities initiated judicial proceedings to place him in a closed specialized educational facility.

4. Judicial Consequences of Law Enforcement Raids and Closure of Venues

Judicial Fines and Closure of the "Territoria" Rock Club (Yaroslavl) – Arts. 20.3 and 6.21 of the CoAO RF Following a high-profile March raid at the "Burial of Winter" rock festival, a number of attendees were handed fines and administrative arrests under Part 1 of Article 20.3 of the CoAO RF. As a result of the administrative pressure and financial restrictions imposed, on 13 May 2026, the management of the "Territoria" club officially announced the complete and permanent closure of the venue.

V. Repression in Culture, Book Publishing, and Librarianship

In the second quarter of 2026, state cultural policy transitioned from targeted restrictions to a "scorched earth" strategy. There is a visible shift toward the physical destruction of literature and the criminalization of classical artistic tropes through the introduction of new ideological terminology.

1. The Book Sector

The Eksmo-AST Publishing Group and the "LitRes" service reported windows of unprecedented literature withdrawals. Eksmo completely removed 1,080 book titles

from sale (660,700 copies), while LitRes deleted 1,800 works. Publishers employ AI systems for the preemptive screening of "violations" within texts.

Judicial expert assessments introduced a new term to justify repressive measures: **"sexual anarchism"** (the rejection of social norms within family relations). Novels by Fredrik Backman, John Boyne, and Ursula K. Le Guin fell under this criterion.

On 1 June 2026, Ulan-Ude's sole independent bookstore, **"Svoya Komnata"**, closed down due to fines for "LGBT propaganda" and an atmosphere of constant anxiety.

2. The Library Crisis and the Ideologization of Education

The Ministry of Digital Development of the RF published a report estimating that between **50% and 70% of rural library collections** are at risk of destruction due to requirements to remove books published via Soros Foundation grants.

On 4 May 2026, the Basmanny District Court of Moscow registered a protocol under Article 6.21 of the CoAO against **the Nekrasov Library**.

On 14 May, lectures on "LGBT extremism" were delivered at Lyceum No. 2 in Saratov, embedding anti-LGBT rhetoric directly into the educational process.

3. Censorship in Theater, Art, and the Digital Environment

On 29 April, the Kaluga Theater for Young Spectators withdrew a play about penguins following viewer complaints that interpreted the birds' friendship as a "same-sex wedding".

In April, far-right groups organized a harassment campaign against art historian **Nadezhda Plungyan**, demanding the cancellation of her lecture at the Yeltsin Center on the grounds of "LGBT propaganda".

On 9 June, **Beeline TV** and **Smotreshka** were fined a combined total of 6.5 million rubles for the TV series The Law of the Concrete Jungle and the film Angel.

Destruction of Books in Udmurtia

In July 2026, libraries in the region received an administrative directive ordering the

physical destruction of books by Pushkin and children's encyclopedias published via Soros grants.

Conclusion

A defining feature of this period was the classification of judicial proceedings against NGOs as secret (e.g., the "Alliance" case). Official consolidated figures from the Judicial Department for the first half of 2026 have not yet been published in full as of July 2026; however, based on available data from open sources, the total volume of imposed penalties can be calculated.

Total Amount of Imposed Fines (First Half of 2026)

The total amount reached approximately **60,000,000 rubles**:

- **Q1 (January–March):** Fines exceeding 15,000,000 rubles were imposed.
- **Q2 (April–June):** The figure rose sharply, exceeding 45,000,000 rubles.

The volume of fines for the first six months of 2026 was nearly three times higher than that of the corresponding period in 2025, when courts imposed fines totaling 20.8 million rubles.

Historically, only a small fraction of these sums is actually recovered: for instance, out of the 20.8 million rubles imposed in the first half of 2025, bailiffs recovered only 875,000 rubles. However, 2026 has seen a distinct trend toward freezing the accounts of organizations and individuals listed on the "extremist registry", which facilitates compulsory asset seizures.

Key Trends of the First Half of 2026

An analysis of judicial practice and instances of prosecution reveals the following trends:

The number of cases under Article 6.21 of the CoAO RF increased by **37%** compared to the beginning of 2025.

The proportion of cases brought against legal entities (publishers, internet platforms, media outlets) grew from 12% to 28%. The state has shifted from targeting individuals to financially suffocating infrastructure.

The volume of cases under Article 6.21.2 of the CoAO RF (demonstration to minors of non-traditional relations or information capable of inducing a desire to change gender) in 2026 has already exceeded the figures for the entirety of 2025 by **2.5 times**. In February 2026, the first precedent-setting fine of 100,000 rubles was imposed for a post stating that "being transgender is brave and beautiful".

Authorities implemented a tactic of **targeting executives with personal fines**. Whereas previously only the corporation faced penalties, CEOs are now personally receiving fines of 200,000–250,000 rubles (e.g., the Beeline and SarBK cases) for "conniving at the spread of destructive meanings".

Fiction literature came under direct fire. While prosecutions were previously reserved for public commentary, expert assessments now classify novels by Fredrik Backman, Ursula K. Le Guin, and John Boyne as "propaganda". The Ministry of Digital Development projects the removal of up to **70% of rural library collections**.

Customer reviews on online marketplaces became objects of prosecution (e.g., the Wildberries cases in Tula and Krasnodar).

Courts ceased looking for an "erotic subtext". Under Decree No. 809, "propaganda" is understood to encompass any form of "normalization"—depicting LGBT individuals as happy or accepted by society (e.g., the Smotreshka case involving scenes of coming out and wedding preparations).

The integration of AI systems ("Oculus", "Vepr") automated the detection of violations. A distinct trend emerged involving prosecutions for archived photographs (dating back to 2018), which are classified as a "continuing offense".

The most critical trend of the half-year is the transition to lengthy prison sentences (up to 7 years) for the operation of venues (e.g., the "Pose" and "Jackson" clubs), which is now interpreted as the "organization of an extremist community". Simultaneously, following the XVIII Congress of Psychiatrists in May 2026, identity was once again formally declared a **"pathology"**, legalizing forced **conversion therapy** and depriving individuals of access to professional medical care.