

Map of the actors in the Donbas conflict: local actors of Certain areas of Donetsk oblast, NGCA

- The "head" of the so-called "DPR" and his affiliates
- "People's council" of the so-called "DPR"
- "Government" and "ministries" of the so-called "DPR"
- Bench





This analytical review of the actors of the conflict in Donbas was prepared within the framework of the Map of Conflict sub-project of the CivilM+ civil society platform.

The overall goal of the work on the Map of the Conflict is to identify the actors and groups involved in the conflict in Donbas at various levels, as well as their influence, relationships, interests, concerns and expectations. It is assumed that this analysis will help identify possible ways of influencing various stakeholders to resolve the conflict.

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According to the authors of this study, the actors considered in this section are not full-fledged actors – therefore, their positions should be considered only in the context of their ties with the Russian Federation. It should also be borne in mind that as of autumn 2020, most of the Certain areas of Donetsk oblast (NGCA) actors mentioned in the study have already received Russian citizenship.

1. "HEAD" OF THE SO-CALLED "DPR" AND HIS AFFILIATES

1.1. Denis Pushilin, "head" of the so-called "DPR"

Denis Pushilin was born in 1981 in Makiivka, has an incomplete higher education, studied at Donbas Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture with a degree in microeconomics. He did his military service in 1998–2000 in the units of the National Guard of Ukraine in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. He began his career in the trading company "Sladkaya Zhizn." He took an active part in the activities of MMM-2011 financial pyramid of Sergey Mavrodi. In 2013, he ran for Parliament from the party My Maiemo Metu (MMM, We have the Goal) in the single-mandate election district #94 in Kyiv oblast. He lost the elections. Since 5 April 2014, he has been an active member of separatist movement, being the deputy to "people's governor" Pavel Gubarev. Since November 2018, he is the "head" of the so-called "DPR." Married. In 2014, he was a citizen of Ukraine, and in April 2019, together with his family, he received Russian citizenship.

Official position regarding the conflict

According to the so-called "DPR" Constitution, the "head" of the "republic" is the head of the "state" and has executive power. At different times, this position was held by several people, including citizens of the Russian Federation. The appointment/election procedure varied as needed. The functions/powers of the head of the so-called "DPR" also changed significantly. Under Aleksandr Zakharchenko, the positions of the "head" and "chairperson of the council of ministers" were combined, the "head" had his/her own power resource, which was financed from the income consolidated by the "minister of taxes and duties" of the so-called "DPR" Aleksandr Timofeev (nickname "Tashkent"), economic assets of all kinds of state-owned enterprises and from expropriated/confiscated private businesses.

Under Pushilin, the "head" of the so-called "DPR," lost all influence on the military and law enforcement authorities of the "republic" and partially on economic processes. For this, at the end of 2018, the position of the "prime minister" of the "DPR" was introduced, which is completely controlled by Moscow.

At the same time, Denis Pushilin's superiority in voicing political statements, performing representative functions, working at public events in Donetsk, Crimea or Moscow is not disputed by anyone. In 2020, he increased his influence on economic processes and access to financial flows in the so-called "DPR."

Interests and functions in the conflict region

Denis Pushilin stood at the origins of the conflict in Donbas and took part in different roles at all its stages, in particular, he led rallies and participated in the seizure of administrative buildings in spring 2014.

He always presented himself to Moscow as absolutely loyal and not having any ambitions, as if he is ready to leave his post at the first request. Therefore, he looks like a long-standing figure as soon as current format of Moscow's complete control over this part of Donbas continues.

In September 2018, Denis Pushilin won in Moscow in the "casting" for the post of the "head" of the so-called "DPR" another "civilian" contender – Dmitry Trapeznikov – due to the combination of his managerial skills, flair, lack of ambition and complete loyalty. His dismissal is not expected due to the departure of Vladislav Surkov from the supervision of Donbas, even though it was Surkov who selected Pushilin to become the "head" of the so-called "DPR." Instead, Pushilin's resignation may be a marker of progress in Russia's position – the current "head" of the so-called "DPR" enjoys extremely low public confidence and is considered non-elected in any relatively free elections. Since June 2020, a "political researcher" Dmitry Chaika (a pseudonym, real name according to some sources Dmitry Konov) has been delegated to Donetsk from Moscow as a curator of Pushilin, who completely took over the leadership of all local media, "political projects" and building the image of the "head" of the so-called "DPR." It is an indicator that Pushilin has strong positions at least in the medium term.

Actions regarding the conflict

In spring 2014, Pushilin controlled a group of 25 persons in Donetsk in the local network of the MMM-2011 financial pyramid and on 6 April 6, after the Security Service of Ukraine arrested Pavel Gubarev, he suddenly turned out to be the only systemic actor of the pro-Russian protest movement who remained not detained. The second storming of the regional state administration building on 6 April put Pushilin in the first roles as one of the few local leaders of pro-Russian groups who remained free.

He never participated directly in hostilities and did not wear a military uniform, but in the first months, he had a serious impact on the distribution of humanitarian aid from Russia. He could not stand the competition, and after a series of assassination attempts, in June 2014 he left for Moscow, from where he returned already in October, having missed the most difficult months of military confrontation in the so-called "DPR."

Since then, he held various positions: "chairperson of the presidium of the supreme council" of the so-called "DPR," coordinator and co-chairperson of the "people's front Novorossiia," "head of the people's council" of the so-called "DPR," "acting head" of the so-called "DPR," representative of the so-called "DPR" in the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG) In Minsk. The key positions for Denis Pushilin were participation in the TCG and control over the local "party of power" – he was the head of the executive committee of the social movement "Donetsk Republic" (PMDR), demonstrated outstanding skills in the administrative conflicts and once, he took control of both the movement and the faction "Donetsk Republic" in the "people's council." Pushilin effectively sustained his personal physical survival against the background of extremely disadvantageous relations with Zakharchenko through legitimacy in

Moscow and Minsk and a demonstration of systematic political work to curators. He was able to attract his former leadership from the MMM network in the person of Aleksey Muratov to the organization of the ODDR. Because of Pushilin's effective control over the ODDR, Aleksandr Zakharchenko created his separate dominant political group within the "party of power" – that was the social movement "Oplot of Donbas." All Pushilin's nominees in the "people's council" were replaced with personal bodyguard and members of former unit of Zakharchenko.

In moments of crises, Denis Pushilin always showed absolute discipline, transparency of intentions and predictability, did not oppose the resignations of his people, endured, and was writing a book. But in autumn 2018, after the assassination of Zakharchenko, he quickly and efficiently destroyed the structures of "Oplot of Donbas," removed all the legacy of this group from the "people's council," transferred Oplot TV channel to subordination of the "ministry of information" and sharply decreased its budget.

Recently, there has been a tough confrontation between the structures of Pushilin and the government leadership (which is also the leadership of Vneshtorgservice CJSC) for access to economic flows. The third actor in this confrontation for resources is the "government's vice-premier" for social policy Vladimir Antonov, who exercises control over the main material flows in the so-called "DPR" – pension transfers and social benefits from Russia. It is already clear from this that the powers of the "head" of the so-called "DPR" are strictly limited by representative and political functions, and he only partially performs administrative functions.

Denis Pushilin's position can be strengthened if opinion polls show at least some increase in his rating among the population. The firm belief in the fact that people would never vote for Pushilin spurs several personal projects of actors who want to replace the "head" of the so-called "DPR" who believe in the possibility of at least some hybrid version of the elections in Certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts not entirely controlled by Moscow, not according to the Belarusian scenario, but with the vote count (within the framework of implementation of the Minsk agreements).

Since the beginning of the conflict, Kremlin has been unsuccessfully trying to present the "head" of the so-called "DPR" as independent actor, aiming to persuade Ukraine to negotiate directly with the representatives of Certain areas of Donetsk oblast, NGCA. The "head" of the so-called "DPR" fully implements the decisions made during the negotiations between Ukraine and the Russian Federation, voicing out his position only on only certain details within the framework of the Minsk Trilateral Contact Group.

1.2. Igor Martynov, advisor to the "head" of the so-called "DPR"

Official position regarding the conflict

Igor Martynov was born in 1969 in Donetsk. In 1991, he graduated from the Donetsk Institute of Soviet Trade with a degree in Commodity Science. In the same year, he began his career as the director of the private enterprise "Maxi." In May 2006, he became an assistant of the Department of Marketing and Commercial Business at DonSUET named after Tugan-Baranovsky. Since 2008, he worked as the director

of Shcherbakov Culture and Recreation Park, and in 2014, he headed the municipal enterprise "Directorate of Donetsk City Parks." The former member of Donetsk City Council from the Party of Regions, a member of the team of the last Mayor of Donetsk, Aleksandr Lukyanchenko, he had a common business with the deputies of the Mayor and was closely integrated into Donetsk pre-war elites.

From October 2014 to October 2016, he was the head of Donetsk city administration, then "deputy head of the administration of the head" of the so-called "DPR." After the death of Zakharchenko, he became "deputy prime minister". He was removed from office in May 2019, then he became an adviser to Denis Pushilin.

He is considered a close member of Pushilin's team, one of the curators of his personal commercial schemes.

As of 2014, he was a citizen of Ukraine, and now he has Russian citizenship.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

Martynov is a typical Donetsk businessman who succeeded in the criminal 1990s. His father in those years was the director of a large butcher shop at Donetsk meat-packing plant. Igor Martynov in 2006 participated in an attempt at a local counter-elite coup, when a group of the head of Kyivskyi District Council Sergey Beshulia acted against the team of then-acting Mayor who was supported by all local influential actors. Despite the demonstrative destruction of the opponent, several persons from Beshuli's team were still picked up and it was then that Igor Martynov got his chance.

He always aims at making money and is a cruel person. In 2014, after Donetsk Mayor Aleksandr Lukyanchenko left the city, his functions were performed by the Deputy Mayor Konstantin Savinov, with whom Martynov fought for the place of the city administrator. Savinov was forced to leave Donetsk after threats to his family that he considered substantial.

Actions regarding the conflict

Martynov headed the city of Donetsk for two years at the time of an active redistribution of property left by the fleeing owners. He formed a team of former experienced city top officials.

The Donetsk administration seemed to be quite loyal to Aleksandr Zakharchenko, but the transfer of Igor Martynov to the "government" was more like a punishment. The persons close to Martynov was subjected to repression. In April 2016, his "first deputy" Igor Ponomarenko was arrested while accepting a bribe. Later, on charges of selling Russian humanitarian aid in his own network of pharmacies, his "deputy", Valentin Laktionov, was arrested, and another of his "deputies", Gennady Tkachenko, left Donetsk and went to Russia.

Under Denis Pushilin, Igor Martynov tried to oversee the social department of the "government," but could not stand the competition with Moscow's proteges.

1.3. Aleksey Muratov, head of the executive committee of the social movement "Donetsk Republic"

Official position regarding the conflict

Aleksey Muratov was born in 1978 in the city of Kurchatov, RSFSR. He is a Russian citizen. Has a higher education. He worked as an engineer at the Kursk NPP, was a member of Kurchatov City Council from the United Russia party. In 2010 – 2018, he was an active participant in the second wave of the MMM financial pyramid of Sergey Mavrodi. He conducted international projects of MMM in Asia and Africa. Muratov was involved in criminal prosecution in India for promoting fraudulent financial schemes in this country. He was released from prison on bail with the help of Russian diplomats.

Aleksey Muratov is a team member and partner of the "head" of the so-called "DPR" Denis Pushilin. They met even before the events of 2014 during the promotion of financial pyramids. In the so-called "DPR," he is directly managing the development of the political project of the local "party of power."

Interests and functions in the conflict region

After the assassination of Aleksandr Zakharchenko and before the appointment of Dmitry Chaika to the so-called "DPR" in June 2020, he almost single-handedly initiated all high-profile ideological projects. In addition, together with Pushilin, Muratov's group promotes international cryptocurrency projects, one of them is PRIZM cryptocurrency. At the facilities of two local thermal power plants – Starobesheve and Zuyevka – he organized cryptocurrency mining. In 2016, in the city of Khartsyzsk, local entrepreneurs tried to organize exchange offices for exchanging bitcoins. The project came across tough opposition from the Pushilin-Muratov group, and they made it clear to businessmen that the entire cryptocurrency business in the so-called "DPR" belongs to Pushilin and Muratov, and others are forbidden to engage into it.

Actions regarding the conflict

In "Donetsk Republic," Aleksey Muratov has a reputation as a show man, a creative person, an apparatchik who created a large organizational structure to work with the population. Under him, the social movement "Donetsk Republic" turned into a huge monster with a solid budget. The movement is represented by 37 regional offices, the staff has more than 1,400 employees. All doctors, teachers, employees of other budget-funded organizations are obliged to "voluntarily" join the "movement" to portray it as something really popular. Muratov's idea was to open the lists of members of the movement, which, in his opinion, should have prevented employees of the budget-funded organizations from traveling through the checkpoint to the territories controlled by Ukrainian Government because they would be tainted by collaborating with the authorities of the so-called "DPR." But Ukrainian website "Peacemaker" did not register 200,000 members of "Donetsk Republic."

Muratov quickly expands his offices to meet the current "needs of the republic" – he organizes all kinds of hot lines, maintains a network of public reception offices, works with young people, created a fairly large network of "people's druzhina," de-

clares that he is constantly working in at least 10 areas and large public projects. When the coronavirus made bright (and expensive) rallies and public events impossible, Muratov invented and organized a 1,000-car rally on 9 May 2020.

