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## Jehovah's Witnesses in Southern Russia Face New Charges



Jehovah's Witnesses in Southern Russia Face New Charges

18:14 08/04/2013

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Tags: [extremism](#), [Jehovah's Witnesses](#), [Taganrog](#), [Russia](#)

ROSTOV-ON-DON, April 8 (RIA Novosti) – Prosecutors in the southern Russian city of Taganrog have charged 16 Jehovah's Witnesses with taking part in the activities of an extremist organization after they allegedly resurrected the banned local branch of the international religious organization.

According to investigators, the religious group's followers continued to hold regular meetings after their local branch was banned in the city in 2009. At the meetings, they allegedly incited hatred against other religions, circulated extremist literature and called for military draft dodging.

The suspects also attempted to involve children in their activities and collected money for the organization, the prosecutors said in a statement.

"The case materials will be sent to the Taganrog city court after the suspects are informed of the charges," the statement said.

The Jehovah's Witnesses organization, which has more than seven million followers worldwide, including over 130,000 in Russia, has been banned in a number of Russian regions and in some former Soviet republics over its religious beliefs.

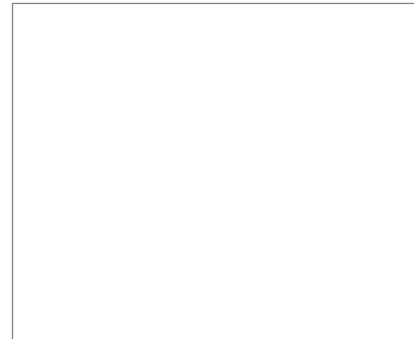
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The Jehovah's Witnesses branch in the Russian capital was dissolved by a district court ruling in 2004, but the European Court of Human Rights [declared the decision illegal in 2010](#).

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**Mikhail1228 Cult of Jehovah's Witnesses**  
18:24, 08/04/2013

This is a US born cult. Americans cringe when their doorbells ring with these idiots and their Watchtower magazines. They brainwash their followers. Most Jehovah Witness men are alcoholics that beat and mentally abuse their wives and families. Both this cult and Scientology should be completely banned in Russia!!

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**laweeet You are mistaken.**  
02:52, 09/04/2013

The are right, that's why everyone hate them...they are the only one who will survive the End.. I study them and they do exactly what is in the Bible. Nothing less or more, they are in every nation and every religion hate them. Who do you think you are? Can you fight against Jehovah? Be careful man.

[Reply](#)

**AndrewThomas Have you studied the bible lately?**  
03:19, 09/04/2013

"At the meetings, they allegedly incited hatred against other religions, circulated extremist literature and called for military draft dodging."

I hope you notice the inherent contradictions present in the above charges?

JW's reject military service because they do not want to kill or do any type of physical violence to other people.

They usually are willing to do other types of volunteer service in place of required military service; however that is left as a personal choice. Some of them refuse to do even that and willingly go to jail instead of serving in the military in any capacity. But, it is based on their respect for the bible, and not wanting to violate Exodus 20:13 "Thou shalt not kill"; instead of any form of political extremism.

Their meetings are dedicated to bible study (at least as the core motive) and they began over 100 years ago as informal groups called (International Bible Students) where people got together to study the bible and verify if the teachings of their own churches agreed with what they read in the bible itself. They changed their name to Jehovah's Witnesses in 1935.

Saying they "incite hatred" against other religions is an interpretive issue.

Usually the concept of "inciting hatred" involves some sort of physical violence or the implied threat of violence in order to be valid; and neither of these is possible with the JW's as they reject any and all form of violence completely.

However, their interpretations of the bible may not be in agreement with those of other religious organizations; but that is more a matter of principled debate about the underlying meanings of bible verses; and has no relation toward "incitement of hatred" against other religions at all.

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Also, calling their literature "extremist" is another issue as the underlying purpose of it is to study the bible, and it is difficult to justify calling the act of studying the bible as extremist if the only fault is by reaching differing interpretations or conclusions about the meanings of bible verses than other religious organizations do.

However, there is no violent or coercive elements present in their activities, so it seems difficult to justify calling any of their literature as "extremist" if there is no possible aspect of violence involved in it.

Of course, JW's have children and bring their children to worship services just like any other religion and they also need to collect money to finance their congregational activities, so that seems a strange charge to make against them.

Given that the bible is also used in both the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches as well, it is difficult to understand how it is possible to accuse the JW's of any sort of criminal or extremist activity, when all they do is try to study the bible and understand it to the best of their abilities?

I'm not writing this to speak for or defend JW's, and I do not have that authority anyways.

I am merely writing this from the perspective of an outside observer who is somewhat familiar with them and who has attended their meetings and studied the bible with them on occasion.

However, if you are going to charge a religious group with a crime for their beliefs, perhaps it would be helpful if there was some accuracy present in knowing what it is that they actually do at their meetings?

Saying they "incite hatred" or "circulate extremist literature" destroys the very meaning of those charges as both are entirely impossible with the JW's.

They are not a cult either, as a cult involves physical control and isolation of its members and the JW's do neither of these.

Also, both Roman Catholics and Orthodox allow unrestricted drinking, while the JW's allow drinking only in moderation, and anyone abusing alcohol would face extreme internal consequences: so statistically the likelihood of the average JW's being more prone to alcoholism or spousal abuse than the average Roman Catholic or Orthodox Christian is impossible.

However, making that claim appears as a possible attempt to falsely portray them as violent in order to support the charges of extremism and inciting religious hatred being made against them.

And again, the motive of their refusal of military service contradicts the first two charges, as their purpose is to abstain from killing or doing any form of violence towards their neighbors.

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[ig ECHR?](#)

16:58, 09/04/2013

What I don't understand is: Russia (an ECHR signatory) can lock up JW's, who maybe really annoying but are mostly harmless. UK cannot deport convicted terrorists and other foreign criminals because it would be against their human rights, as described in the ECHR.

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be reinstated on a new basis. The arms control process currently relies on the New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty), and on the 2011 Vienna Document on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures.

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A criminal case was launched into a topless protest by the Femen group in the German city of Hanover, targeting Russian President Vladimir Putin, the local HAZ newspaper said on Monday.



**Syria Rejects 'Expanded' UN Chemical Weapons Probe - Agency**

Syrian authorities reject an "additional demand" by the UN to let its investigative mission operate across all Syria's territory, the state-run Syrian news agency SANA reported on Monday in its Russian-language section.



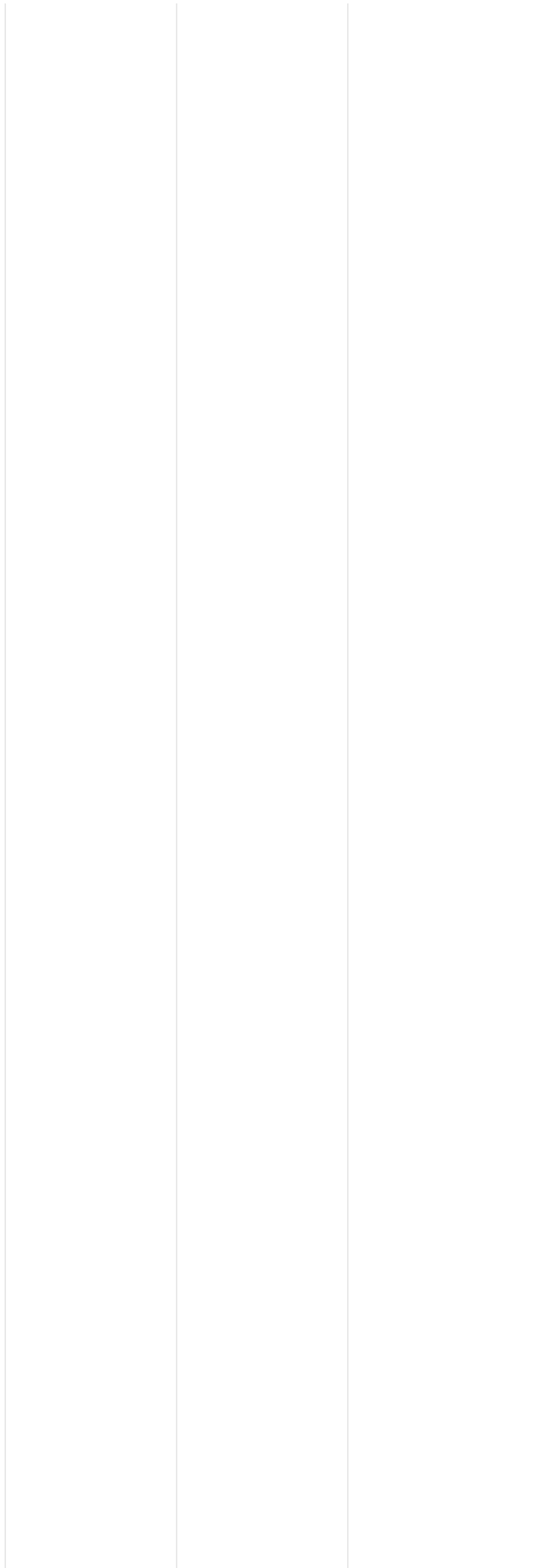
**US Calls on Russia, China to Ease Tensions with N. Korea**

