

30,000 Russians Charged Under Protest Law in 15 Years – Monitor

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Héloïse Bargain / MT

More than 30,000 people have been found guilty of violating Russian protest law over the past 15 years, according to a study by the independent OVD-Info police-monitoring group.

The study looked at cases involving Article 20.2 of Russia’s Administrative Code, known as the “protest article.” Since 2004, the text of Article 20.2 has grown fourfold, OVD-Info said. Seven more articles, included penalties for unauthorized rallies and for “involving a juvenile,” have been added under Article 20.2.

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По статье 20.2 КоАП привлекают все больше людей. Мы подсчитали все известные нам случаи преследования за нарушение правил публичных мероприятий за последние 15 лет (<https://t.co/IGyZi4wYfX>), и вот какие

суммы набираются в разных регионах: pic.twitter.com/Fgds8DHW2F

— ОВД-Инфо (@OvdInfo) [November 6, 2019](#)

Between the start of 2004 and the end of 2018, Russian courts heard 49,274 cases on protest-related violations, finding 30,159 of the defendants guilty, the study published Wednesday [says](#). The amount of fines imposed on those found guilty totaled 160,912,688 rubles (\$2.5 million).

The minimum fine for first-time violations grew from 1,000 to 10,000 rubles (\$15 - \$156) between 2004 and 2018, the study says. Punishment for repeat violations now includes fines up to 300,000 rubles (\$4,600), compulsory work and administrative arrests between 15 and 30 days. If a repeat violator is found criminally liable, they can be jailed up to five years.

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Ekaterina Borovikova, one of the study’s authors, told The Moscow Times that the data indirectly indicates that protest activity is on the rise in Russia.

According to the team’s [explainer](#) on how it studied Russia’s protest charges, the research says that suppressing protest activity using Article 20.2 is a widespread tactic used by the authorities and has intensified in recent years. The authors added that if they excluded cases which were sent back to police over lack of evidence, the acquittal rate for Article 20.2 is just 7%.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/11/08/30000-russians-charged-under-protest-law-in-15-years-monitor-a68105>