Now, an operational headquarters "Healthy Movement" has been set up within "Donetsk Republic," which is working on issues of combating the spread of Covid-19. It also processes applications of people to enter the so-called "DPR" from the territories controlled by Ukrainian Government. When it comes to "Donetsk Republic," there is no border between the "movement" and the "state" – it is rather a structure for the exemplary solution of urgent issues and, thus, the propaganda of the so-called "DPR" both outside and inside.

Muratov is known as the author of the most shocking ideas, which, according to the plan, were supposed to both shock Ukrainian society and provide additional funding from Moscow. Some of them are the "Judas Medal" for Petro Poroshenko turned into a monument on the Donetsk-Yelenovka highway, a project to transfer the monument to Taras Shevchenko to Shcherbakov Park and install a huge monument to Joseph Stalin in its place (which would automatically lead to the renaming of the central boulevard of Donetsk from Shevchenko Boulevard to Joseph Stalin Boulevard), delivery from Crimea to Donetsk of a 40-meter banner with Stalin, which rose in May 2020 over the places of compact residence of Crimean Tatars – it was assumed that it would be hung on one of the city skyscrapers in Donetsk.

There was a project to hold a European congress of antiglobalists in the so-called "DPR," a scandalous meeting of young people "Young Guard" was held in Zuyevka with role-playing games of adolescents with the participation of the character "Lavrenty Beria," and similar characters, quests with "shooting" "enemies of the people" as a way of initiating newcomers and other entertainments that have outraged many.

After Dmitry Chaika came to Donetsk from Moscow in June 2020, all of Muratov's projects with "stalinization" were stopped and he himself again faded into the background, preparing a blow to another rival from Kremlin.

1.4. Dmitry Chaika, advisor to the "head" of the so-called "DPR" (pseudonym, real name according to some sources is Dmitry Konov)

Official position regarding the conflict

Dmitry Chaika is a political strategist from Vladislav Surkov's team of the former aides to the President of Russia. Sent by Moscow in 2014, he worked in Donetsk for two years as an ideological curator. He was the "head" of another "Moscow curator" Aleksandr Kazakov, whose most successful project was the recruitment of the writer Zakhar Prilepin to the so-called "DPR" as a major and political officer of the poteshniy/toy special forces battalion, which attracted Russian media attention to Donetsk after the cessation of major battles until the death of Zakharchenko. This pair of Surkov's political strategists – Dmitry Chaika and Aleksandr Kazakov – were recalled from Donetsk after another scandal. Dmitry Chaika left, and Kazakov remained in the so-called "DPR" until 2018, working as a personal adviser to Zakharchenko, losing his status of Moscow "curator."

Chaika has now tried to repeat this experience for himself. Having lost his job after Surkov's resignation, he accepted the offer to move privately to Donetsk and improve the information support of Denis Pushilin. Dmitry Chaika now manages all information resources, which are influenced by the head of the so-called "DPR" Denis Pushilin and guides the information activity of the latter.

Dmitry Chaika is a citizen of Russia.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

Dmitry Chaika focused on three areas: making money, building a tightly controlled vertical of controlled media for himself and managing Pushilin's daily activities, trying to raise his low rating among the population. To this end, the "head" of the so-called "DPR" holds up to 4 demonstration media events per day.

Actions regarding the conflict

Dmitry Chaika is a civilian who, since 2014, has been known for his forceful management style, using weapons on the table at work meetings and conferences. He automatically goes into confrontation with Pushilin's friends and enemies – the head of "Donetsk Republic" movement Aleksey Muratov and the "minister of information" of the so-called "DPR" Igor Antipov. His strategy is associated with abandoning from shocking actions with Stalin, anti-globalists and all kinds of historical constructors towards the systematic and daily promotion of the discourse on maximum integration with Russia, without fixing the topic of the so-called "DPR" joining Russia as another federal unit.

In early August 2020, Chaika joined the war of Telegram channels common for the so-called "DPR" by opening his anonymous channel, Robin Hood. Employees producing this channel have access to the personal files of all officials of the republic, during the first week the number of its subscribers was 3,500 persons – these were the officials, public employees and employees of budget-funded organizations of the so-called "DPR" who have phone numbers of the local mobile operator Phoenix. The content of the channel shed lights on who are the opponents of the "head" of the so-called "DPR" Denis Pushilin within the so-called "republic," as Chaika sees them. In addition to the government leadership, the channel criticizes Gorlovka administrator Ivan Prikhodko, "minister of internal affairs" Dikiy and "minister of information" Igor Antipov.

1.5. Elena Radomskaya, deputy head of the executive committee of the social movement "Donetsk Republic," "ex-minister of justice" of the so-called "DPR"

Official position regarding the conflict

She is one of the most qualified lawyers in the uncontrolled territories. As of 2014, Elena Radomskaya was the Head of Donetsk regional organization of the Association of Lawyers of Ukraine. She did not take any open participation in the events of spring-summer 2014. Since September 2014, she has been involved in work on creating the legal framework of the so-called "DPR," from March 2015 to autumn 2018, she was the "minister of justice" of the so-called "DPR."

As of 2014 she was a citizen of Ukraine, now she has a Russian passport.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

She is in a kind of political hibernation, applying to the position in the supreme court of the so-called "DPR." She has serious connections in law enforcement agencies, can apply for the post of "chairperson of the supreme court". Being elected to a lower position as the member of the "people's council" is also an option for her. Now she controls the public reception offices deployed on the basis of 37 regional organizations of the social movement "Donetsk Republic."

Actions regarding the conflict

She was the creator of the legal system of the so-called "DPR," she was behind the changes of local legislation that was done in two stages – first, under the adaptive Ukrainian norms, then under the Russian norms; she participated in the development of the civil code of the so-called "DPR."

She became the "minister of justice" at the time of the blockade in early 2015, when Ukraine disconnected the uncontrolled territories from electronic registers – registration of deaths, births, acts of civil status, real estate. She managed to organize first handwritten registration journals, then own electronic registers of the so-called "DPR," restart the system of registry offices, notaries, attorneys. She successfully built direct negotiations and contacts with the Government of Ukraine, organizing the transfer of prisoners for criminal offenses convicted by Ukrainian courts to continue serving their punishment to Government-controlled territories. Valeria Lutkovska, at that time the Ukrainian Ombudsperson, spoke positively about her as a negotiator. Interestingly, since the resignation of Radomskaya, there has not been a single transfer of prisoners from the so-called "DPR" to the Ukrainian authorities (while there have been similar transfers from the so-called "LPR").

1.6. Elena Nikitina, "advisor to the head" of the so-called "DPR"

Official position regarding the conflict

Elena Nikitina is Denis Pushilin's aunt and all her ups and downs were directly related to this relationship. From June 2014 to February 2017, she worked as the "minister of information" of the so-called "DPR." She was fired during the lustration of Pushilin's people organized by Oleksandr Zakharchenko in 2017, when the latter discovered that as a result of a quiet administrative struggle, he had lost influence on the social movement "Donetsk Republic," the "people's council" and some "ministries". She worked at one time in the press service of the "parliament." Now she holds the post of "adviser to the head" of the so-called "DPR," she has considerable influence in "public service" and constantly aspires to various posts, in particular, to return to the "ministry of information".

As of 2014, she was a citizen of Ukraine, now she has a Russian passport.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

She is busy with self-preservation and protection of the position of her family in the

leadership of the so-called "DPR." She is stubborn, not that clever, but very proactive.

Actions regarding the conflict

She stood at the origins of the creation of the first press services, the accreditation system, the seizure of the editorial offices of Ukrainian newspapers, printing houses, the creation of media outlets of the so-called "DPR." She wrote a book about her journey with entitled "Vopreki" (Despite all Troubles). Already in 2019, she tried to unify two "ministries" – information and communications – under her leadership, but to no avail.

1.7. Alena Alekseeva, director of the information policy department of the "administration of the head" of the so-called "DPR"

Official position regarding the conflict

Before the war, Alena Alekseeva held the position of press secretary of the regional organization of the Communist Party of Ukraine. In 2014, representatives of the Donetsk communists became the local resource for the "Russian Spring," providing their trained people to form election commissions in the 11 May referendum. Alekseeva fit well into the management structure of Aleksandr Zakharchenko, acquired the necessary connections in Moscow and fully retained her position under Denis Pushilin.

As of 2014, she was a citizen of Ukraine, now she has a Russian passport.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

She clearly oversees the information policy around the second head of the so-called "DPR;" without Alekseeva's permission, not a single interview of any minister under Zakharchenko could take place. While her position is far from top leadership of the so-called "DPR," she was able to form her own channel of communication with curators in Moscow, her own budget and her unique personal position.

Actions regarding the conflict

Without cooperation with Alekseeva, access to any official of the so-called "DPR" is impossible, many "ministers" have been forbidden to speak for years: e.g., there was not a single interview of the "minister of finance" of the so-called "DPR" or the "minister of economy", the budget and any economic indicators are strictly classified here. At the moment, Alekseeva controls the informal pool of the "DPR bloggers." Employees of various editorial offices, departments and NGOs form a kind of local network of "official" speakers and bloggers who through Alekseeva receive guidance on media coverage and submit the texts written under this guidance for review and approval. After the final "editing" of the texts in Moscow, this pool almost simultaneously releases a series of publications on topics important for the ideologists of the so-called "DPR." This pool, for example, includes the journalist of the First Republican Sergey Karpiy, employees of the "ministry of information" of the so-called "DPR" Aleksey Akutin and Maya Pirogova and other "bloggers" who in recent years

systematically and simultaneously "highlight" not only local issues, but also current Ukrainian and international developments.

1.8. Dmitry Linter, official of the administration of the head of the so-called "DPR," ex-deputy head of the Executive Committee of the social movement "Donetsk Republic"

Official position regarding the conflict

He was born in 1973 in Tallinn. Professionally, he serves Russia's interests. One of the members of the Estonian "Bronze Four" – a group of organizers of protests against the transfer of the Soviet Bronze Soldier memorial from the centre of Tallinn to a military cemetery in 2007. In subsequent years, he actively appeared on Russian television as an expert on discrimination against national minorities and the Russian language in the Baltic countries and in the post-Soviet space. In spring of 2019, he moved to the so-called "DPR," first to conduct one-time trainings for activists of the movement "Donetsk Republic," and in autumn 2019, he took the place of the deputy head of Executive Committee of "Donetsk Republic" on organizational issues.

Now he works in the "administration of the head" of the so-called "DPR."

Citizen of Estonia.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

After speeches in the Baltic countries for the protection of the Russian language as the language of a national minority, in Donetsk, he switched to advocating for the prohibition of Ukrainian and its exclusion from the constitution of the so-called "DPR" as the second state language. He enthusiastically supported the trend of December 2019 when, before and after the Paris summit of the leaders of the Normandy format countries in Donetsk, the Ukrainian language was exponentially stripped out of schools, institutions and legislative acts.

He tries to fit into the so-called "DPR" agenda as a radical, without losing touch with the events in Estonia.

Actions regarding the conflict

For a long time, he hid the fact of his life and work in the so-called "DPR" until the press service of "Donetsk Republic" posted in November 2019 photos of the new leader of the movement on the official resources of the self-proclaimed "republic." Dmitry Linter arrived in Donetsk not as totally external appointee from the curators from Moscow, he joined the "first family:" he married the niece of the "head" of the so-called "DPR" Denis Pushilin, daughter of the "ex-minister of information" Elena Nikitina (that became his third marriage). With his specific experience as a fighter for the "Russian World" in the Baltic countries, connections in Moscow and rare EU citizenship in those places, Linter tried to quickly break into the first roles in the self-proclaimed "republic" and at the same time not fall under the EU sanctions.

Initially, Linter was appointed to a key position – the deputy head of the executive committee of the ruling party for organizational issues with access to personal affairs and management of more than a thousand officials, but he did not succeed. In

Donetsk, "Russian people with initiative" do not take root well, since the local people are poor, angry and ready to fight for their small salaries, sparing neither themselves nor the newcomers.

Aleksey Muratov, having received such an active deputy, went on a long vacation to Moscow, leaving Dmitry Linter in charge. The leadership experience turned out to be unsuccessful – the meetings of the new leader were actively audio taped, discredited, and now he has been transferred to the "administration of the head" of the so-called "DPR," closer to Denis Pushilin.

In the absence of quite bright Zakhar Prilepin from Moscow, former "Latvians" Aleksandr Kazakov and Benes Ayo ("Black Lenin") who left the so-called "DPR," Denis Pushilin's son-in-law has not become a recognizable character yet.

2. "PEOPLE'S COUNCIL" OF THE SO-CALLED "DPR"

The "people's council" of the so-called "DPR" is a unicameral "parliament" of the unrecognized "republic," the permanent supreme and only "legislative" body. The "people's council" consists of 100 members representing two factions: "Donetsk Republic" and "Free Donbas." Factions are composed exclusively by members of social movements of the same name rather than by the parties on the basis of a simple appointment of a person to the post of "council member" with free rotation by decision of the curators of the movement at any time of the tenure, for example, with the wording "due to loss of trust."

The position of a "council member" can be either a punishment or a reward depending on the previous status of a person, including because of a salary that is quite high for the so-called "DPR" (equivalent to \$500). The next step down the career ladder for former "ministers" and top "officials" of the so-called "DPR" can be either the officially unpaid status of an "adviser" or imprisonment in a pre-trial detention centre.

