

Putin Orders Government to Support Pop Music

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Concert in support of the rapper Husky in Moscow, November 26 **Pjotr Sauer / MT**

President Vladimir Putin has instructed the government to draw up a plan to support popular music months after young independent artists were pressured to cancel shows in Russian cities.

A number of young Russian artists [said](#) the authorities had forced them to cancel concerts over allegations of offensive lyrics or extremism. After the brief arrest of a popular rap artist late in 2018, Putin [told](#) government officials “to take charge of” rap music “if it’s impossible to stop it.”

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This week, Putin ordered his deputy chief of staff Sergei Kiriyenko to submit a list of “priority actions” to support music and visual arts by Sept. 1.

“Organize a discussion with members of the expert community and expert groups on forms of state support for contemporary popular music, including genres in demand among the youth,” Wednesday’s directive [reads](#).

The decision follows up on Putin’s meeting with his advisory council on culture and the arts on Dec. 15. Some popular rappers in Russia had also [met](#) with State Duma lawmakers to address the concert cancellations a week earlier.

In 2017, the opposition [accused](#) the Kremlin of using pop and rap music videos to discourage young Russians from attending anti-corruption protests.

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