

Russian Lawmakers Greenlight Expansions for Border Guards to Seize Passports

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Moscow's Vnukovo International Airport. **Mikhail Metzel / TASS**

Russian lawmakers swiftly [approved](#) amendments Tuesday that would expand border guards' power to seize the passports of Russians traveling outside the country.

According to the legislation introduced by the government and approved by the lower-house State Duma in just a single day, border guards will be able to confiscate passports from Russian citizens who are prohibited from traveling abroad.

Russia's border guard service operates as part of the Federal Security Service (FSB).

Passports can be "confiscated within the competence of the court, investigative bodies of the Russian Investigative Committee, executive authorities in the field of internal affairs and their territorial bodies, border authorities of the Federal Security Service and customs authorities," the bill states.

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The expanded powers for passport confiscation will apply to those who are restricted from leaving the country due to their involvement as suspects in criminal investigations, being accused or convicted of a crime, and those “evading obligations imposed by the court.”

Likewise, those restricted from leaving Russia due to mandatory military service — including those who have received digital summonses — will be required to surrender their passports to the Interior Ministry.

If a person fails to hand in their passport, it will be considered void and subject to confiscation at border control.

President Vladimir Putin is expected to sign the bill into law after it receives a vote of approval in the upper-house Federation Council.

Once signed, it will come into effect within 180 days.

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