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Russia Bans Fired FSB Agents From Traveling Abroad

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Vitaly Nevar / TASS

Fired Russian security agents have been banned from leaving the country for five years, according to a new law signed by President Vladimir Putin on Monday.

Russia imposed a travel ban on active Federal Security Service (FSB) employees in 2010 after an FSB double agent exposed the identities of a network of Russian spies in the United States and Britain. Until the latest ban, former FSB employees faced travel restrictions only if they had access to state secrets.

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Putin's new law adds fired FSB agents to the list of persons restricted from international travel.

Russia needs to ban ex-agents from leaving the country because foreign states carry out

“openly hostile actions” against Russians abroad, lawmakers who proposed the travel ban said this fall.

Ukraine and Georgia’s intelligence services in particular use the threat of criminal prosecution to coerce former Russian security agents into cooperation, the lawmakers said.

The travel ban could also prevent corrupt FSB agents from fleeing Russia after being fired, an unnamed agency source said this summer.

Analysts estimated in 2014 that an unprecedented 5% of the Russian population has been prohibited from leaving in what they described as the country’s new course of self-isolation.

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