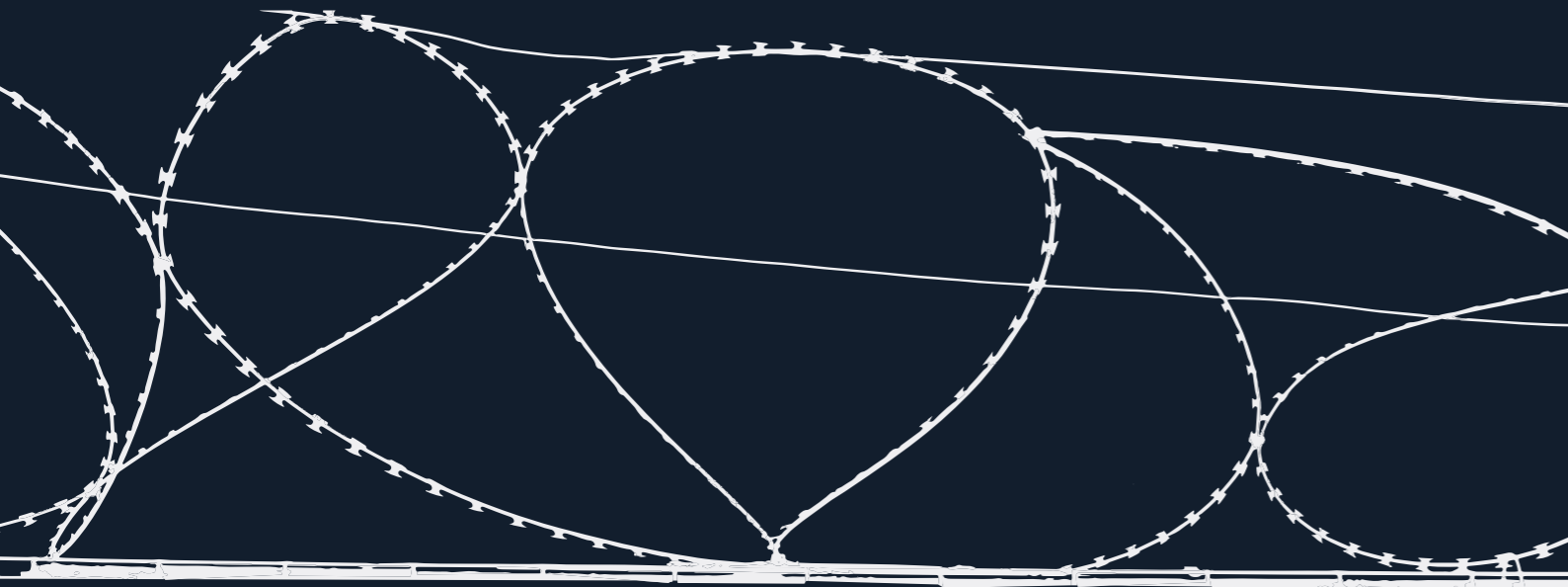


Handbook

For journalists covering the
2018 World Cup in Russia





Editorial

The other side of the World Cup in Russia

Bjørn Engesland
Norwegian Helsinki Committee

When someone says that sport and politics are not affiliated, there is reason to be on guard. Among those who mention this lack of affiliation is the FIFA president, Gianni Infantino. Another is Russia's President Vladimir Putin.

John Peder Egenæs
Amnesty International Norway

It would be nice if sport took place in a secluded world, where power, conflict, money, cheating and crimes were non-existent. But history does not support such a perspective. During the Peloponnesian war, Sparta was expelled from the Olympics because the host city was in an alliance with the Spartans' enemy, Athens. This happened in 424 BC. Little has changed since – politics and sports are still closely connected.

Silje Ask Lundberg
Naturvernforbundet

Ask yourself why FIFA and Putin refuse to acknowledge this fact.

The purpose of this manual is not to destroy enthusiasm about the world's biggest sporting event, but to provide background, much of which is well-known to most. In addition, we give concrete tips about people and organisations who can come in handy for journalists looking for independent, local sources.

