

Russia's Vladimir Region Bans Hijabs in Schools

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Alexander Ryumin / TASS

Authorities in Russia's Vladimir region have [banned](#) students from wearing hijabs while at school.

According to the ban, which was enacted last week Tuesday, "clothing and elements demonstrating the student's religious affiliation... are not allowed inside educational institutions," including hijabs and niqabs.

The Vladimir region's Education Ministry [insisted](#) in a statement on Saturday that the ban does not violate students' rights since Russia's Constitution establishes the country as a secular state without an official religion.

"The requirements for school dress and the students' appearance, regardless of their religion, ensure the secular nature of state and municipal educational institutions, as well as the maintenance of religious neutrality," the ministry said.

Local media [reported](#) that the Vladimir region was the first in Russia to ban hijabs in schools.

However, in 2015, Russia's Supreme Court [upheld](#) a hijab ban at schools in the republic of Mordovia, introducing the first legal precedent of its kind. Two years later, a local court [lifted](#) a hijab ban for teachers.

Related article: [For Veiled Muslim Women in Russia, Prejudice and Harassment Are Part of Everyday Life](#)

The Vladimir region introduced a dress code for schools in 2017, saying that students must comply with “secular” and “business style” clothing. The latest hijab ban updates that dress code.

Calls to ban hijabs in Russia resurfaced earlier this year amid an uptick in discrimination and xenophobia prompted by the deadly attack on a Moscow concert venue in March. The Islamic State jihadist group claimed responsibility for that mass shooting.

Another deadly attack in Russia's North Caucasus republic of Dagestan in June prompted a senior Muslim cleric to [temporarily ban](#) the niqab, a full-face veil, for “safety measures.”

Though Muslims make up Russia's second-largest religious group, human rights activists and regional media regularly report instances of discrimination against women wearing Islamic religious dress.

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