

Russia's Justice Ministry Defines 'Political Activity' of 'Foreign Agents'

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A woman surveys the work of a graffiti artist, who has painted the words "Foreign Agent" on the side of a building.

Russia's Justice Ministry has prepared a bill specifying the definition of "political activity" that is mentioned in the the country's law on "foreign agents."

The document was published on the official website for new bills and draft laws.

"The bill proposes to establish that political activity can constitute participating in organizing and carrying out public events, such as rallies, protests, demonstrations, marches or pickets, ... by organizing and carrying out public discussions or speeches," the document reads.

In addition to this, the bill defines political activity as publicly "appraising the government's decisions and policies" and appealing to the government.

President Vladimir Putin signed the so-called foreign agents law in 2012, requiring all NGOs that receive funding from abroad and are engaged in political activity to declare that their

materials were produced by a “foreign agent,” a term widely associated in Russia with espionage.

The law has been broadly criticized for its loose definition of what constitutes “political activity.”

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