Gaute Eiterjord
Natur og Ungdom

Independent Russian activists and journalists operate at a risk, but at the same time they remain professional. In fact, cooperation with local journalists contributed to the Norwegian football magazine Josimar's disclosure of slavery at the Zenit Arena in St. Petersburg. The expose gained great attention worldwide.

Ingvild Endestad
FRI

The topics we are highlighting – such as human rights, corruption, racism, propaganda, environmental issues and persecution of LGBTIs (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans- and intersex persons) – make up some of the context surrounding the World Cup in Russia. The organisations behind this manual also have plenty of knowledge about these topics.

We are indeed happy to make this information available for journalists. We neither can nor want to decide how journalists cover the World Cup. However, we hope that Norwegian journalists are interested in the context of the matches – because that is, in our view, also part of the story.

Susanne Demou Øvergaard
Skeiv Verden

Maria Dahle
Human Rights House Foundation

Contributing Organisations



Norwegian Helsinki Committee

The work of the **Norwegian Helsinki Committee (NHC)** is based on the Helsinki Final Act, which establishes that

human rights are vital to ensure cooperation between states. In other words, NHC has worked towards respect for and practical action of human rights since 1977. Their international work has mainly been concentrated around former Soviet states and the Western Balkans. *Contact Lene Wetteland, wetteland@nhc.no, +47 97 69 75 53, www.nhc.no*



FRI – the Norwegian Organisation for Sexual and Gender Diversity works for equality and against discrimination against people breaking gender and sexual norms in Norway, in addition to the rest of the world. Since 1950 FRI has been an important and clear voice for LGBTI rights.

The organisation is open to everyone supporting its politics. *Contact Ingvild Endestad, ingvild@foreningenfri.no, +47 97 56 22 95, www.foreningenfri.no*



Amnesty International is a global movement working to promote universal human rights, as defined in the UN Human Rights

Declaration and other international agreements. **Amnesty International Norway** was founded in 1964, and has since fought against discrimination and abuse, and to preserve freedom of speech. Amnesty exposes human rights violations in addition to teaching, creating attention and organising protests and actions. *Contact Patricia Kaate, pkaate@amnesty.no/+47 45 48 53 74, www.amnesty.no*



Skeiv verden (Queer World) is a national advocacy group for LGBTIs with a

minority background. Queer World started as a project by the organisation FRI, but was formally founded as an independent organisation in 2010. Queer World is independent of religion and party politics. *Contact Susanne Demou Øvergaard, susanne@skeivverden.no, +47 95 09 32 93, www.skeivverden.no*



Naturvernforbundet (Friends of the Earth Norway) is Norway's oldest environmental and nature protection organisation, founded in 1914. The organisation is membership-based and democratic, working to solve both local and global environmental issues. In addition to its work in Norway, Naturvernforbundet cooperates with environmental groups abroad on issues such as climate change, nature protection and nuclear safety. *Contact Kjersti Album, kja@naturvernforbundet.no, +47 99 02 66 30, www.naturvernforbundet.no*



Natur og Ungdom (Nature and Youth) is the largest environmentalist

youth organisation in Norway, with local groups working for environmental issues all over the country. Nature and Youth has, since its foundation in 1967, sought to be at the leading edge on current issues and continues to speak out about what needs to be done. *Contact Daniella Slabinski, daniellas@nu.no, +47 472 64 564, www.nu.no*



Human Rights House Foundation (HRHF) protects, empowers and supports human rights defenders and their organisations. HRHF

brings organisations together in Human Rights Houses, and unites the Houses in an international network. Today independent human rights organisations work together in 16 Human Rights Houses in 11 countries. HRHF was founded in Norway in 1992. *Contact Ane Tusvik Bonde, ane.bonde@humanrightshouse.org, +47 99 74 39 07, www.humanrightshouse.org*

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Photo: Kremlin.ru

Why is the World Cup important for Russia?

The World Cup is important to the Russian government, which has repeatedly expressed a wish to "move on" from conflict and sanctions.

By Aage Borchgrevink



Lene Wetteland is the
head of the NHC's Russia
department.

The World Cup is an opportunity to show that Russia is a modern, respected and respectable state.

"By hosting the World Cup, the government seeks to balance the negative attention surrounding Russia's military campaigns in Ukraine and Syria, its involvement in foreign elections, its doping programme and killings of regime opponents," says Lene Wetteland, senior adviser at the Norwegian Helsinki Committee.

