Rights in Russia
Week-ending 12 September 2025

Russia's War against Ukraine

A Ukrainian soldier who went missing near Pokrovsk has said Russian forces tortured some of the Ukrainian soldiers they had captured. (RFE/RL, 5/9/25)

Russia is reportedly producing RG-Vo grenades (a type of toxic gas grenade) and firing them at Ukrainian troops -- despite sanctions and a global convention that bans their use. (RFE/RL, 6/9/25)

The FSB said that it arrested a citizen of Azerbaijan accused of plotting attacks on law enforcement buildings in Stavropol region on behalf of Ukraine. (The Moscow Times, 8/9/25)

Russian opposition figure Ilya Yashin said that authorities had stripped him of his citizenship, citing court documents from his lawyer. (The Moscow Times, 8/9/25)

Grigory Sverdlov, founder of Get Lost, that helps men escape military service, was sentenced to six years in prison in absentia on charges of spreading "disinformation" about the army. (Meduza, 9/9/25)

Russian officials are increasingly worried about how large numbers of soldiers returning from the war in Ukraine, many of whom are former convicts, could disrupt society. (The Moscow Times, 9/9/25)

President Putin awarded a medal for courage to chief of the general staff Valery Gerasimov, subject of an international arrest warrant over alleged crimes against humanity. (The Guardian, 9/9/25)

According to new polling by the Levada Center, 58 percent of Russians say the war in Ukraine has personally affected them or their families in some way. (Meduza, 10/9/25)

Abducted children and those from occupied territories are turning up in Russia's military-style training camps, with fears that some are already on the frontline. (The Guardian, 10/9/25)

Yulia Navalnaya urged the European Union on Wednesday not to impose restrictions on tourist visas for Russian citizens. (The Moscow Times, 10/9/25)

The southern Russian city of Krasnodar reopened its main airport on Thursday, more than three years after it was closed due to the invasion of Ukraine. (The Moscow Times, 10/9/25)

Rosfinmonitoring on Thursday added exiled author Dmitry Bykov to its list of "terrorists and extremists." In April Bykov was charged with spreading "fake news" about the war in Ukraine and evading "foreign agent" obligations. (The Moscow Times, 11/9/25)

The Russian government is weighing an increase in the value-added tax (VAT) as war spending deepens the country's budget deficit, The Bell reported. (Meduza, 11/9/25)

The EU agreed to prolong visa bans and asset freezes on the over 2,600 people and entities the bloc deems responsible for the undermining of Ukraine's territorial integrity. (RFE/RL, 12/9/25)

Other news

People across Russia have been reporting problems accessing Google Meet, the latest platform to face disruptions as the government pushes its own "super-app" called Max. (The Moscow Times, 5/9/25)

Polish authorities on Monday released Pussy Riot member Aysoltan Niyazova from custody after detaining her over the weekend at the request of Turkmenistan. (The Moscow Times, 8/9/25)

Andrei Podnebenny, a Russian serving a prison sentence in Belarus on what government critics call politically motivated charges, has died, the rights group Viasna said. (The Moscow Times, 8/9/25)

Sofiane Sehili, a French national and ultra-endurance cyclist, was arrested in Vladivostok on suspicion of illegally crossing the border and remanded in custody. (The Moscow Times, 8/9/25)

A group of 87 Russian scientists has called on President Vladimir Putin to block a controversial bill that would allow clear-cut logging along the shores of Lake Baikal. (The Moscow Times, 9/9/25)

Tens of thousands of worshipers joined a Russian Orthodox procession in Moscow on Sunday, the largest of its kind since 2015. (The Moscow Times, 9/9/25)

Elections will take place across 80 Russian regions this week. Some regions have opted for an extended three and two-day in-person and online voting, mechanisms that election watchdogs have repeatedly condemned for their enabling of widespread electoral fraud. (The Moscow Times, 11/9/25)

The Kremlin-backed messaging app Max is facing a surge in account rental scams, with fraudsters offering users cash to hand over access to their profiles. (The Moscow Times, 12/9/25)