

Putin Signs Law Expanding Criteria for ‘Foreign Agent’ Designations

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Vladimir Putin. [kremlin.ru](https://www.kremlin.ru)

President Vladimir Putin on Monday [signed](#) into law a bill expanding the criteria for designating individuals and organizations as “foreign agents,” targeting Russians connected with foreign government agencies and international organizations in which Russia is not a member.

The amended legislation also allows authorities to designate as “foreign agents” those who try to involve others in collecting military information that could be used against Russia.

Authorities use the “foreign agent” label, which carries Soviet-era connotations, to target individuals and organizations they view as enemies of the state. Those hit with the designation are required to submit rigorous financial reports to the Justice Ministry, as well as display “foreign agent” disclaimers in publications and social media posts.

Nearly 1,000 individuals, organizations and news outlets, including The Moscow Times, have been branded “foreign agents” since Russia introduced the label under a 2012 law.

In 2022, the law was [broadened](#) further to include not just foreign funding but any kind of foreign support as grounds for being labeled a “foreign agent.” That revision also allowed authorities to shut down websites without a court order and banned designated individuals from receiving state funding, working with minors or teaching at public universities.

A second law signed by Putin on Monday [bars](#) “foreign agents” from engaging in any educational or awareness-raising activities, receiving support from local authorities or serving on the boards of state corporations. That law takes effect Sept. 1, 2025.

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