A national party

The World Cup is also a chance to throw a national party that unites all Russians, including those who do not like Putin or the ruling party. Speaking about the event in December President Vladimir Putin said:

"We'll make everything possible so that it [the competition] became a true sports holiday and, what is most important, brought closer the big and friendly football family, the family that values sports, friendship and fair contest most of all and the values of which are not governed by any current situation," according to TASS.

Important to the Putin brand

Being associated with the world's largest and greatest sports event is tempting to any leader, but perhaps especially if you – like president Vladimir Putin – have built your public persona around sport. Putin plays ice hockey with Soviet veterans and does photo ops in judo outfits. Sport is an important part of the Putin brand.

"A strong president for a strong Russia" was Putin's slogan during the recent election campaign that saw him re-elected with a huge majority in a race where (unlike in the World Cup) there was no genuine competition.

**"By hosting the World Cup, the government seeks to
balance negative attention"**

Benefactors of the system

Similarly, Ramzan Kadyrov, the leader of Chechnya, plays football show matches against Maradona and is something of a godfather of Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) in Russia. In a memorable event he had his three sons (aged eight, nine and ten) fight other kids in Grozny, the republic's capital. Football is used as an attempt to show that the region has recovered from the war.

The recent arrest of one of Russia's richest men, Ziyavudin Magomedov, is linked to corruption at a World Cup venue in Kaliningrad. The arrest of only one of the corrupt oligarchs is seen by some Russians as the result of regime in-fighting and a need for scapegoats to deflect popular resentment.

"Unfortunately the Russian state lacks the will to address the issue of corruption, partly because its officials are the main benefactors of the system," says Wetteland.

The slaves of St. Petersburg

The working conditions of 110 North Korean workers building the stadium in St. Petersburg were described as inhumane, involving low payments, long hours and deaths.

By Kamilla Karlsholmen Hauge

Contact:



Artem Filatov, RTVI
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Russian journalist and producer Artem Filatov visited the construction site along with Norwegian journalist Håvard Melnæs for the Norwegian football-journal Josimar in late 2016.

They uncovered inhumane working conditions, involving accidents related to falls and electric shocks. One North Korean worker was found dead in a container outside the stadium.

“The North Koreans have no personal choice, they are not free. That’s why I’m sure we can call them real slaves,” Filatov says.

Filatov explained that the North Koreans worked long hours and experienced continuous surveillance. Furthermore, North Korea received a high percentage of their income, leaving the workers with a salary consisting of almost nothing. At night they were crammed into small barracks.

Unexpected costs

“The use of a North Korean slave labour force is the result of corruption,” Filatov says.

The Zenit football club decided to rebuild the Zenit Arena in 2006. The original plan was to have the stadium ready by 2008 – 10 years before the FIFA World Cup 2018. However, the first official match at the Arena took place on April 22, 2017.

By then, the construction had lasted for nine years. The cost had been multiplied almost tenfold. Corruption is most likely the main cause for the high total cost.

Foreign Workers

Russian construction companies started importing foreign workers from former Soviet states in the 1990s. However, in the past few years their interest has turned to North Korean workers in order to cut costs:

“The North Koreans are definitely the cheapest labour force they had. Their working conditions were awful in comparison to native Russians and other migrant workers. This is a clear violation of human rights,” Filatov says.

Because of international sanctions, North Korea has exported at least 100,000 workers mainly to China, the Middle East and Russia. The export of workers functions as an important source of income for the regime.



Russian journalist and producer Artem Filatov uncovered inhumane working conditions when he visited the Zenit Arena construction site in St.Petersburg.
Photos: Denis Sinyakov

“The North Koreans have no personal choice, they are not free. That’s why I’m sure we can call them real slaves”

Did you know?

- The Egyptian team will be training in Grozny, the capital of Chechnya, where Oyub Titiev, the head of human rights group Memorial's branch, has been detained on false grounds since January 2018.
- Both Egypt and Chechnya are infamous for cruel treatment of gay men over the last few years.
- In 2016, masked men attacked a group of international journalists and Russian human rights activists on the border of Chechnya to hinder them from documenting violations in the region.

