

THE EUROPEAN
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CENTRE



EDUCATION IN PUTIN'S RUSSIA

24 November 2022
Litteraturhuset, Oslo

Political developments

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- Search for new national idea based on traditional values and image of Russia as a great power
- Increasing portrayal of the west as hostile
- Diminishing civic space, crack down on political opposition, free media and critical voices
- Militarisation of society and aggressive foreign policy
- Increased influence of the church in state affairs

7 MLN. PRESCHOOL STUDENTS

17 MLN. SCHOOL STUDENTS

**5 MLN. HIGHER EDUCATION
STUDENTS**

0,5 MLN. PRESCHOOL TEACHERS

1 MLN. SCHOOL TEACHERS

**0,2 MLN. HIGHER EDUCATION
EDUCATORS**



The students of Moscow universities at the June 2012 demonstration of opposition. Photo by Evgeniy Isaev

Main developments in the education sector

- Education as a means to “counteract expansion of foreign values” (National Security Strategy, Ministry of Education).
- Greater focus on patriotism and loyalty to the state.
(e. g. Education standards, National programmes for upbringing).
- Greater control over curricula, content, education practice, narratives (e. g. Education standards, 2 state commissions on falsification of history, textbook review, restrictive legislation).

Main developments in the education sector

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- Increased control of education activities, restrictions on civil society's involvement in education (e. g. Law on educational activities, 2021, Foreign agent laws).
- Diminishing autonomy of higher education institutions (e. g. case of HSE, ref. DOXA).
- Isolation on one hand and expansion on the other (e. g. withdrawal from Bologna system, HE expansion policy, Humanitarian policy abroad).



Patriotism and militarisation

Latest developments

- Weekly lessons dedicated to “Conversations about important issues”.
- Rituals such as raising the flag, listening to national anthem.
- From 2023 a course “Basic Military Training” in school curriculum (planned duration: 174 hrs. for 5-9th grade and 69 hrs. for 10th - 11th grade).
- “Fit for Labour and Defence” (GTO) extended to training standards: throwing a grenade, air rifle shooting and drone-control.
- New course “Fundamentals of Russian statehood’ is being developed for HEIs, including recertification of teachers.

Patriotism and militarisation

Already existing practices

- Cadet classes, Cossak organisations
- Military training centres at universities (since 2019, currently 90+ across the country)

Additional activities for youth

- “Walking together” movement later replaced by a democratic youth anti-fascist movement called "Nashi" (200 000 members)
- Patriotic-sport camps: in 78 regions with a total of 4780 camps being spread throughout Russia by 2019, embracing an 21,6% of Russia’s young population.
- Yunarmia membership grew from 700 000 in 2021 to 1 200 000 in autumn 2022.

History education

Increasing the number of academic hours for historical education:

- History from grade 1 through the subjects "Fundamentals of Religion and Secular Ethics" and "The World Around Us".
- A new course "Russia is my history" for 10th – 11st grade (140 hours per year).
- The number of hours of history lectures will increase at universities 144 hrs from September 2023.

Thematic focus

- Focus on understanding the causes and consequences of USSR collapse.
- Russian revolution, Second World War, 1990s, 2000s and the modern history of Russia, annexation of Crimea.
- The topic of "special military operation" to be introduced in national history tests after the curriculum and the history manuals are updated accordingly.

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Thank you.

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