

Putin Waives Peacetime Requirement for Officials to Release Tax Returns

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Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a [decree](#) on Thursday lifting the requirement for government officials to disclose their income tax returns for the duration of Russia's military campaign in Ukraine.

"Information on income, spending, assets and property-related obligations is not to be published on official government websites or provided to Russian media for publication during the special military operation," the decree orders.

Russia refers to its invasion of Ukraine as a "special military operation" and makes it a criminal offense to call it a war.

The ban covers the entire period of the war in Ukraine so far, retroactively coming into effect on Feb. 24, when Russian forces launched their invasion, and will remain in effect until a new decree supersedes it.

The decree also exempts soldiers fighting in Ukraine as well as members of the security services from releasing their tax returns, as well as officials who have traveled to Russian-annexed regions of Ukraine for work.

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The presidential decree also lifts another anti-corruption measure — a ban on soldiers, members of the security services, and civil servants receiving monetary or other gifts for their role in the Ukraine conflict.

Prior to the decree, Russian law required civil servants to publicly disclose income tax returns for themselves and their immediate family members in an effort to curtail endemic corruption. Military officers were also required to disclose their tax returns when being appointed or dismissed.

However, public polling has shown that Russians have little trust in the [tax returns](#) submitted by civil servants, with three-quarters of respondents to a 2019 survey saying they thought civil servants declared only a “small” or “negligible” proportion of their assets and income.

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