Festive occasion with tough restrictions

The World Cup in Russia is by no means the nationwide festive occasion one would expect, as restrictions and regulations introduced for the championship resemble those of a state of emergency or an anti-terror operation.

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By Inna Sangadzhieva

Prior to the 2018 FIFA World Cup, special regulations consisting of 20 different measures meant to strengthen security were signed by Putin in January 2017. However, as a consequence, these regulations limit not only freedom of movement, but also violate the right to run a business, property rights, and freedom of assembly. In the name of security, law enforcement bodies are eager to obtain control by checking every apartment and building near World Cup venues and identifying “unreliable persons”.

“We see from the cases of our clients how freedom of expression, assembly and movement have been severely limited during the past decade. These special additional regulations expand the lawlessness and impunity of the security services further, and this is a serious human rights concern,” says Pavel Chikov, head of the International Agora Network.

Whereas the Russian Federation has formal state institutions, they do not operate independently in practice. As a result, notwithstanding that the World Cup-related amendments introduced and signed by President Putin seem to contradict the Russian Constitution, neither parliament nor the courts have implemented their constitutional role as overseers.

Human rights organisations are concerned about arbitrary detentions and arrests of critics, activists, migrants and people with non-Slavic appearances, taking place under cover of legitimate high security precautions for the World Cup.

“It is already happening now. People are being detained and brought to the police stations on a large scale, only because they are ‘non-Slavic’. In other words, appearance happens to be the main criterion for document inspections,” says Sergey Zykov, member of the public prison monitoring commission in Yekaterinburg.

Thousands of soldiers, prison guards and police have been called in to guard the stadiums and other related buildings. In places like Volgograd, Yekaterinburg and Nizhny Novgorod, the local authorities force businesses to close around the stadiums, and the FSB has sent letters encouraging people not to work during the World Cup.

Human rights activists are concerned that such measures may violate the rights of ordinary people. On social media, people express their desire to leave their homes in order to avoid running into the security services, in fear of what might be the consequences.

Register of regulations:

The regulations introduced for the World Cup bestow substantial authority and power on the law-enforcement bodies, in addition to the numerous repressive law amendments that have been adopted since 2012. The list is available at www.nhc.no

From the 20 regulations, some issues are of particular concern to human rights activists:



The regulations allow for individual searches and searches of private apartments without any court order, in violation of the right to privacy.



Freedom of movement will be severely restricted.



Freedom of assembly, protests and demonstrations will also be limited.



Security services are allowed to make lists of “suspect” and “non-reliable” persons according to unclear criteria. Such lists may be used for prosecution in the future. Activists and critical-minded persons are among the vulnerable groups.



Mistrust of representatives of the security services and their behaviour towards citizens may cause conflict and arbitrary detentions.

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Did you know?

Russia was ranked Europe's second-least LGBT-friendly nation in 2017 by ILGA Europe.

Violence against individuals based on perceived or known sexual orientation or gender identity is widespread in Russia; hate groups organise hunts for people who "look gay".

In spite of the documented persecution, detention, torture and murder of hundreds of gay men in Chechnya, it will be the official training location for the Egyptian national team.

By Mina Wikshåland Skouen

In 2017 an unprecedented wave of persecution targeted people believed to be gay or lesbian in Chechnya. According to the Russian LGBT network and the investigation of independent newspaper Novaya Gazeta, hundreds of people were detained and tortured. In addition, an unknown number were killed.

In comments given by Ramzan Kadyrov, the leader of Chechnya, in May 2017, authorities responded that there were no gay people in Chechnya, but if there were, their families would "take care of them". During the FIFA World Cup, Chechen authorities will welcome the Egyptian national team to their base camp in Grozny – which was approved by FIFA in February. In fact, Egypt is one of the countries in the world where gay men have been subject to repression of the very same character as in Chechnya.

"We currently have no grounds to believe that the choice of the Egyptian FA to locate its base camp in Grozny will cause particular adverse human rights impacts," FIFA stated to the Associated Press.

Svetlana Zakharova from the Russian LGBT Network strongly disagrees:

"By locating one of the base camps in Grozny, FIFA is giving a sign that they are fine with the persecution of LGBTIs. FIFA is also showing that they do not understand why such actions should be condemned, and that they do not think that a crime against humanity is a reason to change this location," Zakharova says.

