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Over 3,300 Foreigners Have Received Russian Citizenship for Fighting in Ukraine, Official Says

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Vasily Kuzmichenok / Moskva News Agency

More than 3,300 foreigners have been awarded Russian citizenship this year in return for aiding Moscow's offensive in Ukraine, according to Interior Ministry spokeswoman Irina Volk.

In a Telegram post published Sunday, Volk praised her Interior Ministry colleagues for swiftly assisting "a foreign citizen from a neighboring country" who risked being deported from Russia to face criminal liability for fighting with the Russian army in Ukraine as a mercenary.

"Since the start of this year...3,344 foreign citizens have acquired citizenship on similar grounds," said Volk.

Russian President Vladimir Putin in January signed a decree, which qualifies foreigners fighting in the ranks of the Russian Armed Forces or affiliated military formations for fast-

track citizenship.

The spouses, children and parents of foreigners serving in the Russian army are also eligible for the simplified citizenship procedure.

According to the law, Russian authorities have up to one month to consider citizenship applications from the soldiers and their families.

Russia's simplified citizenship process appeared to be aimed at citizens of ex-Soviet states in Central Asia and other Global South countries who fight for Moscow in Ukraine despite repeated warnings from their governments and the risk of facing criminal prosecution for mercenary work.

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