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No Non-Slavs or Excess Fun in Branded Material, Russia's Public Services Portal Says

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Nearly 200 ethnic groups live across Russia's 11 time zones. **Sofia Sandurskaya / Moskva News Agency**

The Russian government's public services portal should avoid showing non-Slavic people and excessive fun in its advertising materials, its branding book that resurfaced on social media this week recommends.

Russia's Communications Ministry admitted Thursday that the 2015 brand book was "inappropriate" and plans to issue a new set of guidelines.

Embed:

> так вышло что мне пришлось столкнуться с использованием бренда г*сусл*г. интересно выходит: народы нашей великой и могучей державы внезапно выходят за рамки т. н. «бренда» своей родной страны :))

pic.twitter.com/vziY0AVcN7

— дима (@cetetranger) August 25, 2021

The “Gosuslugi” public services portal provides digital state and municipal services to citizens and migrants, including pre-election handouts for retirees and families with children recently announced by President Vladimir Putin.

The branding book dated 2015 and authored by the Russian Communications Ministry issues a set of recommendations for its ads to “reflect the life situations of people who are consumers of public services.”

“When searching for photographs, avoid using images of people of non-Slavic appearance,” states the Gosuslugi brand book, which is still accessible on its website. “The characters in the photo should be similar to people living in Russia.”

Nearly 200 ethnic groups live across Russia’s 11 time zones, with four-fifths of the country's population belonging to the Slav ethno-linguistic group.

Online observers likened the Gosuslugi recommendation to notoriously xenophobic apartment rental ads in Russia's major cities that explicitly ban potential tenants from Russia’s North Caucasus regions and ex-Soviet Central Asian republics.

The portal’s brand book also instructs advertisers to “avoid excessive emotions and collective joy.”

“Avoid comical and anecdotal images of Russian citizens. Images of people in the ad should be in a comfortable, prosperous environment and an appropriate life situation,” it states.

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