Furthermore, Zakharova says that foreign supporters promoting LGBTI rights during the World Cup will not necessarily be safe.

"I am not sure if Russian authorities will manage to keep their promise of not detaining people with rainbow symbols, and that they will provide security for every person visiting Russia," Zakharova says.

Zakharova cites the so-called "gay propaganda law" from 2013 as a contributing factor. The law prohibits the mention of non-traditional sexual relations to minors. A recent report shows that the number of hate crimes based on homophobia and transphobia has doubled since its introduction.

"Russian authorities have promoted this hatred for many years. I am sure they will do their best to protect foreign visitors, but I do not think it is possible. A person raising the rainbow flag in a Russian crowd is not safe and could face violence," Zakharova concludes.

The new face of Russia

President Putin gets almost all the attention from media globally. But listen up; a new and brave generation is waiting for their chance to change Russia.

By Øystein Solvang

"Young people in Russia have what it takes to make changes. We are not afraid like our parents who grew up in the Soviet era. We have what it takes to fight corruption, injustice, lies and the Putin monopoly," says Lisa Liubavina.

She is an activist in the independent movement Vesna in St. Petersburg.

A recent survey from the Levada Centre shows that 42 per cent of the population of Russia want change. One of them is Viktor Vorobev. The young liberal activist has experience from the liberal Yabloko party and the Navalny campaign.

"The role of millennials in Russia is not to fight, but to survive today's conservative power elite and to work for a transition to a brighter and democratic future," he says.

"Young people in Russia have what it takes to make changes."

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Denis Panfilov is a student of political science in Moscow and believes that the young generation will become more dominant in Russian politics:

"It's a youth rebellion that will only become stronger and stronger!"

Panfilov points out that many young people participate in mass demonstrations against corruption and social injustice.

"Today's protesters will be tomorrow's politicians and civil society. We are beginning to learn how to make changes," the student says.

Senior Adviser Inna Sangadzhieva at the Norwegian Helsinki Committee believes that the new generation is increasingly distancing themselves from the authoritarian regime and the propaganda from the government.

"We see a growing civil society where people demonstrate despite the risk of being arrested. A new political culture is emerging with an understanding of the rights of individuals."

The fearless post-Soviet generation is pessimistic when it comes to short-term changes.

"But we must not lose faith in a future of democracy and freedom in Russia," says Lisa Liubavina.

Environmental heroes or foreign agents?

Pressure on environmentalists and journalists makes it difficult to work for environmental protection.

By: Kjersti Album and Daniella Slabinski



Support for a national park in Khibiny mountains. Photo: Evgeny Usov

Russia has huge environmental challenges, but concerns for natural values, environmental protection and people's health are not taken into account sufficiently.

"Pressure on those who try to protect the Russian environment has increased in the last few years," says Vitaly Servetnik, co-chair of the Russian Social-Ecological Union (RSEU), a member-based democratic organization that brings together public organisations and active citizens from all regions of Russia.

Thirty-one environmental groups across Russia have been labelled foreign agents so far, for receiving money from abroad and at the same time working on "political" issues. In the World Cup cities, environmental groups have been labelled foreign agents in Rostov-on-Don, St. Petersburg, Kaliningrad, Samara, Nizhny Novgorod and Sochi (Krasnodar region). This is shown in a recent report from RSEU and Naturvernforbundet.

"Russia could really use engaged environmentalists, but the authorities choose to regard them as threats," Servetnik says.

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Threatened by construction

The Russian environment has not recovered since the Olympic games in 2014. In Sochi specifically, and in the Krasnodar region as a whole, many problems remain unsolved. In order to host the World Cup Russia has created new environmental problems. In Kaliningrad the new stadium was built on the island of Lomza. As a result of the construction, the quality of the city's drinking water has deteriorated and pollution has increased in the Pregol river, which flows through the center of Kaliningrad and into the Baltic Sea.

"In areas across Russia that are under pressure, valuable nature is destroyed by industrial development without democratic procedures," says Servetnik.

