

Match-Fixing Bill by State Duma

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The parliament has passed in a second reading a bill submitted by President Vladimir Putin that toughens the maximum punishment for match-fixing to seven years in prison.

The country is hosting the 2018 World Cup and wants to improve its reputation for fair play in sport.

The legislation makes it an offense for athletes, coaches and sports officials from betting on their own sports and couples possible prison time with a maximum 1 million ruble (\$30,000) fine for those convicted.

The bill now goes through a mandatory third reading before passing through the rubber-stamping Federation Council and landing on Putin's desk for signing into law, all thought to be formalities.

Match-fixing is thought to be common in Russian football, although nowhere near the scale of the 1990s, and the culprits are rarely held to account.

The governor of one of the World Cup host cities, Kaliningrad, last month admitted asking his local football team to drop points because promotion would mean the club swallowing extra state subsidies.

The FIFPro international players' association claimed last year that as many as one in 10 footballers in Russia has at some point received an offer to fix a game.

In April, the Russian Premier League urged the media to refrain from jumping to conclusions on match-fixing whenever a shock result occurs.

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