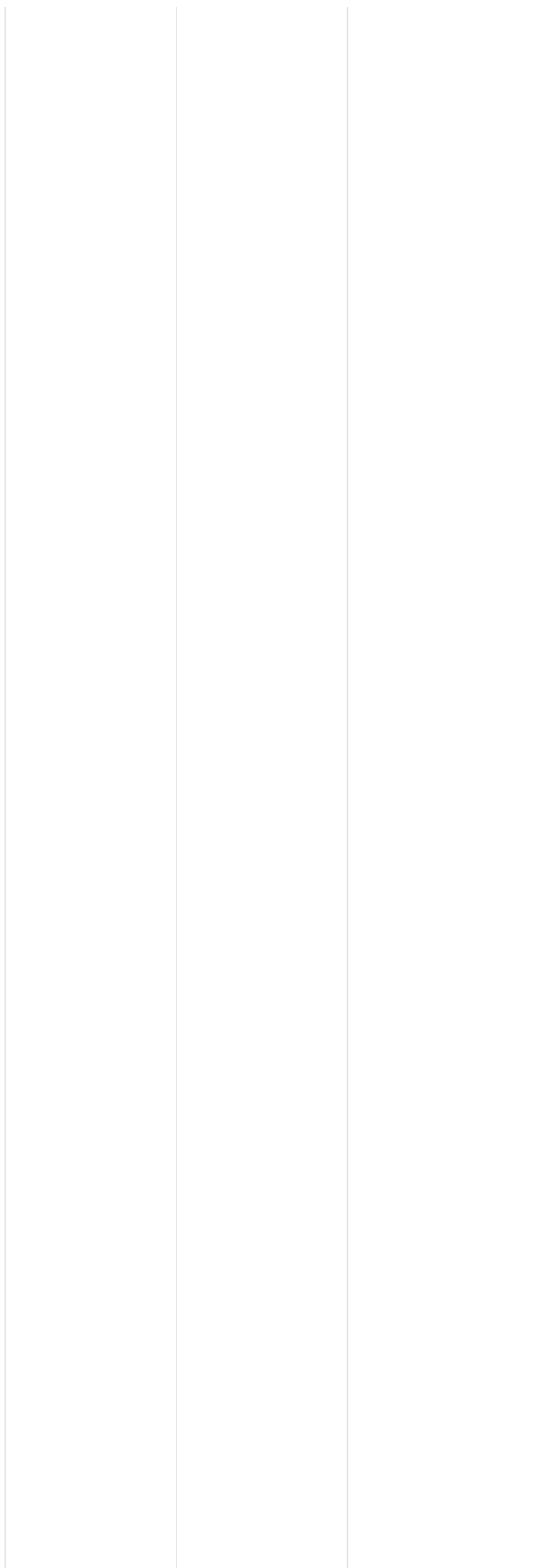
US officials said Monday they have asked Russia and China – two North Korean allies – for help in getting Pyongyang to back off the escalating rhetoric and inflammatory actions that have alarmed its neighbors and prompted the Pentagon to heighten its military readiness.

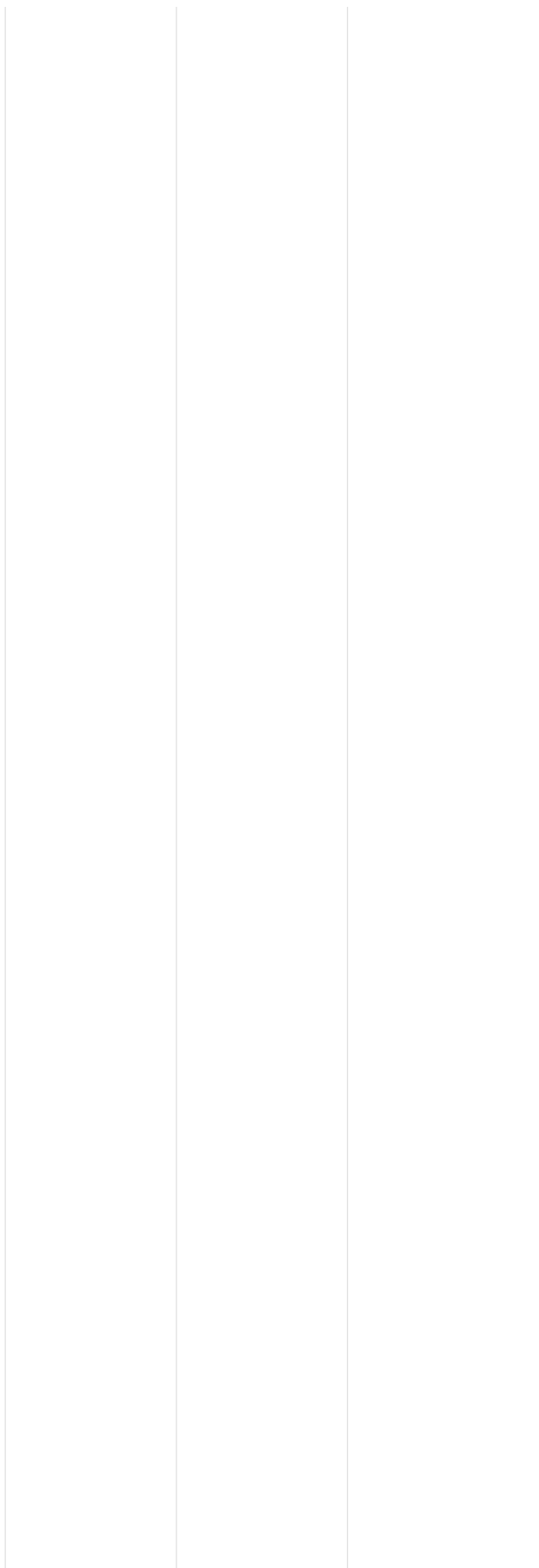


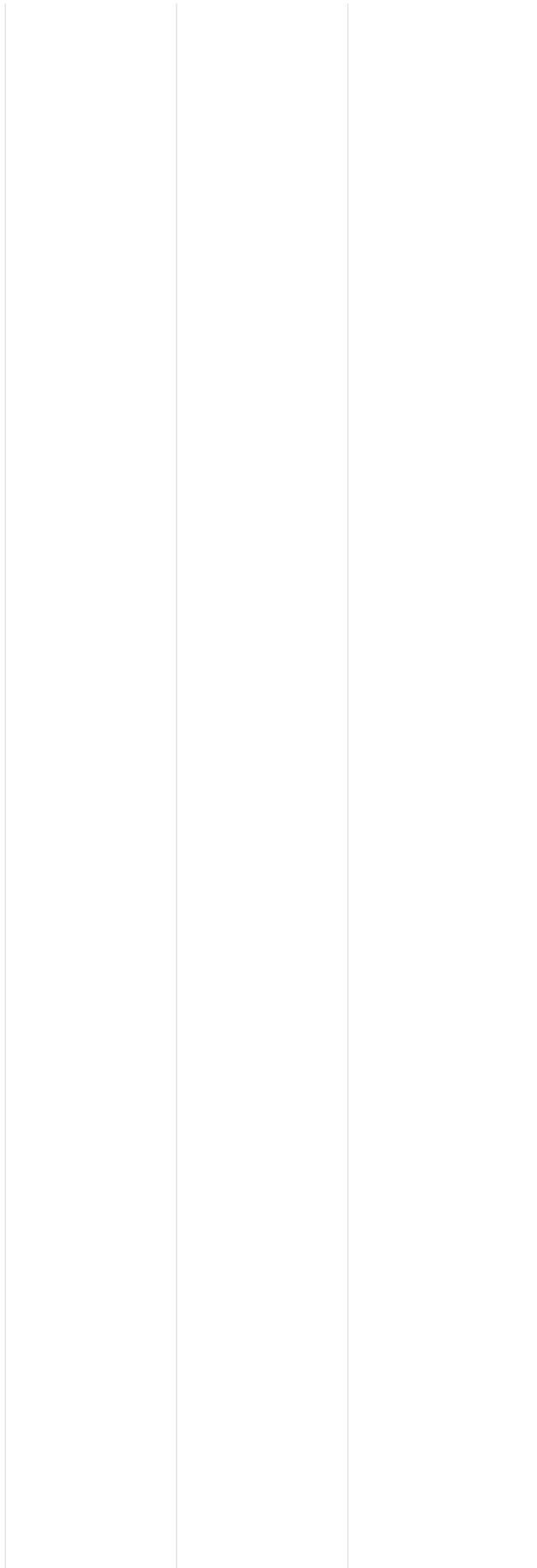
**Obama Opens Window for Russians to Contest Magnitsky Sanctions**