Not a single party or other project can participate in the "parliament" other than as part of the allocated quota in the social movement "Donetsk Republic." The quota was formally allocated in exchange for refusal from their own political activities. So, within "Donetsk Republic," there were groups of "Oplot of Donbas" and the Communist Party of so-called "DPR." At the same time, in the last convocation, the Communist Party had a quota of three members, one was killed, the rest were removed from the "people's council" in May 2018 due to the lack of effective renunciation of political activity with the common Kremlin-style wording "due to loss of trust."

The "head of the council" is Vladimir Bidyovka – a well-known member of the Communist Party. He was the Member of Parliament of Ukraine from the Communist Party of Ukraine until October 2014, but at the same time, he formally represents the "Donetsk Republic" faction.

Denis Pushilin retains real control over the "parliament" through the stable secretariat of the "people's council" and its permanent "first deputy speaker" Olga Makeeva.

Law-making in the so-called "DPR" is a creative process and has gone through three big stages. At first, the codes of Ukraine and the Ukrainian SSR were adapted together with the practices of Ukrainian civil courts. Second, its own Criminal Procedure Code was adopted on the basis of the Ukrainian SSR Criminal Procedure Code of December 1960, the Civil Code of Ukraine was put in operation. By and large, the legal framework of the so-called "DPR" was a modified version of Ukrainian law translated into Russian. Starting from March 2017, a stage of deep restructuring of legal framework to meet Russian standards began, culminating in the adoption of the Civil Code of the so-called "DPR" by the current composition of the "people's council" in December 2019. It came into force only in July 2020, after 6 months given to the study of the document by the judiciary and everyone else involved in the process. Almost everyone in the legal community of the so-called "DPR" studied at Ukrainian universities and it is not easy for them to retrain to Russian standards.

2.1. Faction of the movement "Donetsk Republic" (68 representatives)

Official position regarding the conflict

Since its creation, the "Donetsk Republic" party has adhered to a clear and consistent position of secession from Ukraine. It was the reluctance of its members to comply with individual decisions made in the framework of the Minsk process that led to its complete reformatting. It began in 2015 with the resignation of the founder and ideologist of the party Andrey Purgin from the post of chairperson of the "people's council" and the forced departure to Russia of another ambitious Donetsk ideologue of the movement Aleksey Aleksandrov who was the head of the secretariat of "people's council." With the death of Vladimir Makovich (who read out the declaration of sovereignty of the so-called "DPR" in April 2014) in 2017 from natural reason, and the grave illness and shadowing of the former Head of the Committee of Voters of Donbas Aleksandr Khryakov (he kept the status of a "member of council" and his salary, but he no longer had any influence), the time of Donetsk marginal pro-Russian politicians who actively integrated into the "Russian Spring" in 2014 is over.

Aleksey Aleksandrov (together with Andrey Purgin) is still trying to somehow influence the internal processes in Donetsk and make himself visible by financing the Donetsk Aboriginal Telegram channel, which criticizes the actions of the local authorities of the so-called "DPR." Purgin, while he was the author of the concept of creating the so-called "Donetsk people's republic," is completely marginalized and removed from any decision-making in the so-called "DPR."

The current social movement "Donetsk Republic" created by Denis Pushilin and Aleksey Muratov under the formal chairmanship of Aleksandr Zakharchenko until 2018, does not have the slightest continuity from the group of marginal radicals who made its name even before 2014.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

The current faction "Donetsk Republic," as well as the entire "parliament of the DPR," is not an independent decision-maker. As a rule, both factions of the "people's council" vote for the prepared decisions unanimously.

The "Donetsk Republic" is a ruling group with a rigid structure and administrative resources: all "public sector" employees are obliged to join the movement on pain of dismissal, the number of its formal members exceeded 200,000. The renewed "Donetsk Republic" is represented in the authorities of the so-called "DPR" at all levels and differs little from other departments and "authorities of the "DPR,"" receiving funding from general sources. About 1,400 officials work in the structures of "Donetsk Republic" in 37 regional offices.

Youth organizations, "people's druzhina" headed by the master of sports of international class of Ukraine in kickboxing, winner and medallist of the World and European championships in kickboxing and boxing Roman Troshin operate under social movement "Donetsk Republic." The youth wing is preparing a reserve for the bodies of the "ministry of internal affairs" and army units of the so-called "DPR."

Actions regarding the conflict

The creation in 2005 of the NGO "Donetsk Republic" is associated with the reaction of the top leadership of the Party of Regions to the victory of the Orange Revolution. Shadow leaders tried to copy the methods of the first Maidan and carried out latent anti-Ukrainian activities in Donetsk, to which the local official leadership of Donetsk region was not formally involved. In relation to the activities of some representatives of "Donetsk Republic," the regional department of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) initiated criminal cases, and also prohibited the activities of the organization itself. One of the founders of "Donetsk Republic" Aleksandr Tsurkan, before his death in 2008, accused the SBU of mercury poisoning. But the activities of "Donetsk Republic" generally did not find proper reaction from the law enforcement system and the political leadership of the region.

Editorial staff of "Donetsk Republic" publishes a weekly newspaper "Donetsk Republic" with a circulation of 100,000 copies. It regularly holds meetings of active members in the premises of Donbas Arena, at which the "prime minister" of the so-called "DPR" Aleksandr Ananchenko is obliged to speak since October 2019.

2.2. Faction "Free Donbas" (32 representatives)

Official position regarding the conflict

"Free Donbas" is the second permitted political group in the so-called "DPR" "parliament." It positions itself as a constructive opposition. Its declared objectives are to promote and establish the ideas of the "Russian World," including the reunification of a single civilizational space with the Russian Federation. The structure was originally created by Moscow for the tasks of the Novorossiia project in all regions of the South-East of Ukraine, but it has greatly outlived its original version. Now it has practically no influence on political processes within the so-called "DPR."

Interests and functions in the conflict region

After its creation, "Free Donbas" bloc united the NGOs and various groups in the so-called "DPR" advocating the secession of the entire South-East of the country from Ukraine in the form of the so-called Novorossiia. The organization, headed by Pavel Gubarev and Yekaterina Gubareva, was always considered in Kremlin as a backup alternative to the existing power group, an echo of the time when the Novorossiia project was relevant to Moscow. Since 2014, their movement has been associated with one of the rival Kremlin towers – with the public-private partnership of the Russian oligarch Konstantin Malofeev. The maximum influence of the Gubarev couple and their movement, respectively, reached the moment when Igor Strelkov (Girkin), a staff member of the FSB, was present in Donetsk as the "minister of defence" of the so-called "DPR."

But even after the latter returned to Russia, "Free Donbas" movement was quite influential and capable, a self-sustaining foundation of business projects was built around it that was supposed to finance the social movement, its leaders and a whole set of their own media – television, radio and a newspaper under the general brand of Novorossiia.

The leadership of "Free Donbas" and, accordingly, the "people of Malofeev" then

included key "minister" of the "government" of the so-called "DPR" – "minister of communications" Viktor Yatsenko. The latter controlled and profited from the confiscated assets of Ukrainian mobile operators (most of all Kyivstar and Life), as well as Ukrtelecom, creating a local mobile operator Phoenix. Yatsenko also organized a controlled Internet provision throughout the "republic." In general, it made it possible to accumulate a large amount of cash.

The stronghold of the "economic empire" of "Free Donbas" was also Semerochka supermarket chain. Having its own stable resources (in addition to funding to Moscow), the media and a small quota in the "people's council" (which allowed to employ officials of the movement as "members of council"), "Free Donbas" movement has long claimed the role of a junior partner of the authorities, a kind of "second ruling party" of the so-called "DPR."

Actions regarding the conflict

"Free Donbas" was created as a social movement in Donetsk in October 2014. In autumn 2018, in preparation for the "elections" of the head of the so-called "DPR" and the new composition of the "people's council," the leader of "Free Donbas" Pavel Gubarev was suddenly not allowed to register as a candidate for the post of "head" of the so-called "DPR" and an opponent to Denis Pushilin. As a result of systemic and massive pressure, Gubarev was forced to flee to Russia. When the lists of candidates for members of the "people's council" were approved, an alternative congress of "Free Donbas" was held under the control of Russian curators, which adopted its own list of the necessary candidates. During the congress of the organization, the wife of Pavel Gubarev, Ekaterina, was detained.

Since the end of 2018, "Free Donbas" has come under the full control of local curators, and since then, the lists of members of "people's council" from both social movements existing in the so-called "DPR" have been formed in the same offices.

In 2019, all media outlets under the Novorossiia brand were transferred to the "ministry of information" of the so-called "DPR" due to chronic wage arrears and under the pretext of inconsistency (salaries were paid in envelopes, without paying taxes). Now the TV project Novorossiia still exists as a channel with technical air without a single employed journalist. In autumn 2019, criminal cases were opened against the entire leadership of the "ministry of communications" of the so-called "DPR," and Viktor Yatsenko and his entire team did not return to Donetsk from another business trip to Moscow.

In the current power structure of the so-called "DPR," only Yekaterina Gubareva remains as a "member of council" who was able to stay free and keep a part of her business and influence only thanks to personal connections in Moscow, old merits and political resourcefulness.

"Free Donbas" faction no longer even has a piece of its own ambitions, the "people's council" almost always votes unanimously, the faction is engaged in team-wide routine work – it takes part in establishing relations with the Russian Federation, in particular, assistance is provided to the residents of the Certain areas of Donetsk oblast, NGCA, in obtaining Russian passports. Ekaterina Gubareva sometimes initiates "draft laws," mainly on improving the social standards in the so-called "DPR."

2.3. Vladimir Bidyovka, "speaker" of the "people's council" so-called "DPR"

Official position regarding the conflict

Vladimir Bidyovka was born in Makiivka in 1981. Since 2010, he was a member of Donetsk Regional Council from the Communist Party of Ukraine, and since 2012, a Member of Parliament of Ukraine of the 7th convocation. Currently, he is an Acting speaker of the "people's council."

Interests and functions in the conflict region

In the "people's council," he plays the role of a skilful "shepherd." He is one of the few qualified specialists in the "public service" of the so-called "DPR" with a clear, consistent political career within the Communist Party of Ukraine, experience in publishing a regional newspaper, conducting election campaigns, working in Donetsk Regional Council and the Verkhovna Rada.

Actions regarding the conflict

He held the posts of editor-in-chief of the newspaper Communist of Donbas, of the second secretary of Donetsk regional committee of the Communist Party, member of Donetsk Regional Council and Member of the Verkhovna Rada.

The faction of communists existed in the Verkhovna Rada until 24 July 2014, when, after presenting numerous facts of the participation of communists in separatist demonstrations in the eastern Ukraine, it was early disbanded. Until now, in the so-called "DPR," Vladimir Bidyovka is reproached for participating in the ATO voting, the appointment of Oleksandr Turchynov as the acting President, etc. In Ukraine, he is better known as the MP who voted for "dictatorship" laws on 16 January 2014. After the defeat of the Communist Party in Ukrainian parliamentary elections, Bidyovka moved to Donetsk and was first elected as a member of the "people's council" in November 2014. Re-elected in 2018, he was included in the EU sanctions list as "speaker" of the "people's council."

He was selected for the post of "speaker" as loyal, manageable and high-status person, the only ex-member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in this convocation.

2.4. Olga Makeeva, "deputy speaker" of the "people's council" of the so-called "DPR"

Official position regarding the conflict

Since 2014, she was Denis Pushilin's deputy in his position as "speaker" of the "people's council," in September-October 2018, during the struggle for the position of the "head" of the so-called "DPR," she acted as "chairperson" of the "DPR" "people's council." She is an experienced business lawyer, one of the creators of the legal framework of the so-called "DPR."

As of 2014m, she was a citizen of Ukraine, now she has a Russian passport.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

A good team-player, she always focused on Pushilin, opposed the "ministry of justice", played the role of a deputy without ambition to become the first one. She is an experienced expert who can produce on demand both a scandal and a necessary law.

Actions regarding the conflict

She did not openly participate in the events of spring-summer 2014, as worked at that moment as the Head of the Legal Department of DMS corporation of Andrey Alyosha, and was very balanced in managing the team. According to some reports, her husband took part in the hostilities on the side of the so-called "DPR" and was wounded, the house of the Makeev family was damaged by shelling, since it was located close to Donetsk airport.

She is one of the civilian qualified experts who joined the so-called "DPR" already at the stage of building of its "state structure." She publicly displays extremely harsh rhetoric. She often appears on local TV channels, performs representative functions, and is well known among the population.

2.5. Ekaterina Gubareva and Pavel Gubarev, social movement "Free Donbas"

Official position regarding the conflict

Until autumn 2018, the Gubarevs (wife and husband) held leadership positions in "Free Donbas" social movement, and from the first days of the protests in winter-spring 2014, they were actively involved in the events leading to the creation of the so-called "DPR." On 1 March 2014 at a rally in Donetsk, Pavel Gubarev was "elected" as the first "people's governor" of Donetsk region. He led the seizure of administrative buildings in the city, organized the Novorossiia party in summer of 2014. The latter set the goal of creating a new state on the basis of the southern and eastern regions of Ukraine and had solid sponsors in Moscow. Later in 2015, under A.Zakharchenko, he made an unsuccessful attempt to take control of the city of Yasnyuvata as the mayor. After that, his weight in the so-called "DPR" began to decline. Ekaterina is a member of the "people's council," the only real politician in the family.

As of 2014, they were citizens of Ukraine.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

Ekaterina Gubareva was able to fit into the power structure of the so-called "DPR" and the power structures in Moscow much better than her husband Pavel Gubarev, who remained in the memory of many as the "people's governor." During the raider seizure of the social movement "Free Donbas" under Pushilin, it was Ekaterina who was isolated from the world. The couple was able to build a closed self-sustaining circuit of business, media and social movement. E.Gubareva keeps chances of returning to Donetsk.

