

Russian Justice Ministry Blacklists Prominent Anti-Racism Research Center

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SOVA Center

Russia's Justice Ministry has added another prominent NGO to the federal government's list of "foreign agents." According to an [official announcement](#) on the ministry's website, the SOVA Center, a think tank that conducts sociological research primarily on nationalism, xenophobia, and racism in Russia, is the latest organization to be blacklisted.

Federal officials have said only that the SOVA Center was declared a "foreign agent" after an unscheduled inspection of its offices, without offering any further details.

Russia's 2012 law on foreign agents requires NGOs that receive funding from abroad and engage in loosely defined political activity to register as "foreign agents," incurring additional, often crippling police scrutiny.

Earlier this year, the Justice Ministry also blacklisted the Levada Center, one of Russia's three largest national polling agencies, and the only pollster widely viewed as independent. The

Levada Center is currently contesting this decision in Russian courts.

The SOVA Center was first established in 2002 by human rights activists from the Moscow Helsinki Group and “Panorama” Center.

Related article: [Leading Independent Pollster Blacklisted as ‘Foreign Agent’](https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2016/12/30/russian-justice-ministry-blacklists-prominent-anti-racism-research-center-a56709)

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