

Russian Police Detain Journalists Protesting ‘Foreign Agent’ Crackdown

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Police detained a number of journalists staging single-person pickets outside the FSB on Saturday.
Denis Kaminev / AP / TASS

Russian police Saturday detained a handful of journalists in central Moscow protesting against the government’s crackdown on independent media outlets.

At least nine people, most journalists from independent outlets, including TV Dozhd, The Bell, Takie Dela and Romb, were detained Saturday afternoon in Moscow, the independent Meduza website reported.

The protesters were staging solo pickets outside the central Moscow headquarters of the FSB security services in opposition to a host of independent media outlets being labelled “foreign agents” in recent months.

Embed:

Полиция также задержала Софью Гройсман*, экс-журналистку издания «Проект», ранее признанного Генпрокуратурой нежелательной организацией.

Кроме того, задержан журналист Андрей Бабицкий.

Фото: «Новая»

* Включена Минюстом в перечень СМИ, выполняющих функцию иностранного агента pic.twitter.com/1SD5PsVn3E

— Новая Газета (@novaya_gazeta) [August 21, 2021](#)

Russia's Justice Ministry on Friday labelled broadcaster TV Dozhd and iStories investigative news websites “foreign agents” — the latest organizations to be targeted in what critics say is a broad campaign to silence independent voices.

Dozhd said it plans to appeal the decision.

The fiancé of jailed former journalist Ivan Safronov, who is being held on [treason charges](#), was also detained at the demonstration, the Novaya Gazeta newspaper reported.

Related article: [I Am a 'Foreign Agent'](#)

Under Russian law, [single-person pickets](#) are the only form of protest which do not require prior approval from the authorities. Police on the scene said the picketers had broken rules about how far apart they must stand, the OVD Info non-government organization which monitors detentions [reported](#).

Several media outlets, including Meduza, The Insider and Proekt have been designated “foreign agents” or “undesirable organizations” in recent months. Other civil society organizations, including those linked to exiled oligarch Mikhail Khodorkovsky have been [outlawed](#), individual activists have been [handed](#) lengthy prison sentences, and authorities have also shuttered Alexei Navalny's anti-corruption foundation and regional network of supporters ahead of parliamentary elections next month.

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