

# Public Protection or Repression?

## Russia's Anti-Extremism Law Enforcement

By Maria Kravchenko and Natalia Yudina; edited by Alexander Verkhovsky  
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Since the February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, newspapers have been full of stories about Russia's military brass and political leaders. However, there has been very little attention paid to what life in Russia is like for ordinary citizens. This publication offers a much-needed evidence-based view of human rights under Putin.

East View Press is proud to present relevant data gathered by the Moscow-based nonprofit SOVA Center for Information and Analysis, which for over two decades has been reporting on the country's legislation and law enforcement. As local Russian offices of advocacy groups such as Memorial, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have been shuttered one after the other, this book emerges as a critical resource. Its publication has become even more urgent with the recent dissolution of the SOVA Center itself.

Compiled for the first time in book form, this collection spotlights SOVA's research on Russia's evolving anti-extremism laws. The statistics here show convincing evidence that, far from safeguarding citizens from hate crimes, this legislation harbors a not-so-hidden agenda: silencing dissent. A must-read for scholars of civil rights, post-Soviet politics, and international relations, this book also resonates with anyone interested in the development of nation-states and the strategies they deploy to retain their authority.

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### Advance praise for *Public Protection or Repression?*

*This evidence-driven volume by the SOVA Center provides an indispensable analysis of Russia's regime evolution, dissecting its use of anti-extremism legislation in achieving repressive political goals. It explains how anti-extremist legislation and law enforcement operate in Russia, using extensive statistics that SOVA has gathered over years of monitoring.*

Ivan Grek, PhD  
Co-Director at The Russia Program, The George Washington University

## PUBLIC PROTECTION OR **REPRESSION?**

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Law Enforcement



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