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Russia Blacklists Brigham Young University and German NGO as 'Undesirable'

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BYU campus. **WikiMedia Commons**

Russia added Brigham Young University and Germany's Körber Foundation to its list of "undesirable" organizations, exposing anyone affiliated with them to potential criminal charges.

No explanation was provided by the Prosecutor General's Office or the Justice Ministry for the designations, which were published on the ministry's website on Monday. Both entities were officially blacklisted on April 29, according to the entries.

The designation bars the private American university and the German nonprofit from operating in Russia. Under Russian law, individuals found to be affiliated with "undesirable" organizations face up to four years in prison, while organization leaders risk up to six years.

Brigham Young University, based in Utah and sponsored by the Mormon Church, offers an

undergraduate degree in Russian studies. The Körber Foundation lists the Russian human rights group Memorial as a longtime partner.

The Moscow Times contacted Brigham Young University for comment.

Russia introduced its "undesirable" law in 2015, using it to crack down on independent media, opposition groups and foreign organizations. Nearly 230 organizations are currently blacklisted, including The Moscow Times, which was added to the list last summer.

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