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Russia Adds Ukraine Separatist Recognition to School Curriculums

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Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency

Russian high schools will start teaching students about the Kremlin's recognition of eastern Ukraine's breakaway republics as independent states in the upcoming academic year, according to a course outline published on the federal Institute for Education Development Strategy website.

In a break with the international community, President Vladimir Putin formally recognized the independence of the pro-Russia Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) and Lugansk People's Republic (LNR) on Feb. 21, days before he sent troops into Ukraine.

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A ninth-grade modern Russian history course for the next academic year contains a lesson titled "The revival of the country since the 2000s, the reunification of Crimea with Russia" that will cover Putin's recognition of the DNR and LNR.

Students in the course will also study Russia’s 2018 construction of the Crimean bridge connecting mainland Russia to the annexed Ukrainian peninsula, as well as 2020 constitutional reforms that gave Putin the option to extend his rule until 2036.

Sergei Naryshkin, the chief of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service, on Monday called for schools to teach about the "heroic struggle” of people in the Donbas region that encompasses the Donetsk and Lugansk regions.

Russian Education Minister Sergei Kravtsov previously said schools in separatist-held Donbas could adopt Russian educational standards from the start of the next academic year in September.

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