

Rights in Russia

April 2014

Ukraine On 2/4 the Russian Federal Communications and Mass Media Agency ([Roskomnadzor](#)) said it would purge Crimea of ‘harmful’ information. On 10/4 the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe passed a resolution [depriving](#) the Russian delegation of voting rights. On 17/4 in Geneva Ukraine, Russia, the USA, and the EU announced [agreement](#) on measures aimed at defusing the crisis in Ukraine. On 22/4 Crimean Tatar leader [Mustafa Dzhemilev](#) was told he was barred from entering Crimea for five years.

Freedom of expression On 8/4 rights ombudsman Ella Pamfilova called for the full rehabilitation of those convicted in the [Pussy Riot](#) case. On 9/4 the State Duma’s Culture Committee discussed a [draft cultural policy document](#) i.a. on the [Internet](#) that declared Russia's need to preserve its unique “state-civilization”. On 11/4 the Human Rights Council denounced as illegal the dismissal of Andrei Zubov, a professor at [MGIMO](#), over an article criticizing Russia's actions in Ukraine. On 13/4 at least 5,000 people took part in a Moscow [rally](#) to denounce a government [crackdown](#) on [independent media](#). On 21/4 rights ombudsman [Pamfilova](#) criticized a bill requiring [bloggers](#) with more than 3,000 daily visitors to register with Roskomnadzor. The bill was approved by the [State Duma](#) (on 22/4) and the [Federation Council](#) (on 29/4). On 22/4 founder of VKontakte [Pavel Durov](#) announced he had left Russia after he was forced to sell his shares in the company. On 29/4 [Sova](#) Centre released a [report](#) expressing concern over increased [internet](#) censorship.

Right of association In a speech on 8/4 President Putin called on the [FSB](#) to ensure Russia does not let the West use local civil rights groups to foment unrest. On 8/4 Russia’s [Constitutional Court](#) struck down a legal challenge to ‘foreign agent’ law. On 8/4 St. Petersburg City Court upheld on appeal a lower court ruling that the [Memorial Anti-Discrimination Center](#) is a foreign agent.

Right of assembly On 6/4, six [protesters](#) were detained on Manezh Square for supporting the Bolotnaya Square prisoners. On 30/4 Moscow authorities said they would not allow the opposition to stage a [rally](#) on Bolotnaya Square on 6/5.

Electoral rights On 15/4 the State Duma approved in a first reading a bill to end direct [mayoral elections](#) in some of Russia's largest cities.

High profile prosecutions On 2/4 a Krasnodar court gave a three-year suspended sentence and a fine of 70,000 roubles to NGO activist and professor [Mikhail Savva](#). On 12/4 [Mikhail Savva](#) appealed the ruling. On 8/4 Human Rights Watch called on the authorities to immediately release [Ruslan Kutaev](#), arrested in Chechnya on 20/2 on drugs charges and allegedly tortured. On 1/4 reports said Russian content providers began receiving warnings for permitting reposting from the [blog](#) of Aleksei Navalny. On 22/4 Aleksei Navalny said he had been denied access to the [Internet](#) to prevent him publicizing a letter from Yves Roche to prosecutors refuting the charges against him. On 22/4 a Moscow district court found Aleksei Navalny guilty of [slandering](#) Moscow City Duma Deputy Aleksei Lisovenko, who alleged Navalny posted referred to him on Twitter as a ‘drug addict’. On 24/4 a Moscow court extended Navalny’s [house arrest](#) by six months. On 28/4 a Moscow court returned the Yves Rocher case against [Aleksei Navalny](#) and his brother to the prosecutors.

North Caucasus On 15/4 Russian security forces [killed](#) four suspected militants in Dagestan in a security operation. On 26/4 Russian forces killed up to five suspected militants in Derbent, [Dagestan](#). On 28/4, a witness for the prosecution testifying at the trial of ex-mayor of Makhachkala [Said Amirov](#) said [he had been subjected to torture](#) in Dagestan after his arrest.