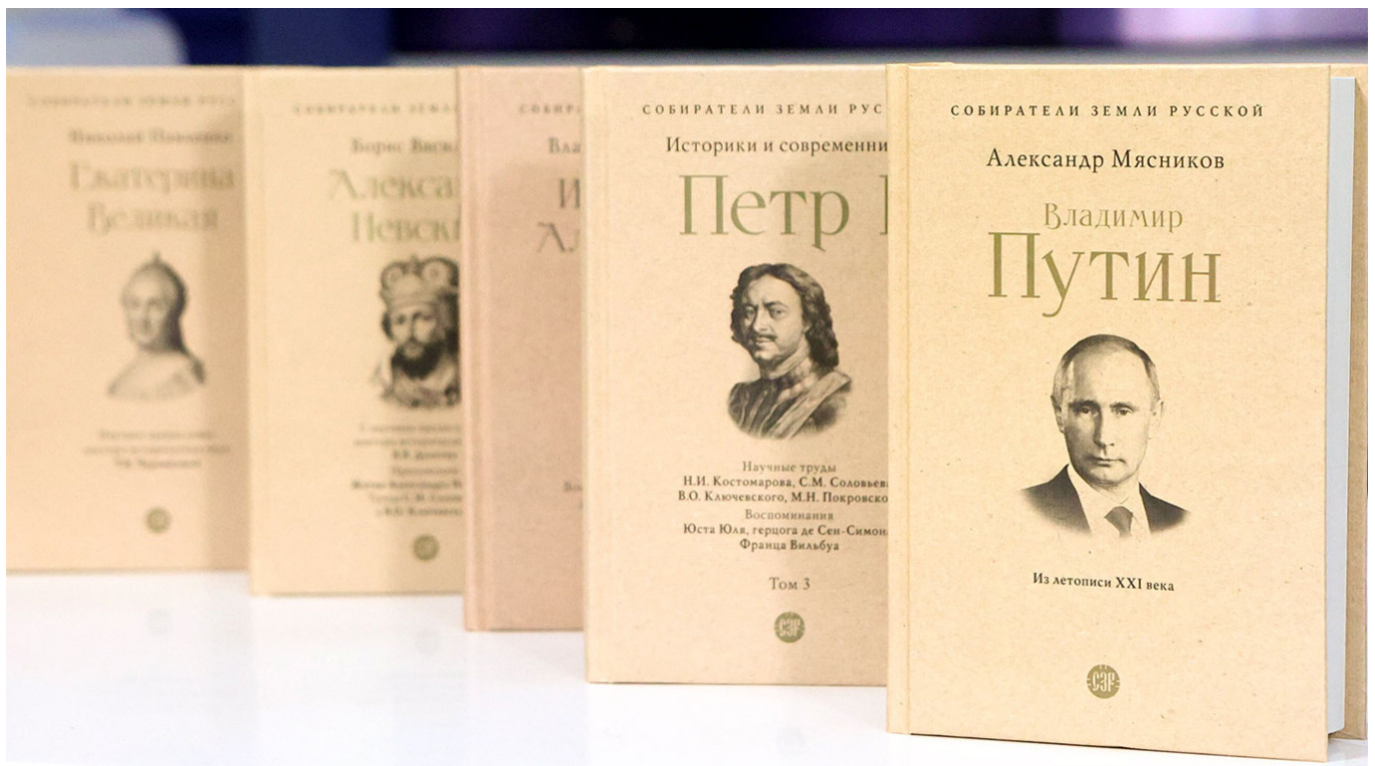


Russia Creates Book Censorship Body – Vedomosti

April 23, 2024



A display of the book "Vladimir Putin: From the Annals of the 21st Century." **Yaroslav ChingaeV / Moskva News Agency**

A union of leading Russian publishers and libraries has created an advisory body that would evaluate books for their compliance with the country's increasingly repressive legislation, the Vedomosti business daily [reported](#) Tuesday.

The Russian Book Union's so-called expert center will issue recommendations on individual books, but leave the final decision to pull the books from sale up to the publishers, according to Vedomosti.

The expert center's recommendations have already led AST, one of Russia's largest publishers, to [announce](#) Monday that it would suspend sales of three books by U.S. authors James Baldwin and Michael Cunningham, as well as the Russian postmodern writer Vladimir Sorokin, for allegedly containing "LGBT propaganda," which is outlawed in Russia.

Related article: [Russian Booksellers Remove Potentially Banned Books](#)

These three titles [appeared](#) in a list of 252 books published by Russian journalists in February amid fears that publishers and major online distributors would pull them from shelves out of fear of violating Russia's "LGBT propaganda" law.

In December, AST [suspended](#) the printing and sale of books by popular exiled anti-war authors Boris Akunin and Dmitry Bykov.

Vedomosti reported that the Russian Book Union had discussed creating the expert council with state media watchdog Roskomnadzor in January 2023. The original idea reportedly envisioned that Russia's Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media Ministry — which is in charge of publishing houses — would oversee the council's work.

The expert center currently includes representatives from Roskomnadzor, state-backed military and historical societies and legal and educational professionals as well as Orthodox Christian, Jewish and Muslim faith leaders, according to Vedomosti.

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