Actions regarding the conflict

Ekaterina Gubareva personally met Igor Girkin's group during the illegal crossing of the Russian-Ukrainian border, Pavel Gubarev was the face of the seizure of power and the regional administration building in 2014. It was for him that Strelkov changed the captured SBU officers. The family had rather deep connections in Moscow through the curators of Strelkov's mission – the affiliates of Konstantin Malofeev.

In 2018, during the "elections" of the "head" of the so-called "DPR" Denis Pushilin, Pavel Gubarev was supposed to run as an alternative candidate, and a political technologist from the Surkov pool was sent from Moscow to run Gubarev's campaigning. But Gubarev's unpredictability frightened the Kremlin curators so much that the Surkov political technologist flew to Rostov only by the moment when Gubarev's "Free Donbas" movement was completely defeated.

When it comes to returning to public politics, Ekaterina Gubareva who has good connections at the local level has much more changes for that compared to Pavel.

3. "GOVERNMENT" AND "MINISTRIES" OF THE SO-CALLED "DPR"

CJSC Vneshtorgservice (VTS) is a company registered in the so-called republic of South Ossetia controlled by the Kremlin. In March 2017, the VTS received control over all the seized large industrial assets in the territories of Certain regions of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, NGCA. By a special "decree" of the head of the so-called "DPR" Aleksandr Zakharchenko, the VTS was "temporarily" exempted from all tax and customs duties, except for the single social tax and income tax. Under the "head" of the so-called "DPR" Denis Pushilin, on 24 October 2018, the "government" of the so-called "DPR" and VTS signed an agreement on socio-economic partnership worth 150 million rubles a year, which were to be allocated "to schools, kindergartens and hospitals." The agreement was signed by "acting prime minister" of the so-called "DPR," adviser to the CEO of VTS Aleksandr Ananchenko and Vladimir Pashkov who combined the positions of the CEO of VTS and "vice prime minister" of the so-called "DPR."

Only in the so-called "DPR", VTS has such equipment and remnants in warehouses transferred under its management as Donetsk Metallurgical Plant (branch No. 1); Yenakieve Metallurgical Plant (Branch No. 2); Makiivka Metallurgical Plant (Branch No. 3); Yenakieve Koksokhimprom (Branch No. 4); Khartsyzsk pipe plant (branch No. 5); Yasynuvata coke chemical plant (branch No. 6); Makiivka coke plant (branch No. 7); Komsomolska Ore Administration (Branch No. 8); PJSC "Air Liquide." Since March 2017, the following enterprises in the so-called "LPR" have come under the control of the VTS: Krasnodonugol JV; Alchevsk Metallurgical Plant; associations "Sverdlovanthracite" and "Rovenkianthracite." In October 2018, after the assassination of Aleksandr Zakharchenko, Dokuchaevsk flux-dolomite plant was officially transferred under the control of VTS.

VTS is managed from the central office in Donetsk (the building of the former managing company of Rinat Akhmetov). It employs about 200 "white-collar" managers. The second centre of the company is the office in the city of Alchevsk.

After VTS leaders Pashkov and Ananchenko received control over the government of the so-called "DPR," they acquired actual control over Donetsk railway and the shipment of raw materials by third-party internal suppliers.

3.1. "Government" of the so-called "DPR" – "prime minister" Aleksandr Ananchenko

Official position regarding the conflict

The head of the so-called "DPR government" Aleksandr Ananchenko was born in 1966 in the town of Selidovo, Donetsk region. He graduated from Kharkiv Institute of Law. From June 1988 to July 1996, Ananchenko worked in the police, having risen to the rank of senior lieutenant, was an investigator, duty officer, senior operative officer of the Criminal Investigation Department of Selidovo City Department of Internal Affairs. He is known for his work in Kemerovo in the International Investment Company (MIKOM) of Mikhail Zhivilo (a native of the town of Selidovo), which was defeated by

Kremlin after the unsuccessful assassination attempt on the governor Aman Tuleyev in 2000. Later on, Ananchenko was noticed at work in the Ukrainian structures of one of Viktor Yanukovich's associates – businessman Eduard Prutnik. As an advisor in the VTS, he formally worked and continues to work in the structures of former Ukrainian oligarch Sergey Kurchenko. South Ossetia is considered the fiefdom of the FSB, and VTS company registered in Tskhinval with all its turnovers is by no means a personal project of Sergey Kurchenko.

Since autumn 2018, he became the first separate "prime minister" of the so-called "DPR." Before him, all economic and administrative positions were held by Zakharchenko personally and there was no independent working structure in the "government". He is an advisor to the Head of the South Ossetian company VTS, works as "prime minister" in conjunction with Vladimir Pashkov who is the CEO of VTS and the "deputy prime minister" of the so-called "DPR." These two persons control the entire large industry of both the so-called "DPR" and so-called "LPR" (Alchevsk Iron and Steel Works until 2017 provided 80% of customs revenues for the entire Luhansk region), while at the same time leading the "government" of only so-called "DPR," which created a completely unique management position.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

Олександр Ананченко послідовно змінює свою орієнтацію з 2018 по 2020 рік Aleksandr Ananchenko has consistently changed his orientation from 2018 to 2020 towards much greater involvement in the internal political processes of the so-called "DPR." Until autumn 2019, he preferred to be in the shadows, not shining in the media. Since autumn 2019, Aleksandr Ananchenko has been forced to participate in public events of the social movement "Donetsk Republic," speak to activists, and put forward his own "political" initiatives. For example, he is known for the proposal to change all the English-language signs remaining from Euro-2012 to Russian-language ones in Donetsk.

Ananchenko's main interests were to get complete control over the economic chains vital for VTS in the so-called "DPR," reduce production costs and maximize profit in the sales markets in Russia. In March 2017, Aleksandr Zakharchenko, in conjunction with Aleksandr Timofeev, left part of the energy mines confiscated from the former owners and, most importantly, the railroad and the flux-dolomite plant in Dokuchaevsk under the control of the so-called "DPR". This bunch of then-"DPR" leaders could independently establish inter alia the prices for transportation and limestone dolomites, necessary for metallurgy, and impose these prices on VTS. In 2017 in Donetsk, they spoke out loud about the trade war between VTS and the "Timofeev group of companies."

After the partial destruction of the Zakharchenko-Timofeev link and their group of companies, as well as the emergence of the so-called "DPR government" headed by the leadership of the VTS, these problems were removed, the flux-dolomite plant was transferred under the control of VTS, and everything else was administratively subordinate to the government.

Actions regarding the conflict

During the first year of its existence, Ananchenko's "government" focused on sustaining dynamic and maximum work of the industry under the auspices of VTS. By

order of the company's management, coal, flux-dolomites were shipped to VTS enterprises without payment, the railway provided cars and carried out transportation for free. By the summer of 2019, this practice caused the mines to lose all their working capital, wage arrears reached three to four months, which led to protests by miners. The scandal gained momentum and was covered in the Russian media.

In October 2019, after Surkov's intervention, a search began for a solution to the problems with non-payments. There is a trend towards a decrease in the influence of Sergey Kurchenko's structures on the "government" and personally on Ananchenko.

Underfunding of programmes related to the development of mines led these enterprises to bankruptcy. In the so-called "LPR," it is primarily the state enterprise "Vostokugol," and in Donetsk, the city-forming mines named after Skochinsky and named after Zasyadko are being prepared for closure.

"Government" leaders are focused on maintaining control over further redistribution of spheres of influence in the industrial sector of the so-called "DPR." In particular, these are nationalized enterprises previously owned by Rinat Akhmetov and Viktor Nusenkis: Donetskstal PJSC (now called Vneshtorgservice Branch No. 1), Yenakieve Metallurgical Plant PJSC (now called Vneshtorgservice Branch No. 2), as well as Yenakieve, Makiivka and Yasynuvata coke ovens, Khartsyzsk pipe plant, Dokuchaevsk flux-dolomite plant, Komsomolska Ore Administration (now called Vneshtorgservice Branch No. 8).

Now the only relatively working large assets are Yenakieve Metallurgical Plant and Alchevsk Metallurgical Plant. Donetsk metallurgical plant has been put on hold for two years, Donetsk electrometallurgical plant, for three years. With the shutdown of the two largest mines in Donetsk, there will be no city-forming enterprises operating. In this situation, maintaining social stability becomes the main problem for the leadership of the so-called "DPR."

3.2. Vladimir Pashkov, "vice prime minister" of the so-called "DPR"

Official position regarding the conflict

Vladimir Pashkov is a native of the city of Bratsk, Russia. Former vice-governor of Irkutsk region of the Russian Federation (2008 – 2014), after resignation he worked in the structures of Sergey Kurchenko. Since 2017, he is the CEO of CJSC Vneshtorgservice (VTS). Remaining the CEO of VTS, in spring 2019, he also became "vice prime minister" of the "DPR" government, gaining control over all suppliers of VTS enterprises, power plants and the railway.

Born in 1961, Russian citizen.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

Vladimir Pashkov is a typical "external person" who was in confrontation with the local authorities of the so-called "DPR," who – unlike the so-called "LPR" leadership – were able to defend both their own market of retail and wholesale trade in petroleum products from the claims of Sergey Kurchenko, and in 2017, control over the railway, extraction of flux-dolomites and part of profitable energy mines.

The appearance of an additional independent centre for economic management in the so-called "DPR" headed by Aleksandr Ananchenko after the assassination of Aleksandr Zakharchenko and the subsequent co-optation of VTS CEO Pashkov into the government in 2019 proved that the main beneficiaries of assassination of the ex-head of the so-called "DPR" there were structures behind VTS.

Interestingly, the structures of VTS and the "government" of the so-called "DPR" were not under the control of Vladislav Surkov, who came to Donetsk on purpose in autumn 2019 to make a blow to Ananchenko and Pashkov with a loud promise of resignation at a specially assembled meeting. The fact that Vladislav Surkov, and not the Ananchenko's government, eventually resigned after it, made an indelible impression on the local elite of the so-called "DPR."

Actions regarding the conflict

Vladimir Pashkov secured for VTS the access to the railroad and flux-dolomites, the shipment of raw materials to the seized metallurgical resources of VTS practically without payment, completely exhausting the local coal industry and the railroad in less than a year, which caused spontaneous protests of miners and railroad workers, local confrontations and letters from the committee of miners' wives addressed to the President of Russia Vladimir Putin.

In 2018, Pashkov signed an agreement on social support for the so-called "DPR" and partnership with his adviser and concurrently "prime minister" Aleksandr Ananchenko. In accordance with this agreement, or the use of assets worth many billions of dollars, VTS began to allocate a little less than \$2 million for social needs of the so-called "DPR" per year (150 million rubles).

Since 2019, after the resignation of Surkov and changes in the structure of owners and beneficiaries of flows to/from the so-called "DPR" (for example, according to some reports, control over the supply of oil products from Rostov-on-Don to Donetsk was transferred from Kurchenko's structures to those of Viktor Medvedchuk), Vladimir Pashkov changed his position, becoming a more accountable official to the local leadership in the person of Pushilin. VTS has lost a part of the drained yet still profitable assets in favour of SOEs (state-owned enterprises) controlled by the "head" of the so-called "DPR" Pushilin.

In addition, Pashkov decided to become another prominent member of the social movement "Donetsk Republic." He has a common press secretary (for VTS and the government affairs), but did not become more public, does not give interviews, does not make statements and does not invest in real estate and assets inside so-called "DPR."

By and large, loud underground strikes at the Nikanor-Novaya and Komsomolska mines in the so-called "LPR" is also something that VTS is to be blamed for, as it left coal enterprises with heavy wage arrears and doomed to be closed.

But in all these cases, Ananchenko and Pashkov are only technocrats who receive wages and bonuses and who fulfil external requirements. Perhaps, from the point of view of Moscow, they are good executives whose resignation is now non-expedient.

3.3. Vladimir Antonov, "vice prime minister" of the so-called "DPR"

Official position regarding the conflict

Vladimir Antonov, born in 1979, a Russian citizen, a very conspiratorial actor, obviously a professional FSB officer. In the government of the so-called "DPR," he is responsible for the social block. He occupies a unique independent position in the power structures of the so-called "DPR" as another "overseer" from Moscow. He has influence and close contacts with local structures of the "MGB", without mutual subordination.

Prior to his appointment to the post of "vice prime minister", he was the "minister in charge of the agricultural sector" of the so-called "DPR."

Interests and functions in the conflict region

Vladimir Antonov controls the Donetsk money flow – ruble transfers from Moscow – to maintain social stability, the payment of pensions and benefits, wages to public sector employees. He is unaccountable and mutually hostile to both the "head" of the so-called "DPR" Denis Pushilin and the Ananchenko-Pashkov team. He has his own circle of social "ministers" who cannot be removed without his consent. Interestingly, this circle of "Antonov's associates" includes the "minister of information" of the so-called "DPR" Igor Antipov, whose information resources often attack both the "head" and the "government" of the so-called "DPR" in the interests of Antonov.

The same Antipov, despite the precarious position, the hate from both Denis Pushilin and Elena Nikitina, manages to remain at his post for years under the protection of Vladimir Antonov.

Actions regarding the conflict

Vladimir Antonov is a real third force in the civilian management structure of the so-called "DPR" that carries on a daily painstaking administrative struggle with the other two, documenting the facts of corruption and abuse and promptly reporting them to Moscow.

