

FSB Claims Ukraine Sought to Recruit Members of Russia's Youth Army

March 06, 2025



Youth Army initiation at the Victory Museum in Moscow. **Vasily Kuzmichenok / Moskva News Agency**

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) [said](#) Thursday that it foiled a NATO-backed Ukrainian attempt to recruit members of Russia's Youth Army.

The FSB alleged that Ukraine's GUR intelligence service sent phishing emails to schools in Moscow and the surrounding region after intercepting and altering messages from the Youth Army and the military-patriotic education center Avangard.

"Ukraine's Defense Ministry sought to collect personal data on adolescents for their potential recruitment and involvement in intelligence and subversive activities against Russia's security," the FSB said in a statement.

The agency said schools in Moscow and the Moscow region had been warned about the alleged Ukrainian operation. It added that an investigation was ongoing.

Last month, Russia's Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, [warned](#) that both

young and elderly Russians faced a growing risk of being coaxed by foreigners into committing sabotage.

President Vladimir Putin established the Youth Army, or Yunarmia, in 2015. Russia's Defense Ministry backs the organization.

Supporters describe it as a patriotic youth organization that fosters civic engagement and prepares young people for military service. Critics, however, argue that it serves as a tool for consolidating Kremlin power and have [likened](#) it to the Hitler Youth.

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