Russia Opens Criminal Case Against Journalist Masha Gessen Over Ukraine War 'Fake News'

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Journalist Masha Gessen. **Masha Gessen / Facebook**

Russia has opened a criminal case against prominent Russian-American journalist Masha Gessen on suspicion of spreading fake information about Russia's military campaign in Ukraine, the independent Dozhd television channel reported Thursday.

Gessen, who was born in Russia but lives in the U.S., was accused of spreading false information about atrocities committed by the Russian army in Bucha during an interview with popular YouTuber and journalist Yury Dud last year.

If convicted, Gessen would face up to 10 years in prison.

Gessen — who uses they/them pronouns — is a nonbinary and transgender person. They moved to New York in 2013, when Russia started imposing restrictive policies against the LGBT community.

Gessen is a longtime outspoken critic of President Vladimir Putin.

Russian troops occupied Bucha, a city west of Kyiv, shortly after Moscow sent troops into Ukraine last year. More than 450 people [were massacred](#) during the Russian occupation, according to the Ukrainian authorities.

Moscow [denied](#) that its army carried out the atrocities against civilians in Bucha, instead accusing Ukraine and its Western allies of staging the scenes.

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