The rest of the social block of the "government" is a kind of black hole. All budget expenditures, as well as the economic indicators in the so-called "DPR" are tightly guarded state secrets. Only detailed data on the population size, disaggregated by city, are open and are updated monthly by the so-called "DPR" statistical office. From time to time, figures of payments to pensioners for individual months with the number of these pensioners are published.

It is absolutely clear that the population size is artificially overestimated. For example, in cities such as Yasynuvata and Dokuchaevsk, which are under shelling, surrounded by the frontline and tormented by unemployment, according to the statistical office of the so-called "DPR," the current population greatly exceeds the pre-war level.

According to statistical offices of the so-called "DPR" and so-called "LPR," the aggregate population size is at the level of 3,7 million people. It is 1 million higher than UN estimates and 2 million higher than data of the Minister for the Temporarily Occu-

ped Territories of Ukraine Oleksii Reznikov.

From 1 to 14 October 2019, an impromptu first population census was held in the so-called "DPR," during which the curators from Moscow mainly tried to learn real figures on employment, self-employment of the population, the number of pensioners and other budget dependents. The census results were promised to be partially announced in the second quarter of 2020, but this did not happen.

The shadow capabilities of Vladimir Antonov are traditionally grossly underestimated.

3.4 Igor Antipov, "minister of information" of the so-called "DPR"

Official position regarding the conflict

Igor Antipov is one of the few experienced, qualified managers in the "government" of the so-called "DPR" with pre-war experience. For many years, he was the CEO of RIA Komsomolskaya Pravda, Donetsk subdivision of Ukrainian Media Holding, had personal connections with Boris Lozhkin, with whom he maintained close contacts until May 2014. He did not take any part in the events of the "Russian Spring." He managed the RIA Komsomolskaya Pravda until 8 December 2014. When the decision was made in Kyiv to shut down the office of Komsomolskaya Pravda in Donetsk, it was simultaneously opened from Moscow in a new capacity as the editorial office of Komsomolskaya Pravda. The newspaper began to be published as a special project of the Presidential Administration of the Russian Federation with additional external funding on a daily basis for the so-called "L/DPR," but without Antipov, who was unsuccessfully doing business in Donetsk. In late spring 2015, he accepted Elena Nikitina's offer and became "deputy minister of information" of the so-called "DPR."

After the lustration of members of the "people's council" and "ministries" from the relatives and people of Denis Pushilin and the resignation of Nikitina, arranged by Aleksandr Zakharchenko, in December 2015, Igor Antipov became a temporary compromise figure in the post of the "minister" and remains in this post until now.

Born in 1961, he was citizen of Ukraine as of 2014. Now he has a Russian passport.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

He is focused on doing business and self-survival. He consistently demonstrates and broadcasts his usefulness as a specialist, at the same time building an understandable vertical of production, retail and wholesale sales of paper media. He created a working system of censorship in the so-called "DPR" media, covering the territory with official projects of the so-called "DPR," projects of his business partners and satellites, and controls the work of the confiscated printing house of Donbas newspaper.

He participates in building a system for strict prevention of disloyal journalists from entering the territory of the so-called "DPR." With the arrival of Antipov, the number of Russian and foreign reporters receiving accreditation dropped dozens of times.

Having no visible merits to the so-called "DPR" in the heated period of 2014 – 2015, he tries to take an extremely conservative position, executing the commands of the next patron who would ensure his physical integrity.

Actions regarding the conflict

Igor Antipov has built 15 regional and city "official" newspapers of the so-called "DPR," which are created under the supervision and funding of the "ministry". In addition, the "ministry", through its central "editorial office" from Donetsk, makes one common "propaganda" page for all these newspapers.

It turns out to be a closed production cycle: the "ministry" finances newspapers, buys newsprint for them and prints all these in its own "state-owned enterprise" – a printing house that was seized from the owners. The "ministry" also controls the circulation, prices for printing, newsprint and all overhead costs, and receives external funding for it. Igor Antipov is a very experienced manager, and his competencies go beyond the level of understanding of local leadership represented by Nikitina.

In addition, the employees of the "ministry of information" keep Dontel – the most popular Telegram channel of the so-called "DPR" with 115,000 subscribers.

Antipov built the work of newspaper retail, filling it with clones of publications from Ukraine, issued under his partial or full control: Telegid, copies of Mariupol publications 7/7 and 7/Ya, Donetsk Vecherniy, the sports project Start, Donetsk edition of Soviet Sport, etc. Most of these publications are issued weekly.

Not a single printing house in Donetsk can accept any newspaper for printing without a separate special permission from the censor of the "ministry of information" of the so-called "DPR." For this, a special server has been created, where the technical departments of the printing houses unload the pages of newspapers before printing – in case of any doubt from the censor, any page is removed and re-printed. Any weekly publication always has day-long lag for possible correction of the censor's remarks, but over the years, everyone already understands what is prohibited and tries not to stop publication. There are cases when the strips were removed because of the quotation of the Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, who sometimes speaks to the "outside world" about the "conflict in Ukraine," which is ideologically unacceptable within the so-called "DPR."

It is difficult to overestimate Antipov's usefulness for the so-called "DPR," but Denis Pushilin's family and associates have been systematically working on his resignation for several years. The "minister" diligently manoeuvres between the sometimes mutually exclusive demands of Vladimir Antonov and Dmitry Chaika, endures the hostility of the "head" of the so-called "DPR" and quietly systematically every day earns money.

3.5. "Ministry of internal affairs" of the so-called "DPR" – "minister" Aleksey Dikiy

Official position regarding the conflict

Oleksiy Dikiy is a former official of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, in different years he held senior positions in Donetsk Department of Internal Affairs. In spring 2014, the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine Arsen Avakov appointed Dikiy to the post of the Head of the Department for Combating Organized Crime (UBOP) of Donetsk Regional Department of Internal Affairs of Ukraine. Immediately after this, Dikiy went over to the side of the so-called "DPR" and was appointed to the post of "deputy minister of internal affairs" of the so-called "DPR." Subsequently, Dikiy rose

to the rank of "minister". The "DPR ministry of internal affairs" is considered one of three "ministers" who are accountable and appointed directly by curators in Moscow, which explains Dikiy's survival from 2014 to 2020.

Born in 1974. As of 2014, he was a citizen of Ukraine. Has a Russian passport.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

Aleksey Dikiy had a long conflict with the former head of the so-called "DPR" Aleksandr Zakharchenko and the leadership of the "ministry of state security" of the so-called "DPR." In his position in the "ministry of internal affairs", Dikiy was able to build his personal for-profit business. In particular, one of these successful businesses is the legalization of stolen cars in Ukraine, since it is the "ministry of internal affairs" that controls the registration of cars and the issuance of license plates. The influence and role of the "ministry of internal affairs" also partly increased in connection with the beginning of the trade blockade by Ukraine and the establishment of control over smuggling.

Actions regarding the conflict

The main power resource of "minister" Dikiy is the local organized crime control department, with its own basement, where people are held in custody for months. After any arrest in the so-called "DPR," it is customary to first of all find out the initiator of the arrest – the organized crime control department of Aleksey Dikiy or the "MGB". Arrests of entrepreneurs are often within the remit of the organized crime control department. The main source of Dikiy's income is the proceeds from state racketeering when the "authorities" conduct checks of private companies and establish the amount of unofficial payments that they are requested to pay.

Dikiy was convicted in absentia by Ukrainian court and sentenced to 12 years in prison.

3.6. "Ministry of state security" ("MGB") of the so-called "DPR" – "minister" Vladimir Pavlenko

Official position regarding the conflict

Vladimir Pavlenko is former officer of the SBU, dismissed from service to the reserve even before the war. He is not a public person and spreads distracting, fake information about himself. There are sources that claim that Vladimir Pavlenko is from Moldova and had connections there that helped him in 2014. Specifically, Minister of State Security of the Transnistria Republic, Russian Lieutenant General Vladimir Antyufeev in 2014 was "vice prime minister" of the "government" of Aleksandr Borodai and oversaw the "state security bodies" of the so-called "DPR").

As of 2014, he was a citizen of Ukraine. Has a Russian passport.

"MGB" of the so-called "DPR" is a completely closed and independent body from local authorities, which is directly supervised by people from Moscow. There is information that the heads of the "MGB" are rotated every year under Russia's supervision, regular operative officers from the FSB come to Donetsk on business trips for three months. The head of the so-called "DPR" does not have the ability to influence

certain decisions of the "MGB" of the so-called "DPR," but can make requests. Denis Pushilin has better informal ties with the "MGB" leadership than his predecessor Aleksandr Zakharchenko.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

The "ministry of state security" of the so-called "DPR" actually runs the entire power block with the exception of the military vertical. It is engaged in checks of all former employees of Ukrainian law enforcement agencies for cooperation with Ukraine. There are cases of arrests and detentions of former members of the Security Service of Ukraine by the "ministry of state security", despite the immunity of international organizations for the presence on the territory of the so-called "DPR." There are also cases of confiscation of real estate of "disloyal" former SBU employees who remained faithful to the oath of office to Ukraine. The remaining real estate is one of the levers of the "MGB" for the employees of the prosecutor's office, the SBU and Ukrainian judges who left for the territory controlled by Ukrainian Government.

In addition to fighting the Ukrainian special services, informal and formal agents of the SBU, the "MGB" is actively fighting against citizens loyal to Ukraine, selectively arresting people in various groups for posts on social networks or verbal pro-Ukrainian statements, or simply statements disloyal to Russia, creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and fear in society. Such arrested persons are called "Twitterers" in prisons.

In the structure of the "MGB", there are two unofficial concentration camps – "Isolation" and the place where the arrested active military personnel are kept (located in the area of Bosse Street in the buildings of the former military-political school) and two own relatively "official" pre-trial detention centres (one is equipped in the basements under the building of the "MGB", the second chamber-type barrack is in the penal colony No. 97).

In 2014, the so-called "DPR" inherited 13 penal colonies of strict regime and Donetsk SIZO No 5. They housed about 9,000 inmates, along with staff. These institutions adhere to relatively legal procedures, and parcels can be transferred to the "MGB" pre-trial detention centre in colony No 97, as to the rest of the colonies and pre-trial detention centre No. 5. Depending on their behaviour during interrogations, the "MGB" prisoners be kept in "good" conditions in Donetsk pre-trial detention centre or a cell-type barrack of colony No. 97, or in other places of non-freedom where the conditions are much worse.

The MGB pre-trial detention centre in the basements of the "ministry" building and the "Isolation" concentration camp do not allow their inmates to receive parcels. Little is known about the concentration camp for the military servants on Bosse Street.

After all the reorganizations, the "MGB" retained in its structure a separate special forces regiment with artillery and tanks, prisoners of the "Isolation" concentration camp are involved in servicing equipment, loading and unloading ammunition.

Actions regarding the conflict

There is every reason to consider the "MGB" of the so-called "DPR" a branch of the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation. It is engaged in active identification and detention of citizens who cooperate with the Government of Ukraine, the so-called "spies and saboteurs." In agreement with the Russian Federation, it makes

decisions on the inclusion of persons in the exchange lists. The "ministry" of state security in the so-called "DPR" is also endowed with special separate functions to control the smuggling of cigarettes, drugs and illegal arms trafficking. People charged under these non-"political" charges make up to 30% of the "MGB" prison population.

In Donetsk and Debaltseve, two powerful factories for the production of counterfeit cigarettes continue to operate, this business is under the control of the "ministry of state security". Cigarette packs contain inscriptions on the dangers of smoking, including in Slovak, Czech and other Eastern European languages.

3.7. "Ministry of emergencies" of the so-called "DPR" – "minister" Aleksey Kostrubitsky

Official position regarding the conflict

Aleksey Kostrubitsky is one of the three unsinkable security "ministers" who retain his position in any change of power in the so-called "DPR." Kostrubitsky, a former officer of the Regional Department of the Ministry of Emergencies of Ukraine, remained to serve the so-called "DPR" and was present at all significant events, starting from the fall of the Malaysian "Boeing." He headed the "ministry of emergencies" under Aleksandr Borodaj, Aleksandr Zakharchenko and Denis Pushilin.

Born in 1978. As of 2014, he was a citizen of Ukraine. Has a Russian passport.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

Aleksey Kostrubitsky is a rare phenomenon of an irreplaceable power "minister" of the so-called "DPR" who is not being removed, simply because he has his own vertical going to Moscow and "local" authorities have no authority to remove him.

Kostrubitsky does not have a specialized education, he graduated from a military school of aviation technicians and in Donetsk region that has frequent underground accidents, explosions and fires, he was mainly engaged in the distribution of fuels and lubricants, he did not work directly as a rescuer. He became a senior official in the "ministry of emergencies" by chance, since his immediate leadership in 2014 left with the Head of Donetsk Regional State Administration Sergey Taruta to Mariupol.

He is known to be an efficient executive and an alcoholic, but he is extremely knowledgeable and confidently retains his post for the seventh consecutive year. Under Aleksandr Zakharchenko, a special forces detachment "Legion" was created in the "ministry of emergencies", and Kostrubitsky received from the then "head" of the so-called "DPR" the rank of lieutenant general. After the death of Zakharchenko, without question and a riot, the regiment was disbanded in a matter of days, the "minister" retained his rank, and the combat personnel were transferred to other units.

Under Aleksandr Zakharchenko, the "ministry of emergencies" was a kind of centre of the own political group of the head of the so-called "DPR."

