

## ifa ECP Monitor At a Glance

# Russian Federation

## PRÉCIS

The concept of “soft power” entered public debates after the color revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine and what was perceived as Western tactics aimed at destabilizing Russia. As a counter-reaction, Russia pursued a much more active cultural, educational, and information policy abroad. Two trends are evident here. The promotion of Russian language and high culture aims to strengthen Russia’s image abroad and maintain its influence in post-Soviet countries. On the other hand, a more aggressive information policy seeks to undermine the West and discredit its values and thus present Russia as a potential antithesis. Overall, the Russian ECP approach is characterized by pragmatism and awareness of its geographic limitations. Without the need for further investments, Moscow is working to consolidate its digital & media presence and become a ‘virtual power’.

### Outstanding Fact:

RT (formerly Russia Today) is the leading TV news channel in the digital domain with more than 10 billion views across its YouTube channels and over 16 million subscribers.

### KEY INDICATORS 2019

Population	Rank/number	9 <sup>th</sup> / 144 million
GDP	Rank/number	11 <sup>th</sup> / \$1.7 trillion
GDP per capita	Rank/number	62 <sup>nd</sup> / \$11,585
Cultural Economy	As share of GDP	0.1
Education economy	As share of GDP	0.7
R&D economy	As share of GDP	0.6
Media economy	As share of GDP	0.09
Geopolitical position	Hard power	2 <sup>nd</sup> (2021)
	World trade	17 <sup>th</sup>
	Soft power	30 <sup>th</sup>
	Diplomacy rank	5 <sup>th</sup>

### OVERVIEW OF EXTERNAL CULTURAL POLICY 2019

Number of countries present	about 144
Number of institutions abroad	about 560
FTE staff	at least 1,700
Government support (€ million)	at least 650 <sup>1</sup>
Comparative ECP ranking	middle

<sup>1</sup> Estimation is based on federal budget allocations to selected programs under the “Foreign Policy Activity (Внешнеполитическая деятельность)” and the item “Russia’s Participation in International Information Exchange”. The total expenditure on Foreign Policy activity for 2019 amounted to €1.65 billion.

### Main Objectives

- Advance the interests of Russia in the international arena
- Strengthen positive perception of modern Russia
- Expand cultural and humanitarian presence in the world and especially in regions with compatriots living abroad