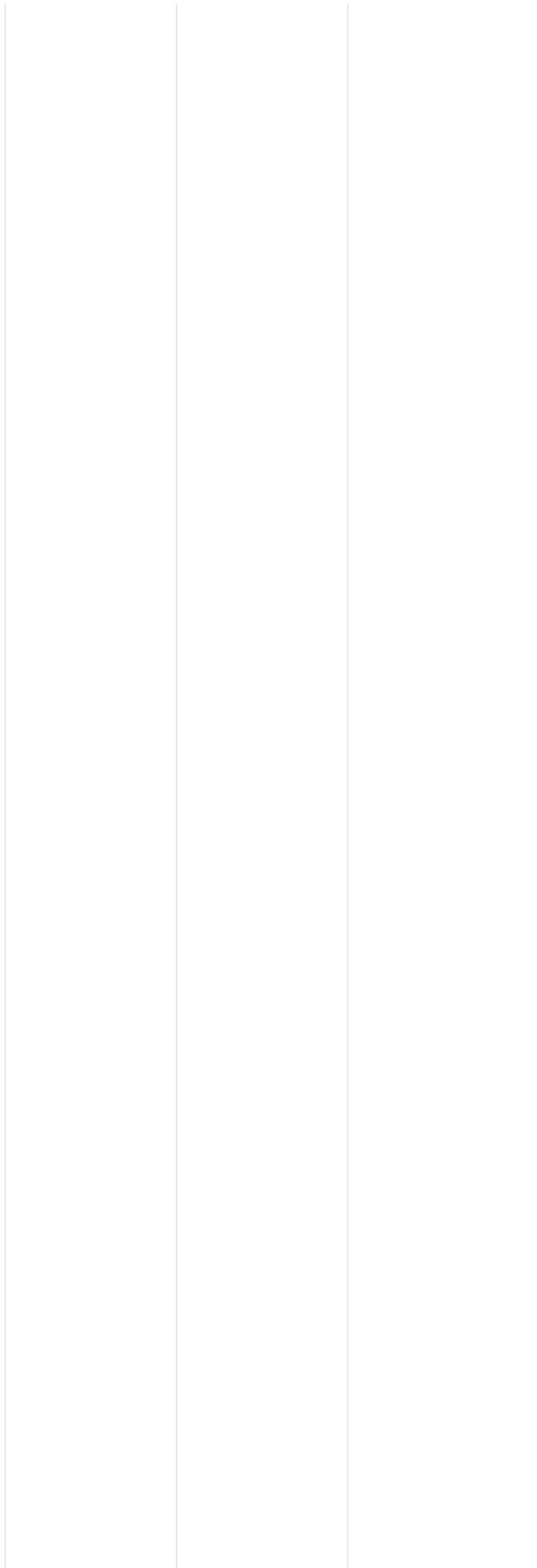
Russian officials who are slapped with Magnitsky Act sanctions this week may have seen their dim prospects for recourse in US courts brighten thanks to US President Barack Obama.



