

Sources

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In accordance with the EUAA COI Report Methodology, the content of this report relies on a range of different open-source material, as well as interviews and email communication with oral sources. Information was mainly gathered from public reports by international organisations; reports produced by various bodies of the United Nations; civil society, advocacy groups, humanitarian organisations and NGOs; COI reports of national asylum administrations; media, specialised academic publications and think tanks.

In addition to publicly available sources, interviews with experts were conducted to supplement information gaps and/or to further corroborate specific findings. Some experts interviewed by the EUAA preferred to remain anonymous for security reasons. Experts were selected and assessed according to their expertise, reputability, and current knowledge of the situation on the ground. All the public and oral sources referenced in this report are cited and described in Annex 1: Bibliography.

Structure of the report

The report consists of four main chapters. The first chapter provides an overview of the political system and governance in Russia, detailing recent political developments, state control over media, the internet and digital platforms, and mechanisms of population surveillance.

The second chapter outlines major legal developments, focusing on the scope and implementation of legislation on ‘undesirable organisations’, ‘foreign agents’, the dissemination of ‘false’ information about the Russian military and government and their ‘discreditation’, and high treason, as well as anti-extremism and anti-terrorism laws against individuals expressing dissent to the government and the war in Ukraine.

The third chapter examines the treatment of various political and social groups by the authorities. It covers political opponents, protesters, environmental activists, journalists, human rights defenders and lawyers, religious minorities, LGBTIQ persons and women, focusing both on legal frameworks and practical application as well as regional differences and societal attitudes where relevant.

The fourth chapter provides detailed information on military service. It outlines the structure of the Russian military forces, the concepts of reserve and mobilisation, conscription into

compulsory military services, contract service, regional recruitment practices, and penalties for desertion.

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