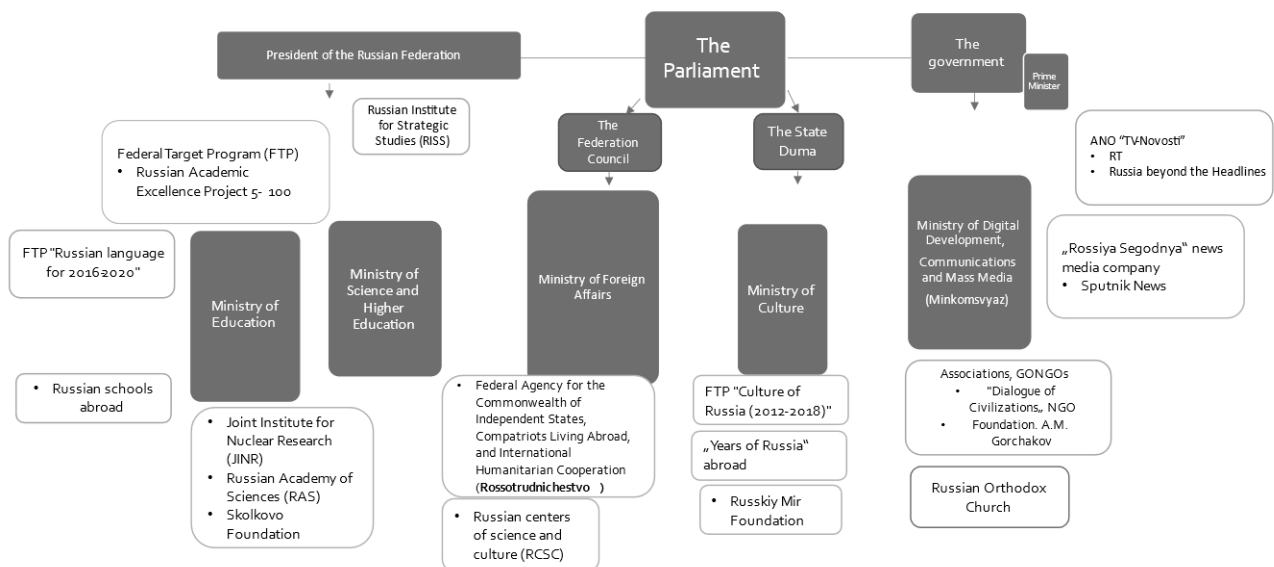
### Policy Context

- A much more active cultural, educational and information policy abroad under President Putin
- Work towards forming a polycentric international system – the Dialogue of civilizations
- Strong regional focus on Russia's neighbourhood

### Regional Focus

	Ruskiy Mir	Rossotrudnichestvo
Europe	52	28
Asia	30	27
Central Asia/ (CIS)	27	16
America	7	12
South America	8	-
Africa	-	8

### INSITUTIONAL MAP



The Russian ECP is defined by a centralized structure. Most foreign cultural and educational programs are planned and implemented by the state. The most important institutions, the agency Rossotrudnichestvo and the Ruskiy Mir, operate under close supervision of the MFA and the Ministry of Culture.

## FIELDS OF EXTERNAL CULTURAL POLICY

	2019	2015	Comment
<b>Culture and the Arts</b>			
Number of countries present	Russkiy Mir centers 52 Russkiy Mir cabinets: 62 Rossotrudnichestvo 80	Russkiy Mir centers 46 Russkiy Mir cabinets: 57 Rossotrudnichestvo 79	
Number of institutes and branches	Russkiy Mir centers 116 Russkiy Mir cabinets: 134 Rossotrudnichestvo 97	Russkiy Mir centers 106 Russkiy Mir cabinets: 140 Rossotrudnichestvo -	
Staff	-	680	Data refer to Rossotrudnichestvo and Russkiy Mir
Budget (€ million)	2.5	2.4	Data refer to the Ministry of Culture (Foreign Relations Program)
Government support (€ million)	Russkiy Mir centers 65 Rossotrudnichestvo 6.5	Russkiy Mir centers 67 Rossotrudnichestvo 6.3	
<b>Language</b>			
Number of countries where courses are offered	58	54	Data refer to RCSC (Russian Centers of Science and Culture)
Number of institutes & branches	35 (Pushkin Institute) 66 (RCSC)	-	Data refer to the Pushkin Institute and the RCSC (Russian Centers of Science and Culture) that offer language courses
Number of students enrolled	In class: 1.1 million	-	Data refer to the Pushkin Institute
	Online reach: 18,189	17,309	Data refer to RCSC (Russian Centers of Science and Culture)
Number of language teachers	2,000	2,600	Refers to the number of foreign teachers of Russian language who enrolled in professional training at the Pushkin Institute
	-	101	Data refer to Russian Schools Abroad, y. 2016/17
Government financial support (€ million)		113	Data refer to the whole Federal Target Program "Russian language for 2016-2020"
	4.3	1.3	Data refer to the federal target program FTP "Russian language" expenses affiliated with Rossotrudnichestvo. 2017 is the latest available
<b>Education – Primary &amp; Secondary</b>			
Number of countries present	88	78	Data refer to Russian Schools Abroad
Number of schools	-	116	
Number of students	21,000	24,300	