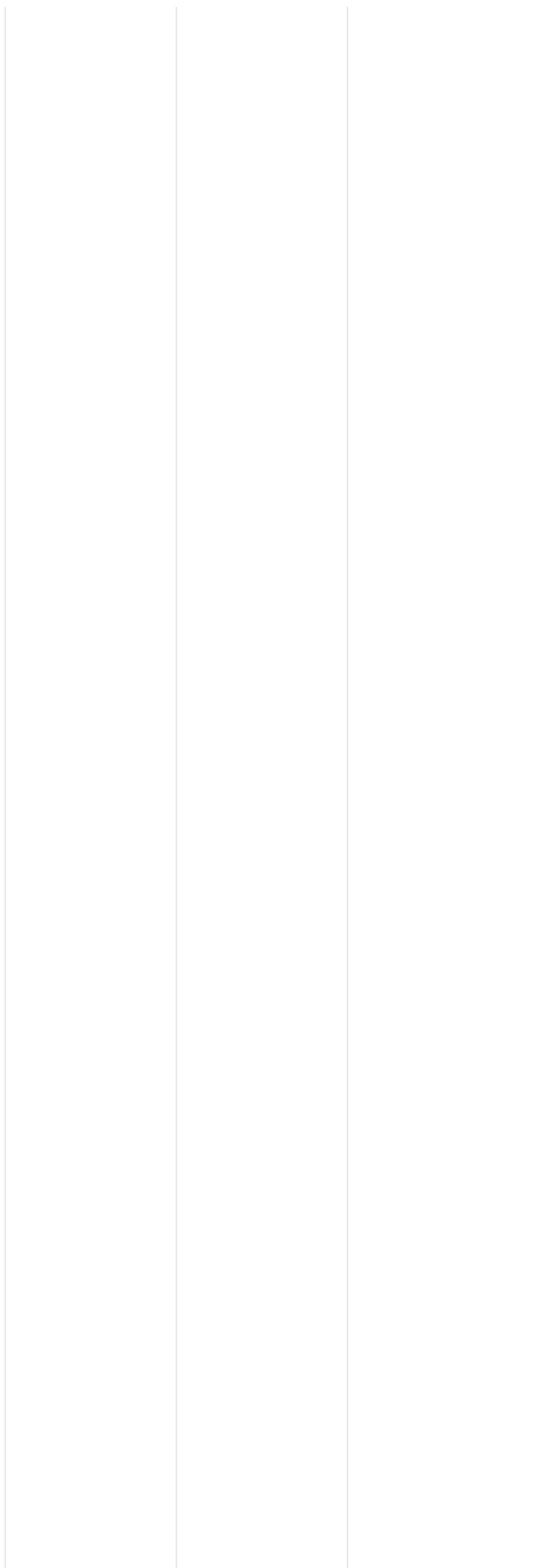


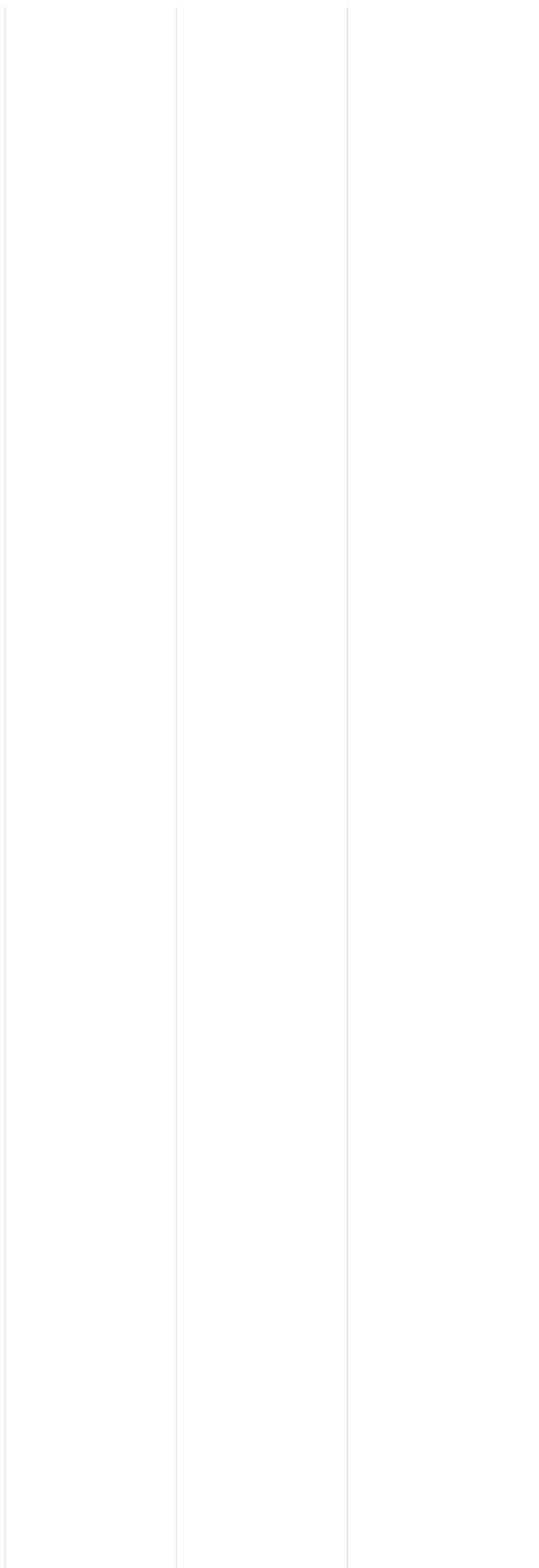


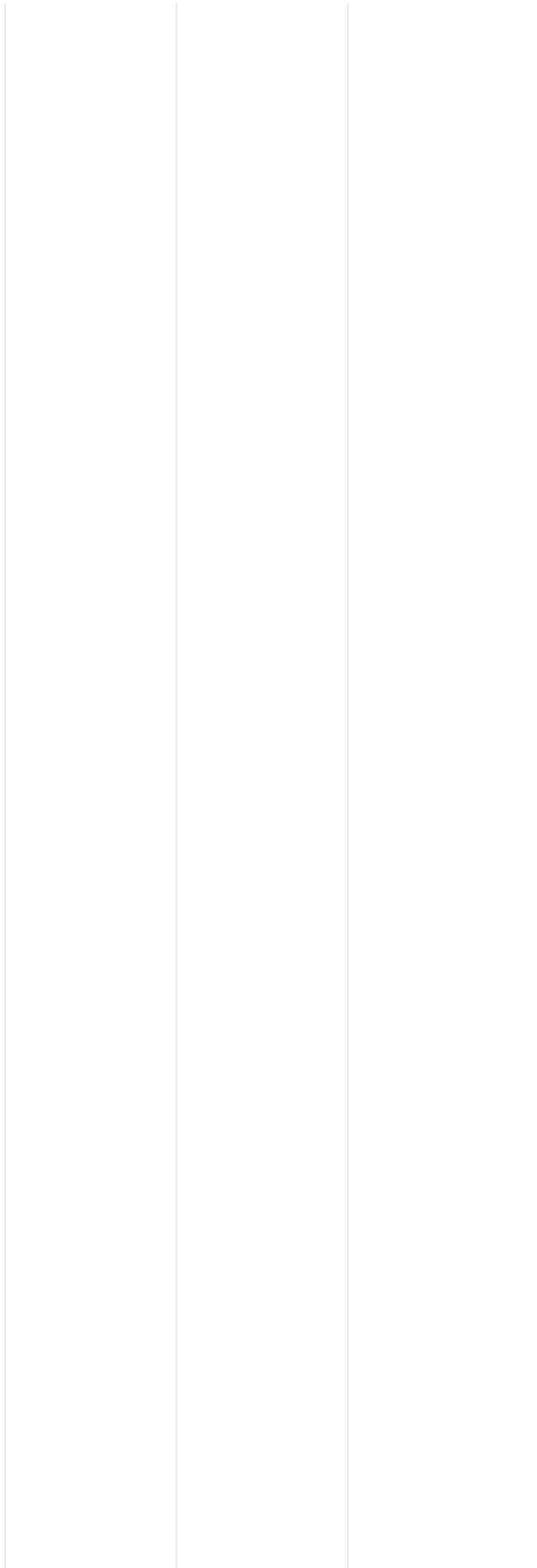


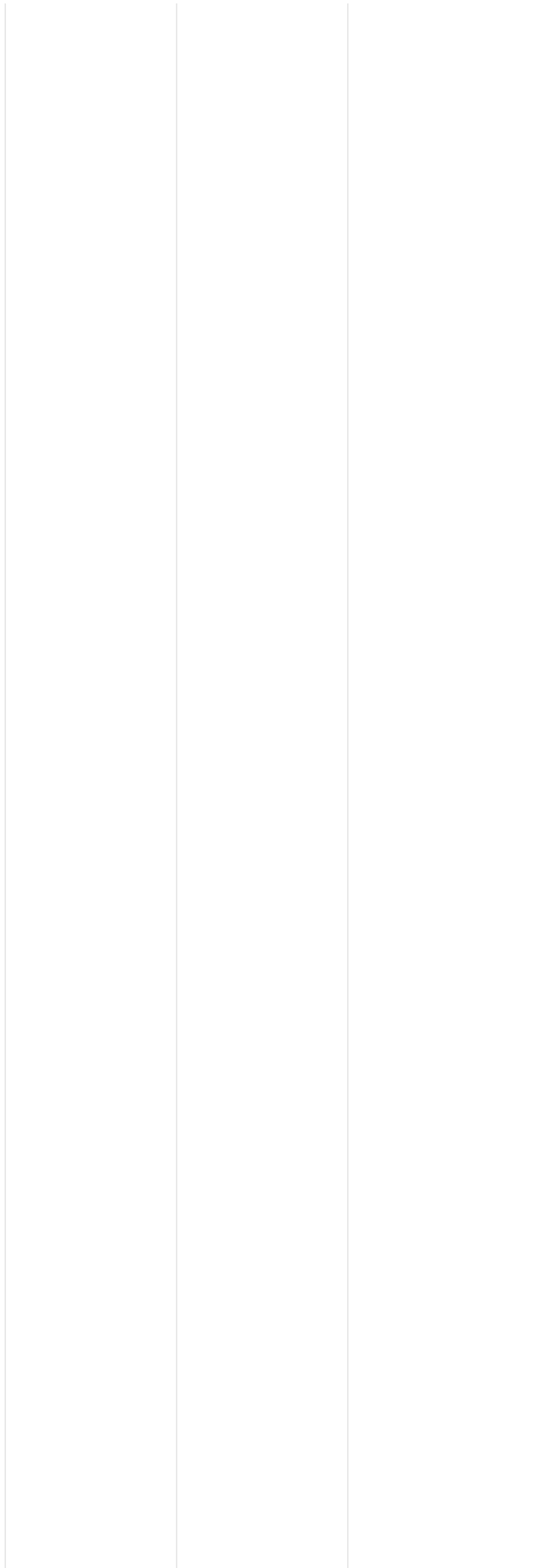