The commander of the "Legion" Sergey Zavdoveev was the leader of the social movement "Oplot of Donbas" created under Zakharchenko. A group of Oplot members dominated in the "Donetsk Republic" faction and consisted mainly of former soldiers of Zakharchenko's personal security. In addition to a large number of various companies and battalions of "special forces," Zakharchenko also maintained a ful-

ly-fledged, influential special service in Donetsk – the "state security service" (GSO). After the assassination of Zakharchenko, the cleansing of all these overgrown political and military structures took place without protests, and in a matter of weeks. All "council members," "colonels" and "political leaders" quickly left Donetsk, prudently opting for obscurity in the vastness of greater Russia.

The entire local political and "military" system of the so-called "DPR" resembles a typical cargo-cult, which will not withstand real challenges without the Russian "exoskeleton."

Actions regarding the conflict

Kostrubitsky is known as a person who closely communicated with Zakharchenko and together participated in the seizure of property. It was a typical case when the "minister" at night during the celebration of his birthday in August 2017 saw a boat on the Kalmius river, and immediately ordered to take it to his dacha in Sedovo. The boat belonged to a Russian citizen who came on vacation and the case received great publicity, which did not affect the fate of the boat or further service of the "minister". The boat was not allowed to be taken away, the "minister" sobered up, the attitude towards him in Donetsk after that remained quite good-natured.

All of this gives the impression that Aleksey Kostrubitsky is much smarter than he seems, and the image of a broken-down "alcoholic lieutenant general" is just a good mask.

3.8. "Ministry of defence" of the so-called "DPR" / "people's militia" of the so-called "DPR" – "minister" Vladimir Kononov / "head of the people's militia department" of the so-called "DPR" Denis Sinenkov

Official position regarding the conflict

Prior to the disbanding of the "ministry of defence" of the so-called "DPR," Minister Vladimir Kononov himself represented a major centre of influence, since under Aleksandr Zakharchenko, separate companies and special forces regiments under "departments" and "ministries" with a total of up to 6,000 people operated under the control of local forces (salaries were allocated to 6,000 persons). After the disbandment of the "ministry of defence" and the removal of Kononov, which is directly related to the death of Zakharchenko, all separate units, except for the special forces of the "MGB", were disbanded and merged with regular units under the strict leadership of the Russians. Ukrainian military intelligence considers the 1st and 2nd army corps of the so-called "L/DPR" to be part of the structure of the 8th Guards Army of the Russian Federation with headquarters in Rostov-on-Don.

Kononov, as a military general who did not have not only specialized, but even general higher education, did not enjoy a good reputation among the Russian military and was transferred to command the military infantry school created under Zakharchenko. In 2020, the first cadets graduated from there, but in September 2019, it stopped recruiting cadets.

Local "military" authorities were transferred to the former commander of the so-

called "DPR" operational command, Denis Sinenkov, at the "people's militia" department. The 1st motorized rifle corps is commanded by the next military general sent from Russia, who always has the same nickname. Establishing cooperation with the next military general is one of the important tasks of each head of the so-called "DPR."

Interests and functions in the conflict region

It is planned that it is the "people's militia" that will further take a key position in matters of troop disengagement, restoration of control over the border and possible joint patrolling of the border with representatives of Ukraine. Its planned structure is unknown so far.

The structure of the military registration and enlistment offices remained under the local "military," partly the supply issues and the recruitment of personnel in the units, which until now was carried out on a contract basis. At the same time, a lot of work was done to register the entire combat-ready male population, due to the heavy shortage in the infantry, in the so-called "DPR," presumably in autumn 2020, an attempt is expected to introduce conscription. Since 2017, at least two one-day military training sessions have been held in Donetsk for the entire male population under the age of 50.

4. BENCH

4.1. Former "head of the security council" of the so-called "DPR" and commander of Vostok brigade Aleksandr Khodakovsky

Official position regarding the conflict

Aleksandr Khodakovsky, the leader of the social movement "Patriotic Forces of Donbas," as a former commander of the Vostok brigade retains influence on the units created from its fighters and commanders – the 11th Regiment of the 1st Army Corps of the so-called "DPR," a separate special combat company and other internal affairs units troops. His units are constantly fighting in the area of the city of Yasynuvata and he has a serious influence on this city.

Born in 1972. As of 2014, he was a citizen of Ukraine. Has a Russian passport.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

In 2015, he left the "people's council" and went into opposition to power. The social movement "Patriotic Forces of Donbas" created by him has never been officially registered in the so-called "DPR" and has never been integrated into the power vertical of the "republic." Nevertheless, he has support in Moscow in the circles of oligarchs close to the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC), which was enough to prevent his direct assassination in Donetsk.

Khodakovsky graduated from the history faculty of Donetsk National University (he learned distantly), he writes and publicly speaks a lot, and sincerely believes in the existence of a special "people of Donbas" and their special interests, which must be defended not only in the armed struggle with Kyiv, but also in negotiations with Moscow. By and large, for this reason, at one time he lost the casting for the place of the head of the so-called "DPR" to Aleksandr Zakharchenko who was free from such ideas.

A. Khodakovsky is disciplined in a military manner, he understands when somebody forbids him to do something, and when he was banned from entering Donetsk or speaking publicly, he strictly followed these bans. He did not create problems for the Kremlin curators during both waves of elections to the "people's council" and the post of head of the so-called "DPR."

He promotes the idea of reconciliation with Ukraine in the form of building a "concrete wall" on the contact line for 20 years and only then, after cooling down mutual hatred, in his opinion, it is necessary to start negotiations "like they did in Transnistria."

He remains the first number as a candidate for rotation as the "head" of the so-called "DPR." Nevertheless, he is unlikely to ever be elected as such either by Moscow or in any "free" elections.

Actions regarding the conflict

As of 2014, Khodakovsky was the acting commander of detachment "Alpha" of Donetsk Regional Department of the SBU, participated in the suppression of the Euromaidan protests in Kyiv, is proud that he stormed the House of Trade Unions in Kyiv. At the same time, he did not enjoy a good reputation in "Alpha," not a single colleague of him went to fight for the so-called "DPR." The first composition of the Vostok battalion was formed with the abundant participation of the Ossetians and the tacit financial participation of Rinat Akhmetov. At the initial stage, Khodakovsky, as well as Aleksandr Zakharchenko and Oplot, collaborated with former "owners" of Donetsk in matters of "maintaining public order" and protecting their property in the city until the entrance of Igor Strelkov's "brigade" in Donetsk.

On the other hand, Aleksandr Khodakovsky is suspected of having shot by "friendly fire" of the Iskra FSB detachment on 26 May 2014 due to inconsistencies during the departure from Donetsk airport.

He publicly recognized the seizure of property by his transport division in Donetsk car dealerships, construction equipment for digging trenches, a network of gasoline filling and refuelling his own equipment at the same time. He continues to promote the idea of the necessity and justification of confiscation of equipment and property of business people who fled from Donetsk, with their property being stored at various sites in the so-called "DPR."

During the fighting in 2014, he created a brigade in which, according to him, up to 4,000 fighters fought. He has a certain influence on his former subordinates, maintains the website of his movement, a Telegram channel with almost 6,000 subscribers, tried to create his own Internet TV channel "Dialogue." His affiliates in Donetsk include the well-known Russian journalist Andrey Babitsky, he maintains relations with Marina Akhmedova and other Russian liberals who have become very "patriotic" after the annexation of Crimea and part of Donbas.

At the same time, the movement "Patriotic Forces of Donbas" does not exist as a harmonious and organized political structure.

4.2. Viktor Yatsenko, "ex-minister of communications" of the so-called "DPR"

Official position regarding the conflict

Viktor Yatsenko is the "minister of communications" of the so-called "DPR" from October 2014 to October 2019, a member of the leadership of the social movement "Free Donbas."

Interests and functions in the conflict region

He is a staunch supporter of the existence of the Russian Empire in any form, a native of Kherson, educated in Moscow. In 2015, he received an award pistol TT for organizing the mobile operator Phoenix of the so-called "DPR" based on the seized equipment of Kyivstar. When Phoenix was launched, Ericsson's software was hacked. Later on, another mobile operator Lugakom in the so-called "LPR" was established based on "Donetsk software."

With a very archaic self-awareness and perception of historical processes, Viktor Yatsenko was the most technically advanced and progressive "minister" in the so-called "DPR." The "ministry of communications" was the only one in the so-called "DPR," where electronic document flow was introduced from the very beginning. He stood out very clearly for his intellect against the background of the local Donetsk managers of the so-called "DPR" of the first draft.

As of 2014, he was a citizen of Ukraine. Now he has a Russian passport.

Actions regarding the conflict

In 2014, he left Kherson for Kyiv to participate in Anti-Maidan protests; since May 2014, he provided communications as part of Igor Strelkov's units in Sloviansk. Since October 2014, he was the "minister of communications" of the so-called "DPR." He supervised the confiscation of the equipment of Ukrainian mobile operators Kyivstar and lifecell, partially retaining the work of Ukrainian operator Vodafone. He was able to organize the functioning, repair, hacking and reprogramming of the network for the so-called "DPR"-own operator Phoenix in the conditions of external sanctions and technological blockade. He ensured the operation of equipment for relaying radio and television signals, distributing frequencies for the emerging network of "DPR"-own public-private radio stations. To prevent damage to equipment, he organized a preventive seizure of the building of Ukrtelecom CJSC in Donetsk in March 2017 before the seizure of large factories and production facilities. He was able to ensure the functioning of the Internet in the so-called "DPR" and the operation of wire telephony.

After the Debaltseve offensive, he received the rank of colonel and Makarov award pistol for special services in ensuring communications.

He became famous for the operation of attracting a mass client to the mobile operator Phoenix, when due to an "accident" he turned off Ukrainian Vodafone mobile operator on the territory of the so-called "DPR" for two months.

He has always been in relative opposition to the current head of the so-called "DPR," focusing on his own connections and affiliations in Moscow through the movement "Free Donbas" and the structures of Konstantin Malofeev. He also opposed the new administrative framework that developed after the death of Zakharchenko with a relatively independent government of the so-called "DPR." According to at least two sources, Yatsenko's personal disaster in autumn 2019 is associated with a trip as part of a Russian delegation to an exhibition in Syria in September 2019. There, the products of the "high-tech industry" of the so-called "DPR" did not meet the declared characteristics. Upon returning from Syria to Moscow, he never returned to Donetsk. In the criminal cases opened in Donetsk, there are accusations about the withdrawal of up to 2 million rubles a week from Phoenix proceeds for his own needs. After his resignation, the entire leadership of the "ministry of communications" fled from Donetsk. Criminal cases in such incidents are a perfect proof that overly influential rivals will not return to the territory of the so-called "DPR."

If Moscow replaces the existing so-called "DPR" management vertical, Viktor Yatsenko is one of the brightest non-standard characters from the pool of contenders for the post of local "prime minister".

4.3. Ivan Prikhodko, Gorlovka administrator

Official position regarding the conflict

A popular business executive from Donetsk who did not take part in any hostilities. In 2014, he headed one of the most shelled Kuibyshevskyi district of Donetsk. He was able to stand out, gain popularity and be appointed the "mayor" of Gorlovka, the third largest city in the so-called "DPR."

Born in 1970. As of 2014, he was a citizen of Ukraine. Has a Russian passport.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

On the territory of the self-proclaimed "republics," all the elected local authorities and their leaders were purposefully expelled, not a single legally elected Mayor of the city retained his or her post. Ivan Prikhodko, in comparison with the rest of the administrators called upon by the so-called "DPR" to manage the cities, looks like a person who not only manages the city, but also builds his political career. At the same time, Prikhodko is alive and has never been arrested in his post, which is a serious "achievement" in the so-called "DPR."

Gorlovka is a city on the outskirts of which battles have been constantly ongoing since 2014, the contact line has divided almost its suburbs into parts, like the village of Zaitseve. All these years, Prikhodko habitually demonstrates, in addition to the skills of a business executive, personal courage, attracts the attention and interest of journalists and was able to gain a foothold as a regular guest on Russian federal television channels. He is especially a frequent guest of the talk show of Skabeeva and Popov at Russia-1 TV channel. In addition, he personally runs his own Telegram channel, which has more than 7,000 subscribers – this is quite a lot in the so-called "DPR."

At the same time, Prikhodko is a part of the pre-war system of power of the Party of Regions, with which the Donetsk business and administrative diaspora, who have left for Moscow, are in contact. Humanitarian and other aid goes to Gorlovka along these contacts. There is information that Prikhodko maintains informal ties with other Gorlovka natives who live in Kyiv. The latter characterize him and Granovsky as apolitical local administrators who will adjust to any flag overhead.

Prikhodko has the image of a person who believes that elections can be held in the territory not controlled by Ukraine with a fair vote count. He is constantly preparing for this, which automatically makes him an enemy of the current "head" of the so-called "DPR" Denis Pushilin.

Actions regarding the conflict

He never took part in the hostilities. Publicly, he demonstrates hatred towards Kyiv and pro-Russian focus. He is building his own small personal fortress in Gorlovka. He is probably the only of the city administrators who pay for personal security, he maintains ties with the command of local military units, Russian journalists, and Donetsk diaspora in Moscow.

He can restrict movement in and around Gorlovka by installing checkpoints for "security reasons."

He turned into a political figure and an obvious potential problem even under Zakharchenko, but he manages to manoeuvre between the curators and keep the hope for better times.

4.4. Aleksey Granovsky, former "vice prime minister", former "minister of industry" and former mayor of Debaltseve

Official position regarding the conflict

Granovsky is another civilian administrator of the so-called "DPR" who managed to survive the promotion in 2014, a long imprisonment in a pre-trial detention centre, return to the administration of the "republic" and again go into exile – as an adviser, awaiting a new appointment.