	2019	2015	Comment
Number of staff / teachers	-	214	
Government financial support (€ million)	n/a	n/a	
<b>Education – Tertiary</b>			
Number of countries present	25	25	Refers to transnational higher education (TNE)
Number of universities / colleges	43	54	Data refer to Russian universities providing educational services abroad
Number of students (TNE)	42,159	46,993	
Number of foreign students	262,416	226,431	Total number of incoming foreign students
Number of government scholarships awarded	12,310	10,300	
Government financial support (€ million)	6.4	-	Refers to spending under the program "Export Education". The National Education Project (2018-2024) Export Education has a total budget of over €1 billion.
<b>Science and Research</b>			
Number of countries involved	18 members, 68 partner countries	-	Data refer to the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research (JINR)
Institutes	Joint Institute for Nuclear Research (JINR) Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS)		
Number of researchers /staff	5,176	4,801	Data refer to JINR
Number of scientists in exchange programmes	1,812 (incoming) 3,229 (outgoing)	-	
Budget (\$ million)	290	168	
Government financial support (€ million)	64	-	Refers to the National project "Science" - "Development of scientific and production cooperation"
<b>Media</b>			
<b>TV</b>			
Number of countries broadcasted to	over 100	-	Data refer to RT
Number of languages	4 (6 online)	-	
Number of channels	8	-	
Audience weekly (million)	100	-	
<b>Radio</b>			
Number of countries broadcasted to	18	over 20	Data refer to Radio Sputnik

	2019	2015	
Number of languages	15 (2 online)	-	
Audience reach (million)	185	-	Radio Sputnik's estimated reach
<b>New media</b>			
Social networks following (million)	RT: 9.7 Sputnik: 1.7	-	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram audiences combined for the international websites.
Digital audience / monthly (million)	RT: 150 Russkiy Mir: 1.5	Russkiy Mir: 1.2	
Government financial support (€ million)	456	417	Total federal budget allocations to program "Russia's Participation in International Information Exchange"
	305	309	Data refer to federal subsidies to ANO TV Novosti, the legal entity behind RT
	107	90	Data refer to Rossiya Segodnya international news agency, the entity behind Sputnik

#### CURRENT ISSUES AND DEVELOPMENTS

- The main ECP actors - the Russkiy Mir foundation, Sputnik agency, RT TV channel and Rosotrudnichestvo federal agency – operate under close supervision of the government. Since they are perceived as the main vehicles of Russian state propaganda, they often lack credibility and have quite a bit of work to do to earn their trust abroad. As a result of the country's failing reputation, other fields like culture and science often receive negative international coverage as well.
- The Russian ECP is lacking a coherent diplomatic vision. There is a disagreement between its presentation in the former Soviet countries or the "near-abroad" and the rest of the world.
- Culture is another weakness in Russian soft power. Outside the post-Soviet bubble, knowledge of Russian language and culture is often superficial and very limited by the historic ideological ties of the Cold War. Russian high culture (ballet, theatre, literature) still finds its audiences. However, the lack of interest in the Russian modern state and culture thwarts many ECP efforts.
- Similar with language, the number of Russian speakers had been trending downwards. For that reason, the government seeks to "expand and strengthen the Russian language, Russian cultural and educational spaces". One of the burning issues is the lack of Russian language teachers. It is planned to increase the number of foreign teachers and trainees in Russian from 3 thousand in 2015 to at least 15 thousand in 2020.
- In comparison to other major ECP players, Russia was slow with the internationalization of its higher education. The government aims to massively increase the global competitiveness of national universities and place them in international rankings (Project 5-100). Also, it set ambitious targets on the export of educational services with at least 435,000 foreign students until 2024.

#### FURTHER INFORMATION, SOURCES, AND REFERENCES

- A user-friendly summary of with additional data and data sources is here: "*Russia – External Cultural Policy: Data Fact Sheet*"
- A full set of references are presented here: "*Russia – External Cultural Policy: References*"
- A fuller report with a descriptive analysis is found here: "*Russia – External Cultural Policy: A Report*"

## Imprint

The External Cultural Policy Monitor

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