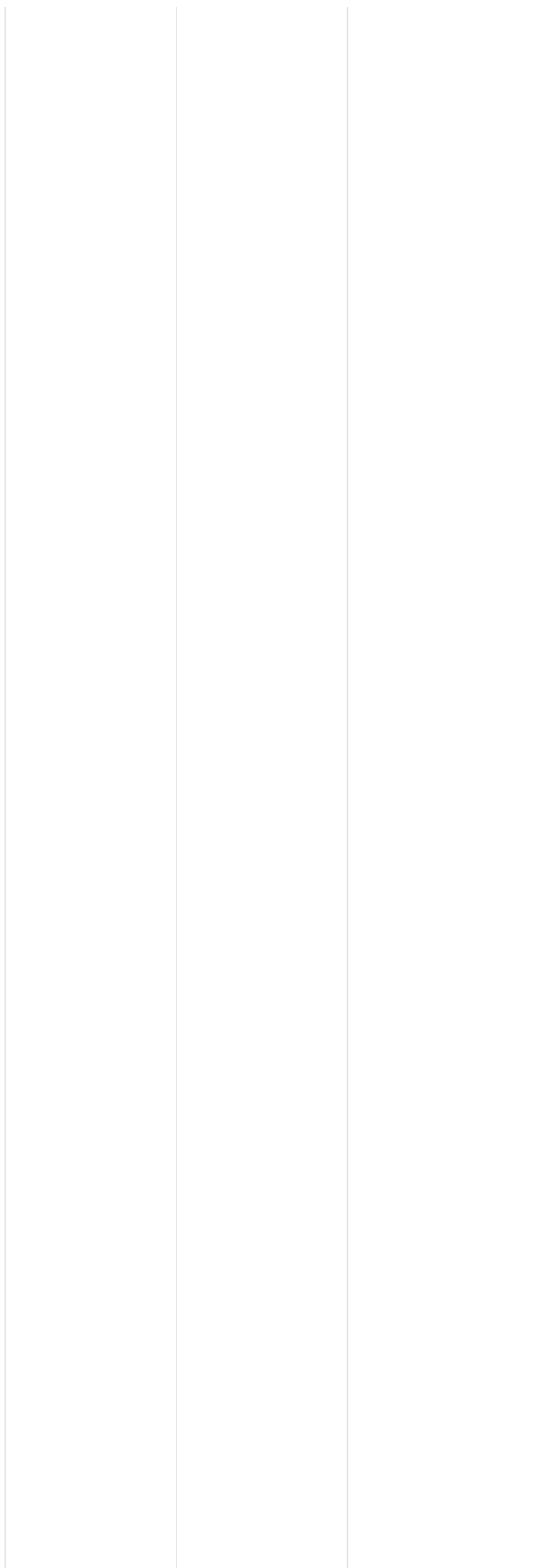


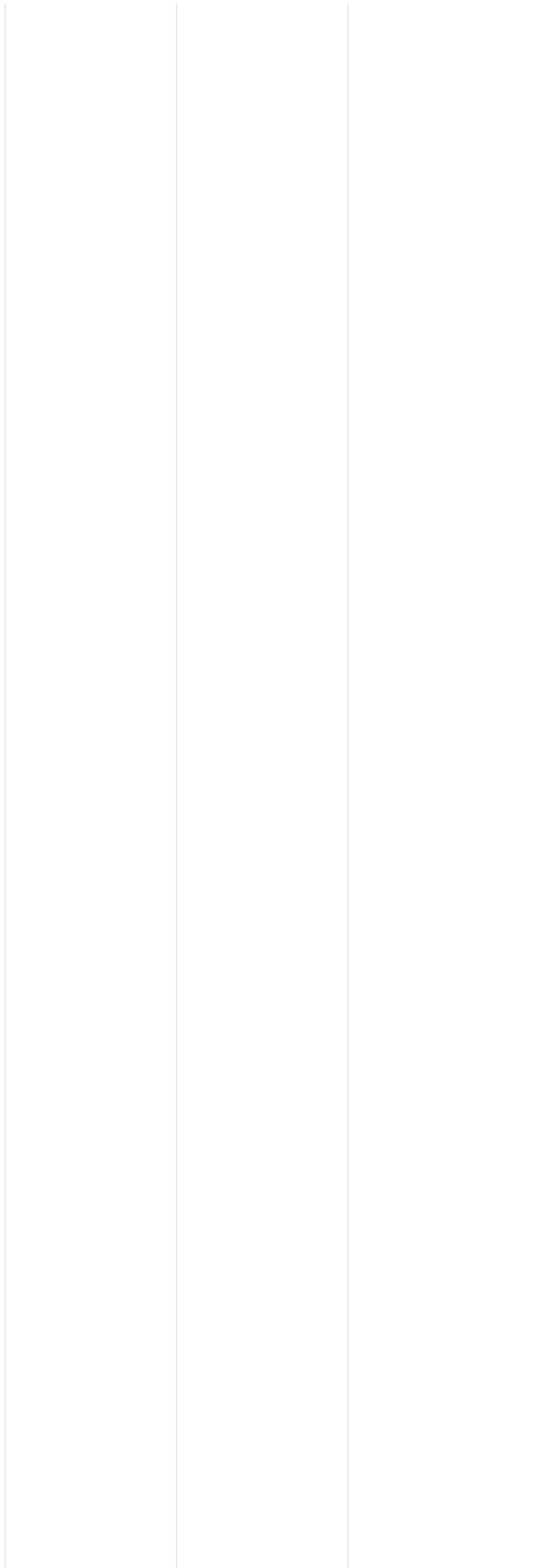


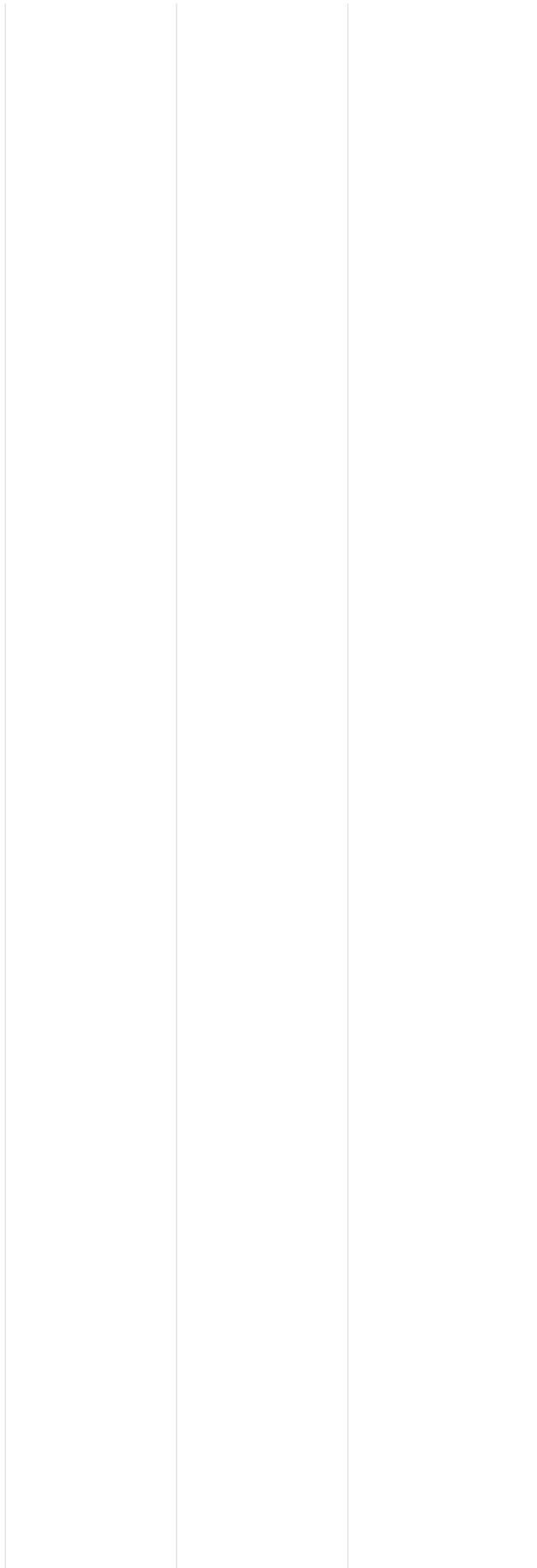


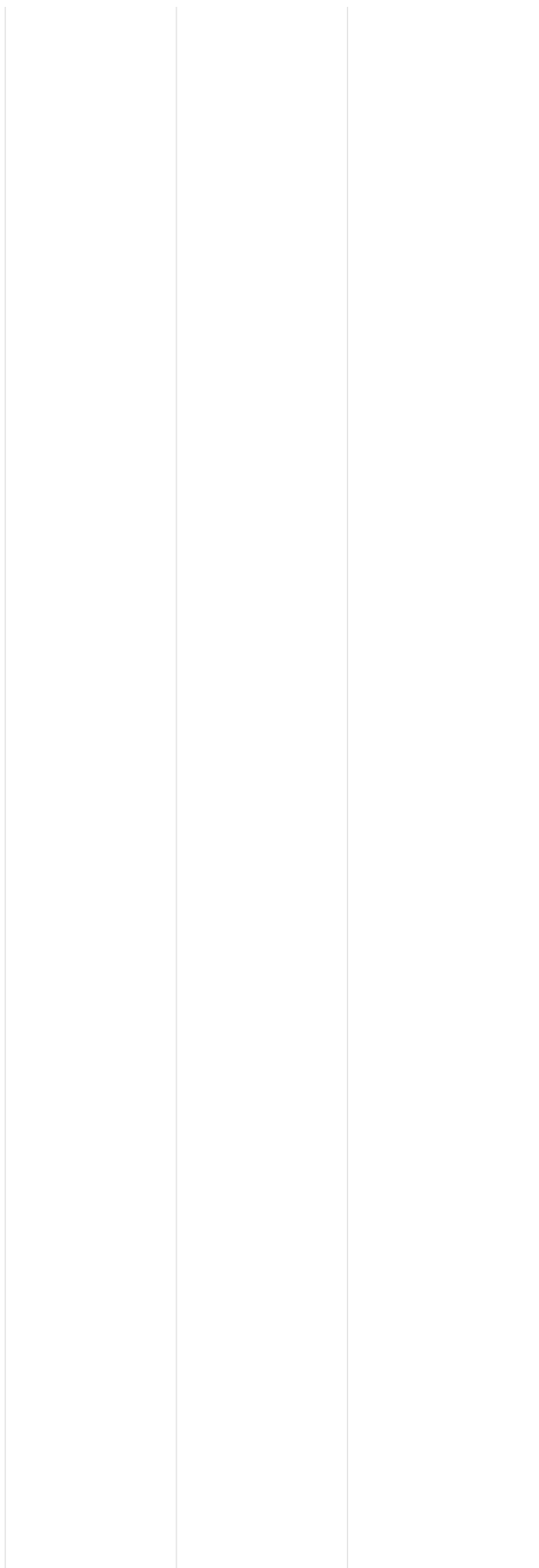