Not giving up

Despite difficult working conditions, environmental groups and brave individuals across Russia engage in environmental issues, such as waste landfills, nuclear waste, construction, and energy efficiency. Servetnik gives several examples:

"In Kazan, people oppose a planned waste incineration plant that will cause toxic gas, because the waste is not sorted and technology standards are low. In other places, such as Volokolamsk outside Moscow, people are protesting against the toxic landfills."

"Russia could really use engaged environmentalists, but the authorities choose to regard them as threats"

Both Natur og Ungdom and Naturvernforbundet cooperate with Russian environmentalists to solve common environmental problems, and to share experience.

"We are impressed that Russian environmentalists don't give up but continue their valuable work," says Gaute Eiterjord, chair of Natur og Ungdom.

"Many environmentalists are labelled as foreign agents, but really they are environmental heroes and agents of nature," says Silje Ask Lundberg, chair of Naturvernforbundet.

Reports with more information are available at www.naturvernforbundet.no/civilsocietyreports

Did you know?

The Russian law on foreign agents was approved in 2012, and says that an organisation can be labelled a foreign agent if it has received foreign funding at the same time as engaging in "political activity". The term foreign agent sounds like "enemy of the state" or "traitor", and most environmental organisations that have received this label decided to close down.

Russian hooligans promise bloodshed

Russian hooligans are among the world's most violent in addition to being far-right and racist. The World Cup is preparing for violent clashes, according to reports.

By Kamilla Karlsholmen Hauge

Around 150 Russian hooligans left two British supporters in comas fighting for their lives, after being attacked with iron bars and hammers at the 2016 European Championship in France.

"It is expected that clashes between English and Russian fans at the World Cup will take place in either St. Petersburg or Nizhny Novgorod at the end of June. In addition, there have been reports of alliances between Russian and Argentinian hooligans," says Natalia Yudina, researcher at the SOVA Center for Information and Analysis in Moscow.

Due to the promise of bloodshed, the hooligans have already arranged training camps.

In addition to being extremely violent, the hooligans are also racist with far-right mindsets.

"Racist prejudices expressed as insults and incitement to ethnic hatred are very evident. Hooting, racist and homophobic chants were heard from the fan sectors of various teams in the past year," Yudina says.

Furthermore, Yudina explained that far-right groups amongst Russian football fans often use neo-Nazi symbols, slogans and banners. The violent aggression especially targets fans from Central Asia, and the stadiums remain no-go areas for LGBTIs.

Even though there have been incidents all over the country, Yudina points out particularly problematic regions within and surrounding Moscow, St. Petersburg, Rostov, Yekaterinburg and Stavropol in addition to the Republic of Tatarstan. Moreover, the hooligans may be a potential threat to journalists in the upcoming World Cup.

"We know of one such case in Krasnodar. In 2017 a journalist who photographed football fans was attacked by hooligans," Yudina says.

In recent years Russian authorities have acted to marginalise the radical fans and minimise the risks of violence. All police forces will be available during the World Cup, ready for mobilisation in order to maintain public order.

"I think it will be a severe blow for the reputation of the Kremlin if violence breaks out. Not only abroad, where its image already is damaged, but also domestically in the eyes of ordinary Russians," Yudina concludes.

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Security before safety

Will supporters be safe at the football stadiums?

By Inna Sangadzhieva

64 matches will be played at 12 stadiums in Russia, and several other stadiums will host trainings. FIFA's security requirements are indeed high. However, some reports show that safety measures were not given the necessary priority during the construction period. For instance, there have been at least three incidents of fires registered at the stadiums during construction in Nizhny Novgorod, Samara and Volgograd. FIFA had to admit the lack of security measures in a report written by the Human Rights Advisory Board.

The tragedy in Kemerovo as a warning

Russians were alarmed after the tragedy in Kemerovo on March 25, when around 60 people, including 41 children, died in a fire in a shopping centre and cinema. When the fire started, the fire alarm was switched off by security guards and the emergency exits were blocked due to anti-terror measures.

