

Russia's RT News Channel May Launch French-Language Service

By [The Moscow Times](#)

August 21, 2014

The  Moscow Times

The government is ready to spend 1.3 billion rubles (\$35 million) to create a French-language service at Kremlin-sponsored television news channel RT, according to a draft bill published Thursday on the government's legislation portal.

The new channel will target audiences not only in France, but also Belgium, Switzerland and Canada, according to the explanatory note accompanying the bill.

"World events in these countries are covered, as a rule, in a way that show Russia in an unfavorable light, which leads to the formation of negative attitudes toward Russia," the note said, adding that the new French service is being created to change this situation.

RT, formerly Russia Today, was launched in 2005 and broadcasts in Russian, English, Spanish and Arabic. It now has an audience of 664 million people spread over more than 100 countries, according to its website.

One of the channel's anchors, Liz Wahl, resigned on air in March, accusing the network — viewed by many as a Kremlin propaganda tool — of "whitewashing" Russia's military intervention in Crimea, which was annexed from Ukraine by Moscow just a few weeks later.

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[Ukraine Bans 14 Russian TV Channels for 'War Propaganda'](#)

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