

Russia's Sberbank Starts Accepting Passports From Ukraine's Breakaway Republics

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Sergei Konkov / TASS

Russia's largest state-owned bank has announced that it is accepting passports issued by Ukraine's breakaway republics Donetsk and Lugansk.

The announcement came hours after [an investigation by Russia's RBC news outlet revealed on Tuesday](#). found that none of Russia's top 30 banks would accept passports from either the Donetsk or Luhansk People's Republics, despite the orders of Russian President Vladimir Putin to recognize the documents.

The majority of banks did not reply to comment, or said that they only worked with Russian citizens, RBC reported.

A Sberbank spokesperson initially told RBC that procedures were still being put in place for Donetsk and Luhansk passport holders. The bank then changed their position on Tuesday

evening, confirming that the documents could be used in branches across the country.

Related article: [Ukraine's Breakaway Luhansk Republic Declares Ruble Official Currency](#)

Vladimir Putin [signed an executive order](#) officially recognizing identification documents from the two self-proclaimed republics on Feb. 18.

Individuals can now use the documents to cross the Russian border.

The Russian Federation will also recognize locally-issued education documents, certificates recording births, deaths, marriages, and divorces, and automobile registrations.

Putin said that the move would “protect human rights and freedoms” and adding that order was designed as a temporary measure until the conflict in eastern Ukraine was resolved.

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