Gregory Shvedov, editor-in-chief of the independent website Caucasian Knot, is concerned with the imbalance between "security" and "safety", where the former is given more priority than the latter:

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"The contradiction between 'security' and 'safety' measures seems to be difficult to resolve"

"The contradiction between 'security' and 'safety' measures seems to be difficult to resolve. Should you open the doors in case of fire? Or should you keep the doors locked, preventing terror attacks? The problem is that both can occur and Russian authorities do not have the proper means to respond," says Shvedov.

Corruption as a threat to security

The tragedy in Kemerovo has also underlined corruption as a threat to security. With a budget of approximately \$12 billion, it goes without saying that the World Cup also implies possibilities for graft and corruption.

Several scandals have already been uncovered in the construction of World Cup-related infrastructure. In Rostov, for instance, 25 lifts were built instead of 45, as originally planned. Aras Agalarov, a Russian billionaire and the man in charge of the stadiums in Rostov and in Kaliningrad, admitted that 20 lifts had disappeared. However, he did not see this as a problem: "people do not use the lifts at the stadiums," he said.

In 2017 Russia ranked 135th out of 180 countries in Transparency International's 25th annual Corruption Perceptions Index, published in February 2018.

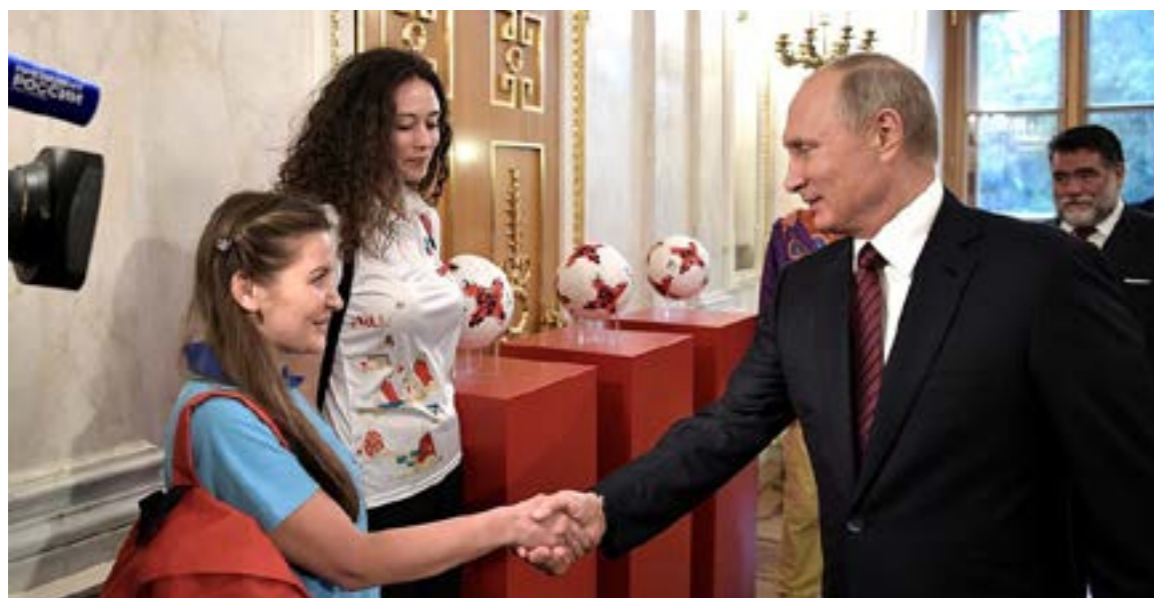
Did you know?

FIFA's corruption report was released in June 2017 and shows how voters exploited the murky system, but still allowed Russia and Qatar to host the 2018 and 2022 tournament.

Dos and don'ts – when covering Russia

Russian broadcast journalist Artem Filatov shares his best advice for covering the World Cup.

By Hilde Sandvær



Joint meeting of the Council for the Development of Physical Culture and Sport and the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia Local Organising Committee's Supervisory Board.
Photo: kremlin.ru

What should journalists be aware of when covering the event?

"Sport is more than just sport for the Russian ruling class. President Putin sees the Sochi Olympics 2014 and World Cup 2018 as symbols of national success and the effectiveness of his system. The government doesn't take into consideration the costs of the international tournament for ordinary Russians," Artem Filatov, TV and radio journalist and producer, explains, and continues:

"Moreover, every person living in the 11 host cities of the World Cup will face human rights restrictions – a special regime of registration not only for foreigners but for Russian citizens, de-facto bans on public gatherings and protests during the World Cup and other measures described as unconstitutional. It's definitely important to take into account all this while covering this great football event."