In May 2014, he entered the power structure of the so-called "DPR" as a representative of the Party of Regions.

Born in 1973. As of 2014, he was a citizen of Ukraine. Has a Russian passport.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

Granovsky, by virtue of his activities in 2014, developed economic ties with Ukrainian enterprises as the "minister" and "vice prime minister for fuel and energy" who was looking for the sale of mined coal. As the "minister of industry and trade" of the so-called "DPR," he became widely known for creating the appearance of a "revival" of Donbas industry. A typical example of the activity of "minister" Granovsky was the organization of tram production in Donetsk, the result of which was the repair of one old Czech tram of the Tatra company. The only "Donetsk tram" is still being repaired, and they keep trying to put in into operation.

Numerous initiatives of the "minister" were actively highlighted by the media, and Granovsky automatically became a well-known media character in the so-called "DPR."

Actions regarding the conflict

On 16 May 2014, the head of the office of the city organization of the Party of Regions, Aleksey Granovsky, was co-opted into the so-called "DPR" government of Borodai as a representative of local officials (Rinat Akhmetov).

After Akhmetov discovered that Donetsk protest allegedly controlled by him completely overflowed the banks, he tried to counter it by announcing the Operation Beep – he called on everyone to hum in cars and factories, to go to a rally of metallurgists of the plants in Mariupol, and gave a command to his henchmen in the "authorities" of the so-called "DPR" to publicly speak out against swindlers from the "Donetsk Republic." It was undoubtedly a demarche of the richest Ukrainian against the curators of the project from Moscow. Granovsky was one of such disciplined managers – he did not use the word "swindlers," but publicly announced his possible resignation after talking with Denis Pushilin in protest against the planned nationalization of large enterprises in the region, mainly Akhmetov's.

He still remained the "minister of fuel and energy". In the resulting chaos, he organ-

ized the functioning of the technological chains that had developed in the region, but he was nevertheless arrested for "exceeding his authority" in November 2014.

Yevgeny Fainitsky, who replaced him at the post, was Sergey Kurchenko's protégé. Fainitsky was arrested in April 2015, and he died in prison under torture, and Granovsky only served more than six months in a pre-trial detention centre, and even then his entourage demonstrated their ability to work in modern conditions – a large group "We believe in Granovsky" and a public campaign for his release was initiated in social networks.

After the release of Granovsky, he was immediately taken to Rostov-on-Don, from where, after health rehabilitation, he was able to return to the so-called "DPR" a year later, in October 2015, as the appointed administrator of Debaltseve.

There, he was able to prove himself, leave the city in the hands of his protégé and get the position of the "minister of industry and trade" of the so-called "DPR." All these ups and downs took place under one person – Aleksandr Zakharchenko – and included the preparation for the confiscation and "taking under state control" of all large industry enterprises on the territory of the so-called "DPR."

Under Pushilin, Granovsky, like most of the prominent figures of the "former regime," was transferred to "advisers" and keeps awaiting the next appointment from Moscow, demonstrating his loyalty, controllability and ability to survive in any conditions. He is seriously engaged in motor sports.

4.5. Vladislav Latyntsev, head of the Voroshilovskiy District of Donetsk

Official position regarding the conflict

Vladislav Latyntsev is the only Ukrainian administrator of a serious level to remain at his post in the so-called "DPR." The head of the Voroshilovskiy District Council of the city of Donetsk became simply the head of centrally-located Voroshilovskiy district in the city and retained this position with three changed heads of the so-called "DPR." It is a completely unique achievement.

Born in 1981. As of 2014, he was a citizen of Ukraine. Has a Russian passport.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

He is loyal to the so-called "DPR," to Russia and to everything they say, just as before 2014 he was distinguished by absolute loyalty to the Mayor of Donetsk, Aleksandr Lukyanchenko. He is the secretary of the regional organization of the social movement "Donetsk Republic" and is very active in this capacity.

Actions regarding the conflict

This district of the city hosts all the "governing bodies" of the so-called "DPR." Latyntsev's work is always visible and he diligently builds his activities in contrast to Ivan Prikhodko: he doesn't have a driver or a bodyguard, works publicly, but at the same time shows loyalty to the local "authorities" at his level – in social movement "Donetsk Republic" as a secretary of only a district organization. When in 2016 in the so-called "DPR" they staged a demonstrative rehearsal of local elections, calling

them "primaries," he was artificially given the highest support (92%) as a potential city "council member" from his district.

He is a part of the personnel reserve of the so-called "DPR" for elections – he did not take part in the hostilities, he is civilian, he was elected to office before 2014, he is a native of Donetsk.

4.6. Boris Litvinov, First Secretary of the Communist Party of the so-called "DPR"

Official position regarding the conflict

He was a "speaker" of the "people's council" of the so-called "DPR" from July to October 2014, since October 2014, he has been the Head of the Communist Party of the so-called "DPR." One of the authors of the so-called "DPR" declaration of sovereignty, organizer of the 11 May 2014 referendum.

Born in 1954. As of 2014, he was a citizen of Ukraine.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

He tried unsuccessfully to integrate the communists into the power vertical of the so-called "DPR," relying on the merits of 2014, availability of a real organization and the support from Moscow's curators of the so-called "Red Line" to help the so-called "DPR," in particular from Kazbek Taisayev, a State Duma member from the Communist Party of the Russian Federation.

Actions regarding the conflict

In 2014, only the communists among the marginal organizations united around the "Russian Spring" possessed a large network of trained people to work in election commissions, and without their help, it would have been impossible to organize at least something that could look like a "referendum on the independence" of the so-called "DPR." In the wake of the "success" of the "referendum", he headed the "people's council" and was able in October 2014 to take advantage of a rare window of opportunity: in that mess, he registered the local Communist Party of the so-called "DPR" and received documents for the first and last party in the history of the self-proclaimed "republic." Later, the curators invented a system with two legalized "social movements," within the framework of which any political life in the so-called "DPR" was to be conducted. The registration of the communists was not recognized and they were offered a quota of three places within the framework of the social movement "Donetsk Republic."

Litvinov was expelled from the "people's council" in 2016, along with another Communist party member (the third member from the Communist Party of the so-called "DPR" had died in battle by that time) for "loss of trust" because they allegedly continued their own "political activities." The communists were expelled personally by the speaker and the head of the executive committee of the social movement "Donetsk Republic" Denis Pushilin.

Nevertheless, with the support of Kazbek Taisayev, the communists continued to exist, hold their own events, and Litvinov, until the death of Zakharchenko, had his own personal office in the "government house".

Under the head of the so-called "DPR" Denis Pushilin, the communists are finally deprived of all privileges, but they continue to work in the hope for a change of political situation and holding any relatively free elections in the future. Litvinov was last seen in Donetsk at the Victory Parade on 24 June 2020.

4.7. Anatoly Khmelevoy, First Secretary of Sloviansk city committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine, head of the transport workers' union of the so-called "DPR"

Official position regarding the conflict

Anatoly Khmelevoy was a Member of Parliament of Ukraine of several convocations from the Communist Party of Ukraine, headed the city organization of communists in the city of Sloviansk when Igor Girkin's group arrived there, refused the post of "people's mayor," but otherwise ensured the legitimization of the invaders inside the city and went with them to Donetsk. In the so-called "DPR," he is engaged in trade union activities, one of the inspirers of the creation of the organization of militias "Slavic Brotherhood" from Strelkov's fighters who left Sloviansk, Kramatorsk, Kostiantynivka and other Ukrainian cities and remained in the so-called "DPR."

Born in 1952. As of 2014, he was a citizen of Ukraine.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

He fought for the legitimization of the communists within the so-called "DPR," tried to organize a trade union of transport workers, organized (but did not lead) the "Slavic Brotherhood" union from the veterans of Girkin's unit expelled from the cities that they invaded.

Since the time of Zakharchenko, fighters from Strelkov's detachment have not been allowed into the "governing bodies" of the so-called "DPR" and are severely limited in their social and political activity. A significant part of active veterans of Sloviansk battles, especially of the "officers," were expelled from the army of the so-called "DPR," but Strelkov's fighters from among the citizens of Ukraine still form the backbone of two brigades – "Slavyanskaya" and the 7th brigade deployed in Debaltseve.

Anatoly Khmelevoy has become a point of gathering of these people around himself.

Actions regarding the conflict

He showed himself as an ideological fighter against post-Maidan Ukraine during the siege of Sloviansk. At the same time, he finds himself in an interesting collision: he is officially a pensioner registered at his home in the city of Sloviansk in the territory controlled by Ukraine. As he is not a displaced person, he does not have to confirm his place of residence with the social security authorities. Therefore, Anatoly Khmelevoy continues to additionally receive his extremely high for the so-called "DPR" pension of the MP of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and has the financial ability to provide assistance to the families of veterans of Sloviansk fights who have found themselves in difficult circumstances. All of these veterans went through difficult life circumstances, since with their registration in the "occupied by Ukraine territories of the "DPR" they were automatically considered potential saboteurs, they were not hired without a "DPR" registration, they could not get an address certificate and,

accordingly, any relatively legal documents in the so-called "DPR" in the territory with a permanent "martial law" and for many years found themselves in an illegal situation.

It was possible to find a dormitory that – according to Zakharchenko's decree – would issue address certificates to these persons – was only possible in 2018, but the problem was being solved even in 2019. Anatoly Khmelevoy was actively involved in social rehabilitation of families of migrants from cities and towns in the north of Donetsk region.

Partly because of this discrimination and the lack of housing, the veterans of Sloviansk fights from Druzhkivka, Sloviansk, Kramatorsk, Kostiantynivka, Mykolaivka and other Ukrainian cities remain a separate cohesive caste in the armed formations of the so-called "DPR," and Khmelevoy's informal influence on this armed group cannot be overstated.

4.8. Dmitry Trapeznikov, Mayor of Elista (Russia), "ex-acting head" of the so-called "DPR;" "ex-first deputy head" of the so-called "DPR" and simultaneously "ex-first deputy head of the council of ministers" of the so-called "DPR"

Official position regarding the conflict

At the last stage of Aleksandr Zakharchenko's life, Dmitry Trapeznikov was able to gain incredible weight in the "administration": he was Zakharchenko's "first deputy" both in the "government" and in the "administration of the head" of the so-called "DPR" at the same time. That automatically made him to become the "acting head" of the so-called "DPR" on the day of Zakharchenko's death, and he performed this function for one week. Now Trapeznikov is the Mayor of Elista (Russia) and Vladislav Surkov, in congratulating him on the appointment, proudly called him a representative of "our Donetsk cadres."

Born in 1981. As of 2014, he was a citizen of Ukraine. Has a Russian passport.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

Trapeznikov has never been a staunch ideological supporter of the so-called "DPR;" he always chose the priority of a career and personal financial success at any cost under any system, time and leadership.

Before the war, Dmitry was an official in the administration of Petrovskiy district at the outskirts of the city of Donetsk, became a proxy of the Member of Parliament Yurii Chertkov, whom the opponents considered a criminal leader and the executor of contract killings nicknamed Devil.

In the so-called "DPR," Trapeznikov was more often suspected of having links with Rinat Akhmetov, since at the dawn of his career as a student, he was the head of the Football Club Shakhtar fan movement. But these assumptions are untenable: Trapeznikov was kicked out of Shakhtar fan movement for flagrant financial and other violations, and then he was only 21 years old.

In the leadership of the so-called "DPR" overcrowded with war "heroes" and people with poor education background, Trapeznikov occupied the niche of the despised

bureaucrat and was able, in the shadow of Aleksandr Zakharchenko, to make the maximum possible career in his case. But the lack of charisma, reputation and necessary connections in Moscow did not give him the opportunity to hold on to the position of "acting head" of the so-called "DPR" for more than a week.

Actions regarding the conflict

Trapeznikov looks modest and non-heroic even compared to Denis Pushilin. In 2014, he did not take an active part in the "Russian Spring." As an official of Petrovskiy District Council, he helped organize distribution of humanitarian aid for the population from the Rinat Akhmetov Foundation.

In the administration of Zakharchenko, he organized paperwork and, using his construction education background, he skilfully negotiated contracts for the restoration of the destroyed city with construction companies affiliated with him.

He was desperate for power, his competitor and immediate superior was another "Akhmetov's associate," head of the "administration of the head" of the so-called "DPR" Maksim Leshchenko. Zakharchenko constantly provoked clashes between his "civilian" managers and, having got Trapeznikov drunk, invited him to deal with his manager "like a man." Trapeznikov went to Leshchenko's house, took out a pistol and, poorly managing a weapon, accidentally shot the latter in the thigh. Leshchenko was treated for a long time and never returned to the leadership of the so-called "DPR," and Dmitry Trapeznikov's career skyrocketed from the moment of this shot in May 2016 – it was he who became the new "head of administration" of the head of the so-called "DPR."

By the summer of 2018, his influence was absolute. Without Trapeznikov's signature, not a single document either in the "administration" or in the "government" could be passed, he was able to block access to Zakharchenko even to the all-powerful "minister of taxes and duties" of the so-called "DPR" Aleksandr Timofeev. He often slowed down management processes as he had no time to sign urgent papers.

His reputation among the mid-level bureaucrats of the so-called "DPR" was legendary, but outside the "house of government," Trapeznikov was little known. He did not manage to develop any connections in Moscow, as he had no serious military or civil achievements. Therefore, he decisively lost the competition to Pushilin and learned about his defeat during convulsive negotiations in Moscow. He was immediately blocked from entering the so-called "DPR." He was not able to take his family out of Donetsk personally, they departed with great difficulty and a minimum of personal belongings.

