

Russia's Ruling Party Uses AI to Purge Anti-War Voters – Reports

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The Moscow branch of the United Russia Party. **Sophia Sandurskaya / Moskva News Agency**

Russia's ruling party is purging its ranks of opponents to the war in Ukraine with AI and algorithms that track voters' social media activity, the Vedomosti business daily [reported](#) Monday, citing unnamed sources within the pro-Kremlin party.

The tools scour two popular Russian social networks, VKontakte and Odnoklassniki, for "politically significant actions" that include likes and shares.

"If the algorithm detected party supporters who spoke out against the special operation, then a second check confirmed their views, they were excluded from our database," one United Russia party source was quoted as saying.

The Kremlin has dubbed its invasion of Ukraine a "special military operation," and using the word "war" puts one at risk of criminal prosecution under wartime censorship laws.

"The artificial intelligence detects party supporters on social networks and gives them points

for likes, for being members of certain groups and other activity,” another United Russia source said. “We then checked them for membership in our database.”

United Russia’s support base has been slashed from 25 million to 13 million as a result of the monitoring campaign, Vedomosti said. Around 800,000 of them are currently awaiting to be officially accepted into the party.

United Russia had reportedly set the goal of building up its support base to 30 million by 2024.

Vedomosti said United Russia is resuming its cleansing campaign after the 2021 legislative vote and ahead of the 2023 regional and 2024 presidential elections.

In the few regions where United Russia performed poorly or which are run by the opposition, Vedomosti said the party base has been rebuilt from scratch to include new supporters ready to show up at the polls.

In Moscow, the newspaper describes United Russia’s support base as “small but clean” and primarily made up of retirees.

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