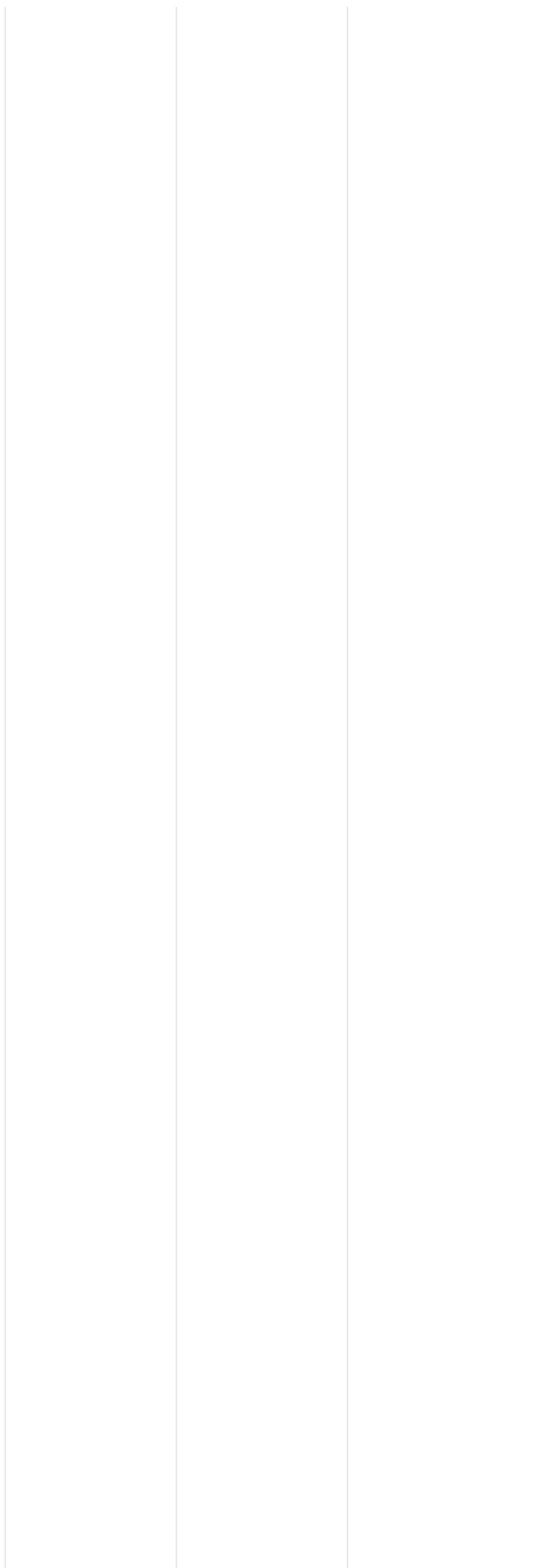


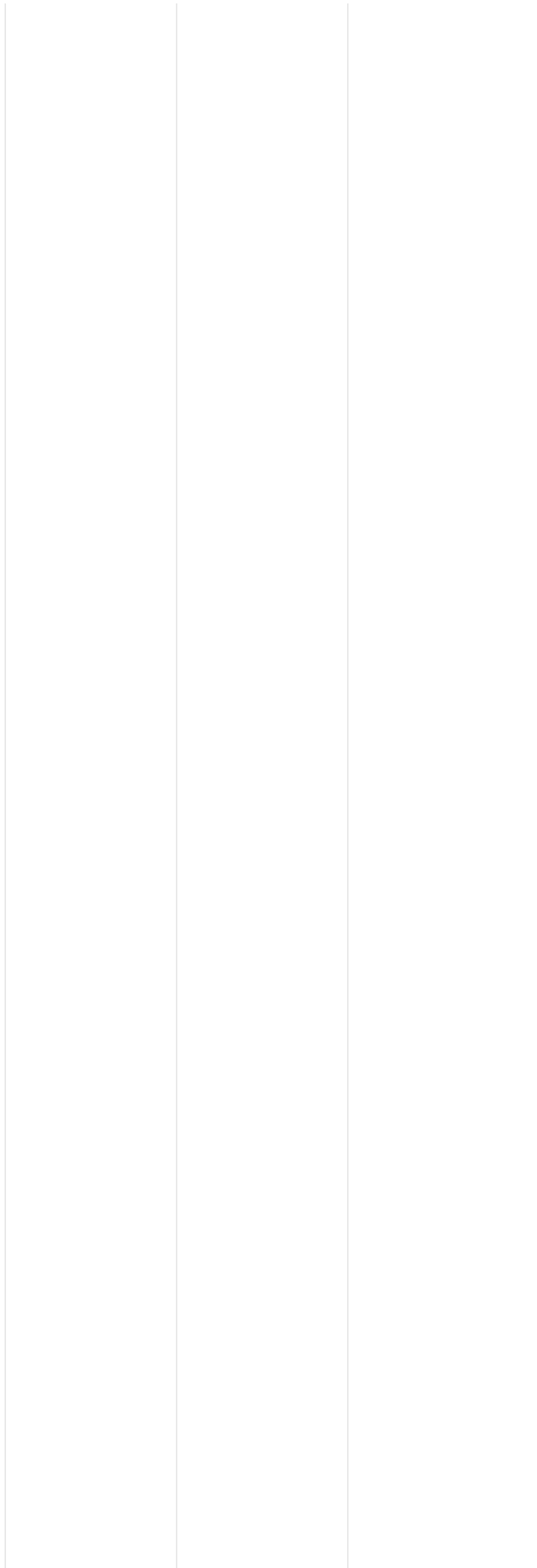


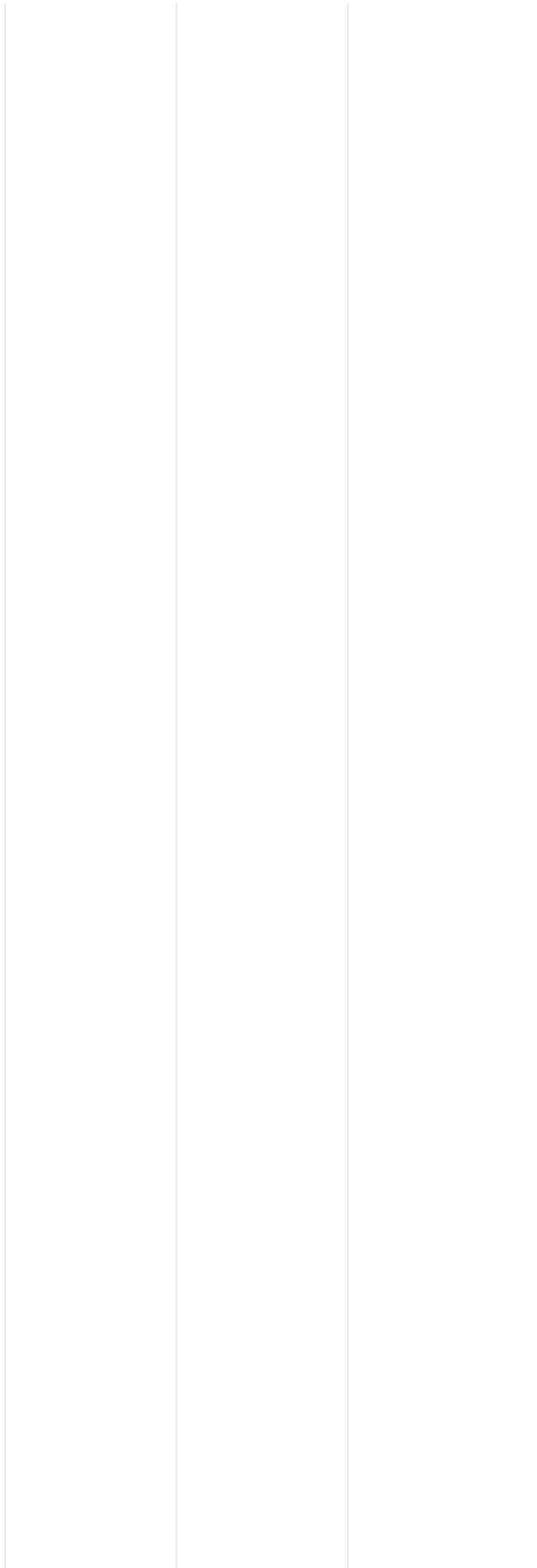


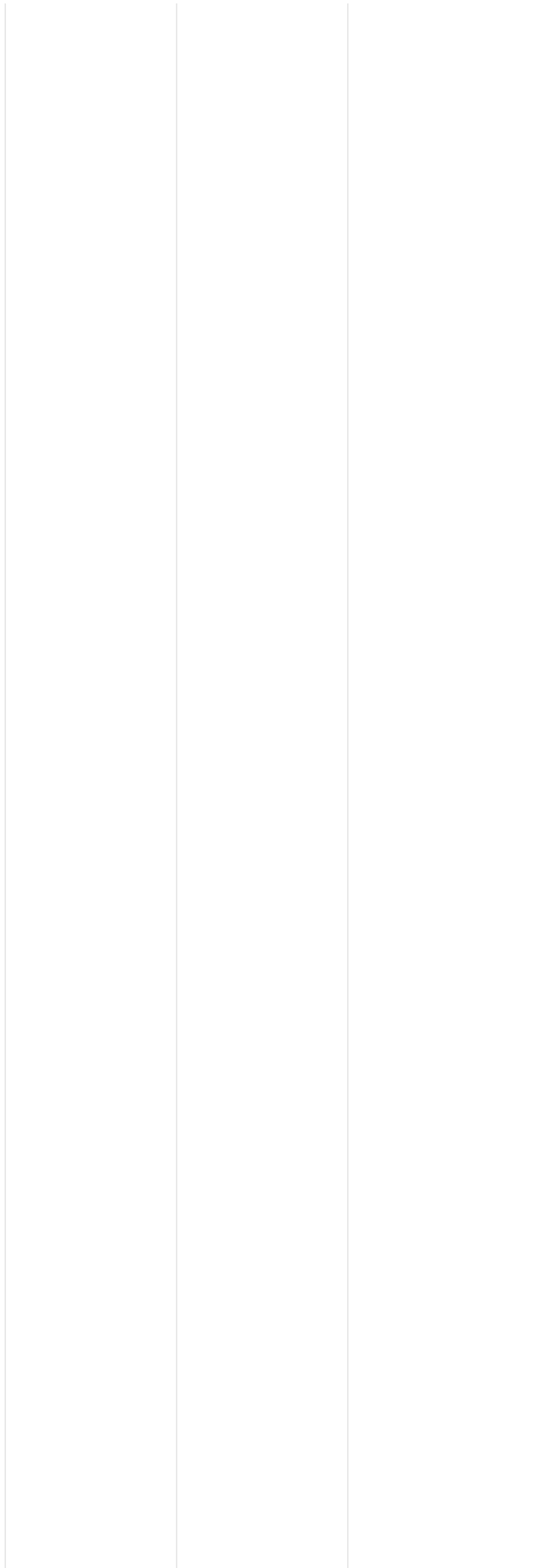