In Elista, Trapeznikov was met with great protests, but now, a year after his appointment, he was able to demonstrate to the capital of Kalmykia his skills of an economic manager and a construction specialist. Since he did not actually fail, this can probably help him to return to his native Donetsk, if, of course, Surkov's people will still decide everything there from Moscow.

4.9. Aleksandr Timofeev, former "minister of taxes and duties", former "vice prime minister" of the so-called "DPR" (nickname Tashkent)

Official position regarding the conflict

Under the head of the so-called "DPR" Aleksandr Zakharchenko, Tashkent held the unique position of a 'personal wallet,' a tax officer looking over all common business, a person who accumulated financial flows, which made it possible to maintain a "parallel" army of almost 6,000 fighters, the Oplot TV channel and the emerging political party "Oplot of Donbas." On top of that, he was also a "vice prime minister" and a "minister". Now he lives in Moscow and retains influence on part of his business in Donetsk.

Born in 1971. As of 2014, he was a citizen of Ukraine. Has a Russian passport.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

Before the war, Aleksandr Timofeev was just another mid-level businessman (he kept a television cable network in several districts of Donetsk) who, together with his friend Zakharchenko, made a dizzying promotion, led the robbery of the richest region of Ukraine, and as a result, it was Timofeev who was able to survive and save himself in this catastrophic avalanche-like process.

Timofeev is an extremely informed witness who is still alive.

Actions regarding the conflict

On 6 April 2014, the previously unknown Donetsk branch of Kharkiv organization Oplot seized Donetsk City Council and, through Aleksandr Zakharchenko, called on the Council members to keep working and requesting the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to adopt the draft law on local referendum initiated by the Party of Regions. This was the first appearance on television of a previously unknown chicken merchant. In the spring of 2014, the Donetsk branch of Oplot worked upon the instruction of the "owners" of the region to prevent the seizure of the City Council by uncontrolled pro-Russian forces already entrenched in the Regional Council.

The person nicknamed Tashkent was the one who took under protection the reception office of the Mayor of Donetsk Aleksandr Lukyanenko. Subsequently, Oplot also did not allow a crowd of pro-Russian outcasts to storm the residence of Rinat Akhmetov in the Botanical Garden. The "backfire" tactic, when the units of the Vostok battalions of Khodakovsky and Zakharchenko's Oplot had to gradually take the situation in the city under control and normalize it, broke down only on 5 July 2014. Then the units of the Ukrainian army "let" a column of up to 4,000 soldiers of Igor Strelkov on a 120-kilometer march from Sloviansk to Donetsk. As it turned out, Zakharchenko and Khodakovsky lacked proper control over their units, ordinary soldiers of Oplot and Vostok, who had watched enough TV, virtually prayed for Strelkov, and he triumphantly took Donetsk. Since then, Moscow has gained undivided control over the "capital" of the region.

Since August 2014, especially after the deployment of regular Russian units into the

territory of Donbas and the defeat of Ukrainian army near Ilovaisk, the high-profile citizens of Russia began to leave the leadership of the so-called "DPR." Aleksandr Timofeev, under the wing of Zakharchenko, got the opportunity to build first a primitive taxation system, and then more and more harmonious and understandable. In addition to hiring staff, the "ministry of taxes and duties" of the so-called "DPR" immediately formed its own separate special forces. Aleksandr Timofeev financed the creation of his own TV channel on the basis of the seized equipment of Channel 12 in Donetsk, allocated money for theatres, built a system for the supply of meat, food, medicines and oil products – he effectively monopolized these three critical areas. In the so-called "DPR," all markets, funeral businesses and hotels were quickly nationalized, and over time, unified "state enterprises" that collected cash were set up.

Timofeev undoubtedly retained ties with the Donetsk diasporas both in Kyiv and in Moscow and with the former "owners" of the region, but his friends tempted by the power lost control over themselves and made a lot of enemies during this period. That's how Timofeev seized the building of the DMS corporation of Andrey Alyosha, a person close to Aleksandr Yanukovych and Yurii Ivaniushchenko that was equipped before the war with special access gateways like in high-security prisons. He used this building for his personal office and equipping it with bulletproof walls and glass. A list of seized businesses in Donetsk is extremely long.

At the same time, Zakharchenko and Timofeev waged a fierce war against the aspirations of former Ukrainian oligarch Sergey Kurchenko, controlling the profitability of "his" company VTS with the help of tariffs for transportation and raw materials. Under them, Kurchenko could not enter the gasoline market in the so-called "DPR," all the time there were problems with collecting money for the consumed Russian gas, which was supplied through Kurchenko's "intermediary" company. In Donetsk, against the background of martial law and a ban on any rallies, public sector employees were suddenly gathered by order for a demonstration in the centre, where they were suddenly obliged to protest "against the Ukrainian oligarchs" in the person of Kurchenko.

Timofeev remained omnipotent and his last action was an attempt to declare Zakharchenko's widow his successor after Zakharchenko was assassinated. To this end, shell-shocked and splintered by the explosion in the Separ cafe, he began to carry her in a black scarf and camouflage to military positions like the heroic widow of Zakharchenko with wide coverage in the local media. But Kremlin already had a different scenario for the so-called "DPR."

Many criminal cases were promptly opened against Timofeev, they were pushed out of Donetsk to Russia, but they still continue to collect money from his network of wholesale alcohol stores in Donetsk. Aleksandr Timofeev retained a small part of his economic influence in the so-called "DPR," as well as mortal enemies on both sides of the contact line.

4.10. Aleksandr Bobkov, former Member of Parliament of Ukraine, the company commander of the Pyatnashki international brigade, a businessman from the 1990s who keeps claiming for the post of the "head" of the so-called "DPR"

Official position regarding the conflict

Aleksandr Bobkov is called a former crime boss and a person who managed the processes related to seized real estate and property in Donetsk. He portrayed himself as a person with military background, and media call him the company commander of Pyatnashki international brigade, created in 2014 by immigrants from Abkhazia.

Bobkov was born in Donetsk in 1960. He graduated from technical school, majoring in equipment of coke plants. He was actively involved in sports, was familiar with the athletes who led organized criminal groups in the 1990s. He served in the Soviet Army in the airborne troops, trained soldiers for the Soviet contingent in Afghanistan. Since 2010, he worked as the director of the Horlivka Coke Chemical Plant.

As of 2014, he was a citizen of Ukraine. Has a Russian passport.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

Aleksandr Bobkov began his career as a freight forwarder in the grocery market in Budenovskiy district of Donetsk, and has advanced due to his physical strength and courage. In 2006, he publicly promised journalists to bring his athletes fighters to the party conference of the Party of Regions, which was supposed to nominate the Mayor of Donetsk. Bobkov was sure that for his courage shown after the victory of the Orange Revolution in 2005 (he did not then flee from Donetsk abroad like many others), he should become the Mayor of Donetsk. His seniors – Boris Kolesnikov – made him then only a member of district council, to punish him and teach him a lesson. But in 2012, Bobkov was still allowed to run for the Verkhovna Rada in his native Budenovskiy district. He was elected the Member of Parliament in a single-mandate electoral district with great success, with more than 82% votes in favour of him.

Since August 2014, due to special relations with Zakharchenko and Timofeev, Aleksandr Bobkov from time to time acted as an intermediary in resolving property issues, ran his own business and enjoyed some kind of special extraterritoriality.

He still lives in Donetsk, holds meetings with his team, tries to "resolve issues" in Donetsk and keeps annoying the entourage of the head of the so-called "DPR" Denis Pushilin.

Actions regarding the conflict

Bobkov is a kind of Donetsk phenomenon. The then-current MP of Ukraine remained in the city in 2014 and tried to use this fact to apply for the post of "head" of the so-called "DPR" in his usual manner, trying to "resolve the issue" on the spot and in Moscow. He did not participate in any hostilities. But the famous seizure of Donetsk City Council by Oplot on 6 April 2014 took place with a set of weapons none of which were similar to the other. There was a persistent rumour that it was the personal collection of weapons of Aleksandr Bobkov who was involved in the selection of fighters for Donetsk Oplot.

Aleksandr Bobkov is officially listed as a company commander, but did not fight for a day. He is definitely not a public person, but continues to aspire to a public position in the so-called "DPR." In 2019, the verdict of 14 years of imprisonment to the doctor of the Kalinin Regional Hospital Elena Lazareva – who was accused of being a SBU spy – was substantiated by the photos of Aleksandr Bobkov and the Ossetian Oleg Mamiev (nickname Mamay), the real commander of Pyatnashki, taken on the hospital grounds on her phone. The so-called "DPR" "court" considered it a disclosure of classified information.

The status of Aleksandr Bobkov in the so-called "DPR" is currently uncertain.

4.11. Andrey Purgin, former "speaker" of the "people's council" of the so-called "DPR," one of the founders of the NGO "Donetsk Republic"

Official position regarding the conflict

Purgin was the founder of the Republican Party in the so-called "DPR" – it is a marginal project created in case local elections are held in uncontrolled territory within the framework of the Minsk agreements. Purgin no longer has a real influence on internal processes in the so-called "DPR" and, in order to avoid troubles, does not strive to have this influence.

Interests and functions in the conflict region

Andrey Purgin is a representative of a bunch of bright, but low-influential Donetsk marginals, who suddenly became in demand in 2014. The main advantage that distinguishes Andrey Purgin from most of his colleagues is that he survived and by 2020 remains relatively capable of doing something.

At the moment, Purgin is the only of the prominent figures who participated in the seizures of the Regional Council and rallies in March-April 2014 who lives mostly in Donetsk and is definitely not expecting any appointment from Moscow. At the same time, he is trying to organize a political foothold, in case of a radical change in the situation around the so-called "DPR" and the appearance of a window of opportunity in the form of elections with a fair vote count.

Actions regarding the conflict

At the beginning of 2005, the Party of Regions needed some kind of relatively effective response to the street activity of the social and political forces that won the Orange Revolution and brought V.Yushchenko to the presidency. According to rumours, the initiative to create spoiler organizations outside the Party of Regions that could demonstrate the protest and disagreement of the Donetsk elites with what happened in Kyiv belonged to Boris Kolesnikov, who financed them.

At that time, a tent city of protesters was created on Lenin Square in Donetsk, where the newly created "Donetsk Republic" did not stand out from many other similar projects. Little known at that time, Andrey Purgin was in the shadow of its leader Aleksandr Tsurkan. Public attention was diverted to much brighter figures of the "Donetsk Republic," namely the leader of the "Committee of Voters of Donbas" (a

local clone of Donetsk regional organization of the Committee of Voters of Ukraine) Aleksandr Khryakov, Head of the NGO "Us" Roman Lyagin, Donetsk activist for the rights of entrepreneurs Vladimir Makovich.

Tsurkan and Purgin became relatively famous because of the Head of the Department for the Protection of the Constitutional System of the Regional Department of the SBU in Donetsk region Sergey Malakhov. He was able to initiate the only criminal case in pre-war Ukraine on the fact of encroachment on the country's territorial integrity. The case did not end in real imprisonment, but Aleksandr Tsurkan, before his death, accused the SBU of poisoning himself with mercury.

Participants of the Donetsk protests against the Orange Revolution in 2004 – 2005 did not get lost in 2014 either.

In April 2014, Makovich read out the Declaration on the sovereignty of the so-called "DPR" in the session hall of the Regional Council, Lyagin served as head of central election committee of the so-called "DPR", Khryakov was the first information minister of the so-called "DPR," and Andrey Purgin, as the "ideologist of the process," headed the "people's council."

By now, Vladimir Makovich has died in poverty, Roman Lyagin is sitting awaiting a verdict in pre-trial detention centre in Kyiv, and Aleksandr Khryakov in the so-called "DPR" retained the position of a member of the "people's council" only for humanitarian reasons – a former active provocateur (before the war, he was responsible for attacks on journalists on the press-conferences) developed a severe form of diabetes.

Before the war, Andrey Purgin kept a small trade in nails and other construction trifles in his native Mariinka, he was not a person of influence, but in 2014, he was able to build a group of active supporters around himself who began to wage a political and administrative struggle for personal interests and the interests of the "people of Donbas" in a way they understood them.

Such independent activities were not welcomed by the curators, but they kept doing it for quite a long time, because the Russians in 2014 – 2015 focused on combating the armed opposition of countless illegal military formations. In the so-called "DPR," harsh street order was established only by May 2015 with the actual defeat of the Cossack formations.

And already in September 2015, Andrey Purgin and his affiliate who was more experienced in the administrative struggle – the head of the "people's council" secretariat Aleksandr Alexandrov – were prevented from entering the so-called "DPR" after their trip to St. Petersburg. They still broke through to Donetsk referring to the fact that they were the "members of people's council," but a day later, the "people's council" headed by the "first deputy" of Purgin, Denis Pushilin, re-elected the entire leadership of the "parliament." Aleksandrov was forced to leave Donetsk under pressure, Purgin lost all posts both in the "council" and in "Donetsk Republic" movement. Andrey Purgin did not participate in hostilities and did not have any influence on the power structures and armed formations.

At the moment, Aleksandr Aleksandrov receives funding from Moscow for the Telegram channel Donetsk Aboriginal that actively criticizes the power structures of the so-called "DPR," finding an opportunity to quote Andrey Purgin. The channel has 8,350 subscribers – thus, it is a serious information resource by local standards.

