

Russian Lawmakers Eye 15-Year Prison Terms for ‘Fakes’ About Ukraine Invasion

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Deputy Vasily Piskarev. **Moskva News Agency**

Russian lawmakers are drafting legislation that would punish “fake” information about the Kremlin’s war in Ukraine with up to 15 years in prison.

The bill being drafted in the lower-house State Duma seeks to punish those who knowingly “distort the purpose, role and tasks of the Russian Armed Forces, as well as other units during special military and other operations,” [said](#) Vasily Piskarev, head of the Duma’s Security and Anti-Corruption Committee, in an interview with state broadcaster Channel One.

Piskarev said the penalties could apply to “fake” information about Russia’s war losses.

Related article: [Russia Blocks Number of Independent and Ukrainian Media Outlets](#)

Russia has not specified how many of its troops have been injured or killed during the war. Ukraine says 5,700 Russian troops have been killed so far.

Piskarev said that most fake materials are “generated in Ukraine,” but are “willingly distributed by a number of Russian media” and on social media.

“It is one thing when it [disinformation] comes at peacetime, and another when our military is performing important tasks of maintaining peace and security, even if this happens abroad. Such fakes demoralize society, undermine confidence in the Russian army, and most importantly are a huge blow to the fighters’ relatives and friends,” Piskarev said.

State Duma Speaker Vyacheslav Volodin later [voiced](#) support for the bill.

Russian authorities have already threatened to block or fine news websites that describe President Vladimir Putin’s “special military operation” in Ukraine as a war or invasion. State media regulator Roskomnadzor has already blocked several media outlets since then.

On Sunday, the independent Novaya Gazeta newspaper was forced to comply with the authorities' demand to change its language.

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