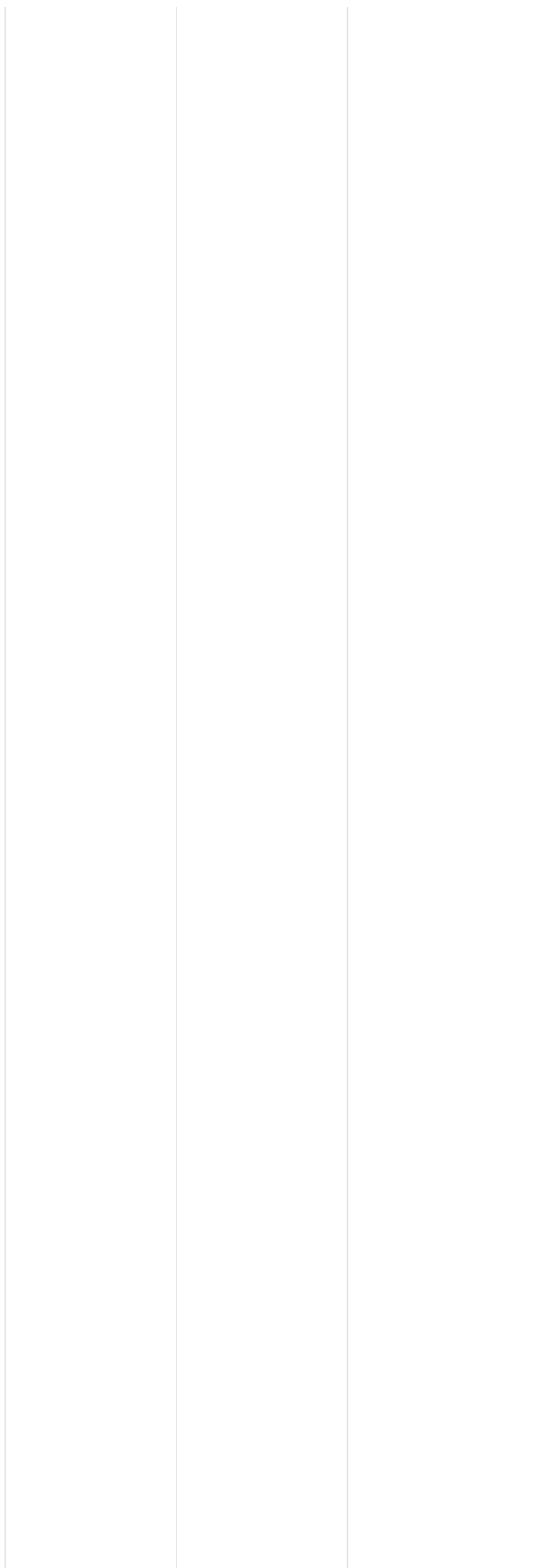


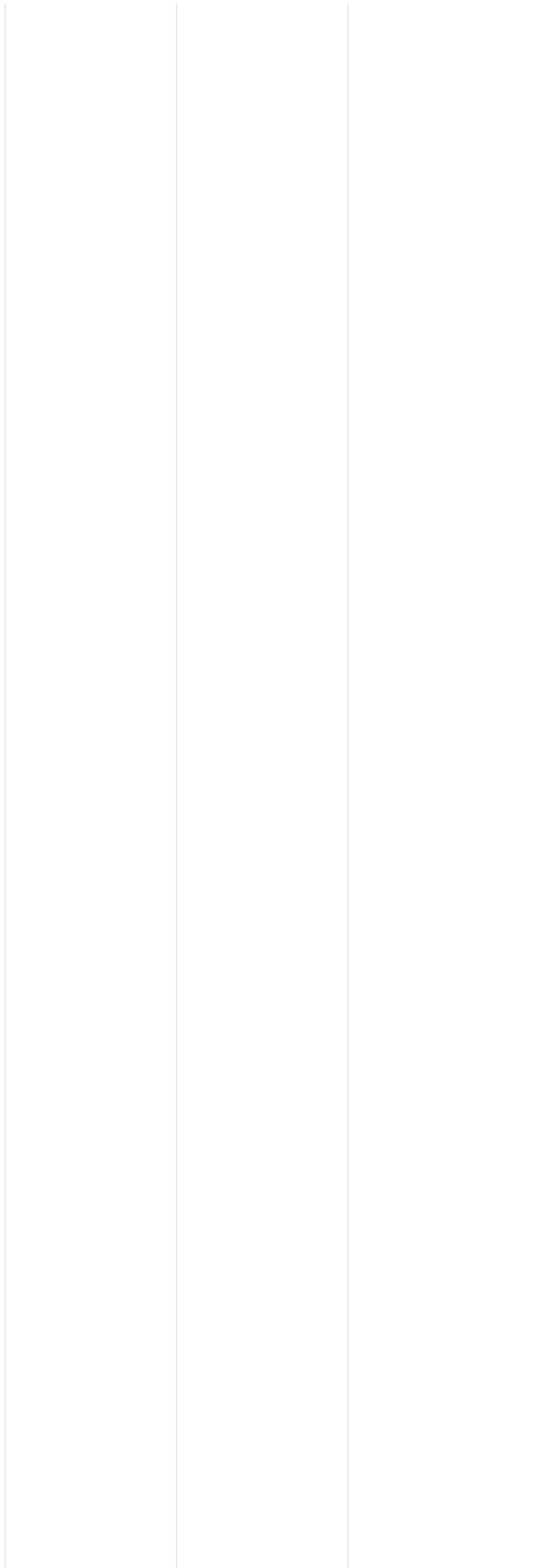


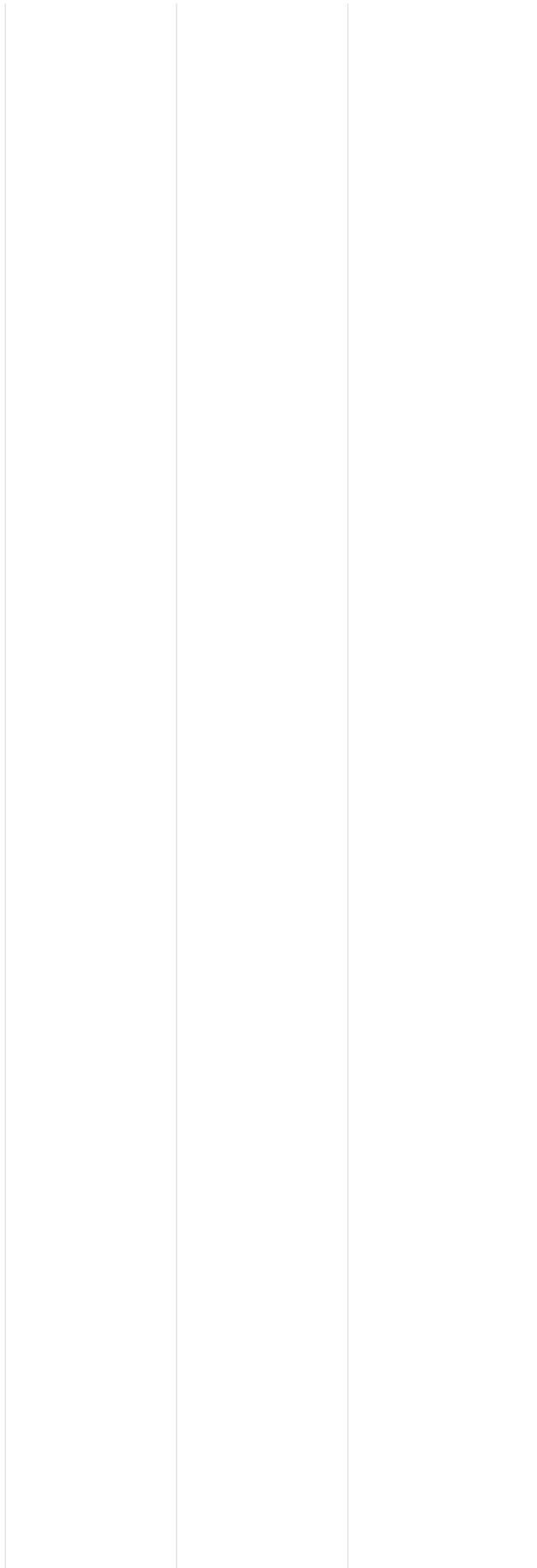


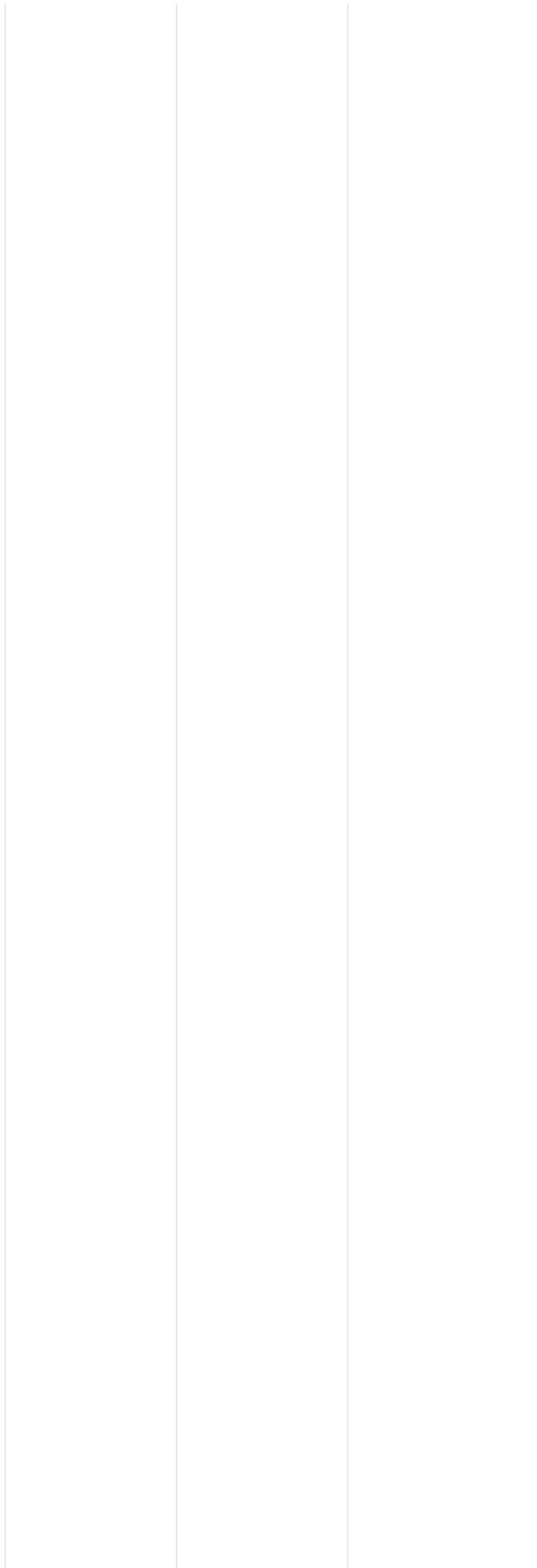




