

Latvia Moves to Expel Russian Journalist Leonid Ragozin, Delfi Reports

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Leonid Ragozin. **Facebook**

Latvian authorities have launched proceedings to declare Riga-based Russian journalist Leonid Ragozin persona non grata, Delfi [reported](#) Tuesday.

While Ragozin was not identified by name, Foreign Minister Baiba Braže [announced](#) blacklisting proceedings against a Russian citizen based on new information from “competent authorities” and discussions with the prime minister.

Sources familiar with the matter told Delfi that the move targets Ragozin, who has resided in Latvia since around the time of Russia’s annexation of Crimea in 2014. There was no indication when the decision would be made.

Ragozin drew public ire for comments he made on a podcast hosted by Aaron Maté of fringe far-left outlet The Grayzone, which has been accused of taking a pro-Russian slant.

He [argued](#) that Russia was compelled to respond to the West with “brute force,”

saying, “[Russia] always consider themselves as the underdogs and as the side that is being under constant pressure from the West, encroaching on its sphere of influence, on its strategic interests. It compels them to respond to hybrid actions, to clandestine actions, to sort of invisible actions that change the landscape in the former Soviet Union.”

Late last month, Latvian Interior Minister Jānis Dombrava [urged](#) the foreign ministry to declare Ragozin a persona non grata due to “opinions that are in blatant contradiction to the interests of the Latvian state.”

“His actions can be regarded as ones aimed at steering Western public opinion in a direction favorable to Russia,” Dombrava wrote on Sept. 30.

Ragozin is a former producer for the BBC Russian Service and editor at Russian Newsweek. His freelance commentary has appeared in recent editions of Al Jazeera, Jacobin and The American Conservative.

In an August column for The American Conservative, Ragozin [argued](#) that ordinary Russians perceive greater threats from Western nations than from their own government.

On Wednesday, Ragozin [thanked](#) supporters while criticizing those reacting to the news of the proceedings to declare him persona non grata with “sadistic glee.”

Latvia has declared dozens of Russian cultural figures, state journalists and commentators personae non gratae since the beginning of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

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