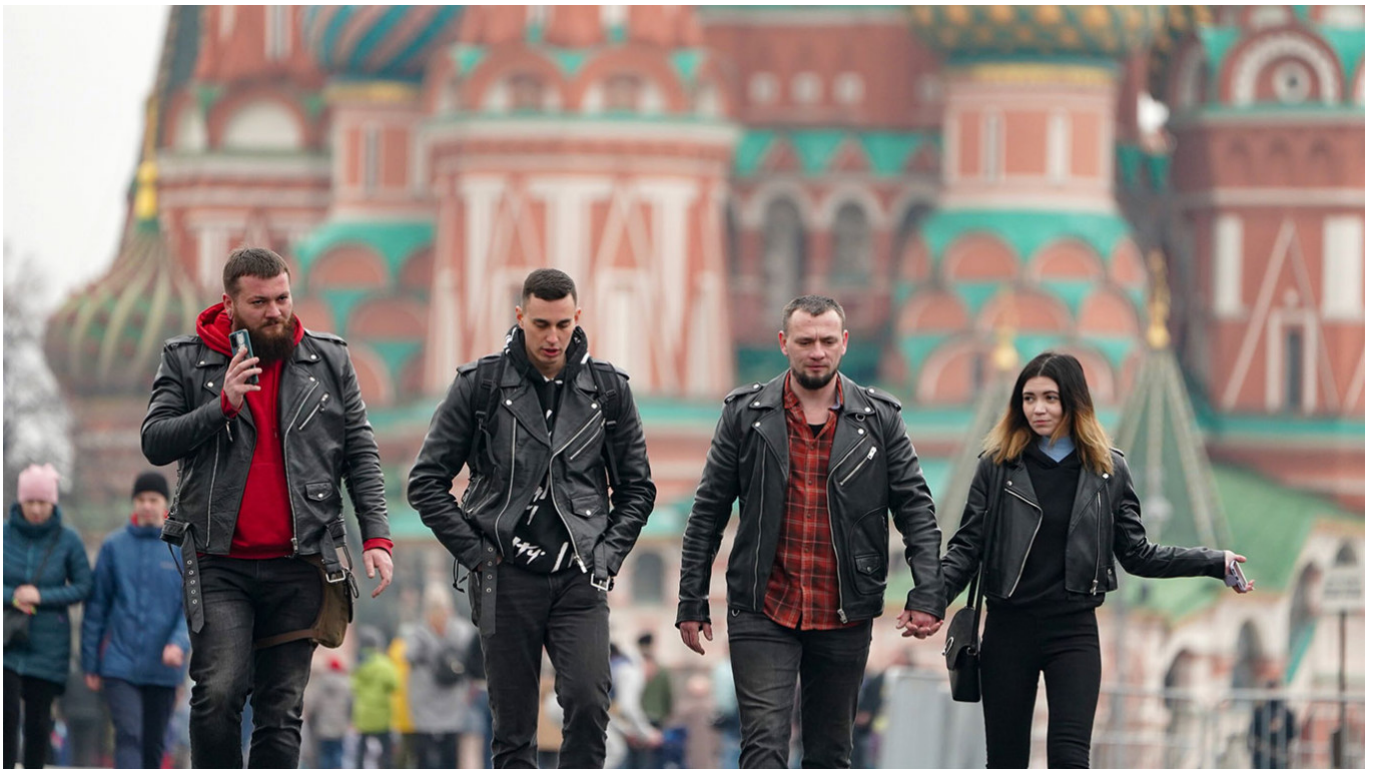


Russia Accuses Ukraine, West of Recruiting Youth for 'Sabotage'

By [AFP](#)

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Pelagia Tikhonova / Moskva News Agency

The head of Russia's FSB security service on Tuesday accused Ukraine and the West of recruiting young Russians to stage armed attacks in their home country.

The accusation by security chief Alexander Bortnikov comes a week after President Vladimir Putin accused the West of having helped Kyiv stage "terror attacks" in Russia while Moscow pursues its military offensive against Ukraine.

Moscow has cracked down on criticism of its campaign in Ukraine, with a growing number of treason cases and long prison sentences for social media dissent.

"In the conditions of Russia conducting the special military operation, Ukrainian special forces and their Western curators have launched an aggressive ideological indoctrination and recruitment of our citizens," Bortnikov told a meeting in Moscow of the National Anti-

Terrorism Committee.

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"Especially the younger generation, to involve them in sabotage, terrorist and extremist activities," he added, according to a statement from the committee.

He alleged that "118 terrorist crimes have been prevented in Russia" since February last year, when Moscow launched its offensive in Ukraine.

He gave no details of the kind of supposed crimes these included, where they took place or who they targeted but alleged that "the perpetrators were young people and teenagers, including minors."

In early March, Russia detained a young woman after an explosion killed a top military blogger in St. Petersburg, blaming Ukraine and the opposition. Little is known about the attack.

Russia has also witnessed a number of arson attacks on army recruitment centers since Putin launched a mobilization drive in September last year.

The Russian leader said last week that "there are grounds to assert" that Western intelligence services were involved in "staging sabotage and terrorist attacks."

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