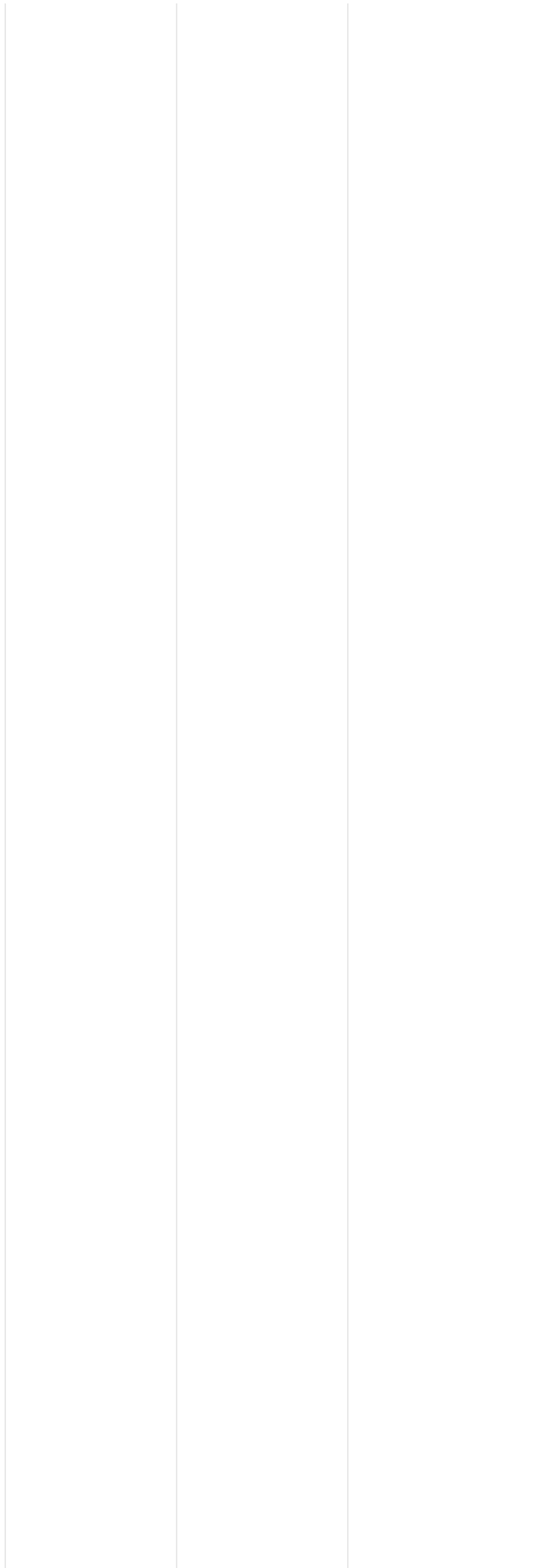


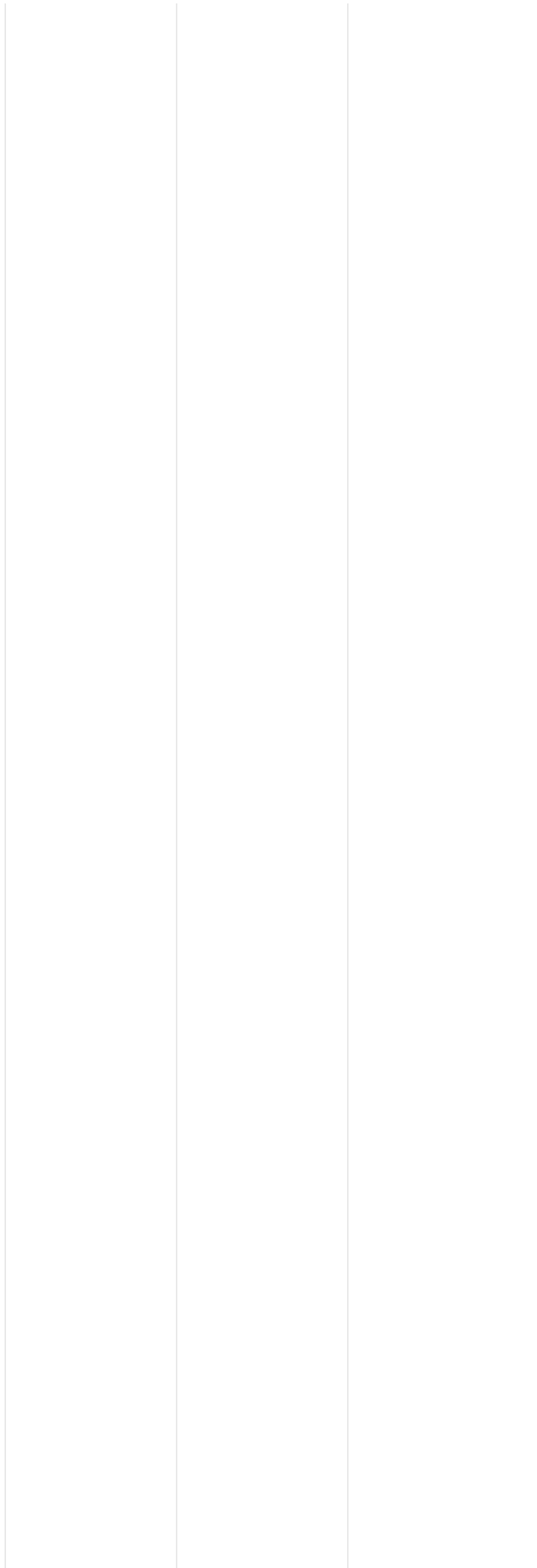














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