

The Information War on Wikipedia: Is Ukraine's Right Sector Neo-Fascist?

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Region: [Russia and FSU](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#)

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On Tuesday the group called for supporters to patrol Wikipedia. In a posting on Vkontakte, the Russian equivalent of Facebook, Right Sector wrote: "We appeal to people who can make changes to Wikipedia.

In the English version (with Russian worse) Right Sector is depicted as an organisation that has a fascist and neo-Nazi views, with appropriate consequences. If you have an opportunity — correct this misunderstanding."

*On Tuesday the page was modified 174 times, including changes to describe Right Sector as an "organisation to protect demonstrators" and a "youth patriot organisation". After the intervention of Wikipedia administrators, the page was locked and reverted to saying that **Right Sector was "described by major Western newspapers as having far right or neo-fascist views"**.*

When protest leaders in Ukraine helped oust a president widely seen as corrupt, they became heroes. But as they take places in the new government, some are facing uncomfortable questions about their values and associations, not least alleged links to neo-fascist extremists.

Russian President Vladimir Putin claims Ukraine has fallen into the hands of far-right fascist groups, and some Western experts have raised concerns about extremists' influence. Yet many Ukrainians see the same groups as nationalist stalwarts and defenders of independence.

Two of the groups under most scrutiny are Svoboda, whose members hold five senior positions in Ukraine's new government including that of deputy prime minister, and Pravyi Sektor (Right Sector), whose leader Dmytro Yarosh is national security deputy secretary.

Right Sector activists still hold several buildings close to Kiev's Independence Square. On Tuesday the group called for supporters to patrol Wikipedia. In a posting on Vkontakte, the Russian equivalent of Facebook, Right Sector wrote: "We appeal to people who can make changes to Wikipedia. In the English version (with Russian worse) Right Sector is depicted as an organisation that has a fascist and neo-Nazi views, with appropriate consequences. If you have an opportunity — correct this misunderstanding."

According to Wikipedia's logs, last Monday the Right Sector entry described the party as having "borderline fascist or neo-fascist views". On Tuesday the page was modified 174 times, including

changes to describe Right Sector as an “organisation to protect demonstrators” and a “youth patriot organisation”. After the intervention of Wikipedia administrators, the page was locked and reverted to saying that Right Sector was “described by major Western newspapers as having far right or neo-fascist views”.

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