Why is it important that foreign journalists cover more than the matches?

"Russian state media focus on the positive side of the upcoming tournament, but there are multiple human rights violations and registered deaths because of lack of safety during the construction of the stadiums. There are also killings of stray animals in Russian regions before the World Cup."

"The officials don't want to talk about the negative sides, but it's important to show the real price of the World Cup in Russia. Those who died or suffered deserve better treatment and better conditions, and foreign journalists are able to expose it. Moreover, since 2014 officials have done a great effort in order to isolate Russian citizens. They ban food and products from the US and EU, block Telegram messenger, ban British Council and other institutions in Russia."

Independent media:

www.novayagazeta.ru
www.rbc.ru
www.vedomosti.ru

www.kavkaz-uzel.eu
(Rostov, Volgograd)
www.znak.com
(Yekaterinburg)
www.newkaliningrad.ru
(Kaliningrad)
www.7x7-journal.ru
(Saransk, Kaliningrad)
www.fontanka.ru
(St.Petersburg)

What are the greatest challenges for journalists in Russia?

"Russian journalists often experience direct or indirect government control. Female journalists face sexual harassment even in the State Duma, the lower chamber of the Russian parliament. For independent media the situation is not stable, they may easily lose investments and advertising income and close down as a result of state actions against them."

What are the challenges for foreign journalists covering Russia?

"In practical terms it's difficult to get comments from Russian officials. You have to send them written requests in advance (2-3 weeks or so). The interviews in many cases are very formal. You need accreditation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to contact officials while working in Russia. It's not enough to have a journalist visa for such purposes."

“Every person living in the 11 host cities of the World Cup will face human rights restrictions”

How can local journalists in Russia assist foreign journalists in meeting these challenges?

"My work with Josimar magazine on North Korean slave workers is an example of such cooperation between Russian and Norwegian journalists. There is a significant number of independent, highly professional and open-minded journalists in Russia. We know the situation and the sources and we need an opportunity to distribute the results of our work on the international level."

Do you have any concrete practical advice?

"I recommend to approach independent local initiative “The Cup for the People” (<http://cupforpeople.spb.ru/en>) in St. Petersburg. Olga Polyakova and other activists are ready to talk about human rights issues and the real impact of the World Cup on their city."

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Did you know?

- The price of the World Cup for Russia is around \$12 billion.
- Budget spending for only one stadium in St. Petersburg is over \$1 billion.
- The former deputy governor of St. Petersburg Marat Oganessian was arrested in connection with embezzlement at the new stadium.
- Billionaire Zyavudin Magomedov (No. 81 on the Russian Forbes list) has been charged with embezzlement at the newly-built football stadium in Kaliningrad and is under arrest.

11 Cities – 64 Matches

1 – Yekaterinburg

Sverdlovsk region
Population: 1.4 million
 Yekaterinburg is one of the most liberal regions in Russia, with a democratically-minded and popular mayor. However, mayoral elections were recently abolished. There have also been documented human rights abuses all over the region. Among other things, a detention centre known for severe torture is located next to an arena used in the upcoming World Cup.

Matches at Yekaterinburg Arena:

June 15: Egypt vs. Uruguay
 June 21: France vs. Peru
 June 24: Japan vs. Senegal
 June 27: Mexico vs. Sweden

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Chelyabinsk (200 km from Yekaterinburg)
 Andrey Talevlin, environmental activist and lawyer
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2 – Kaliningrad

Kaliningrad region
Population: 450,000
 The Kaliningrad region has 80 per cent of the world’s amber reserves. However, the region has a lot of illegal mining and corruption is also very widespread. In addition, there are a lot of environmental concerns in the form of port warehouses of barrels of poisonous substances.

Matches at Kaliningrad Stadium:

June 16: Croatia vs. Niger
 June 22: Serbia vs. Switzerland
 June 25: Spain vs. Morocco
 June 28: England vs. Belgium

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3 – Kazan

Tatarstan Republic
Population: 1.2 million
 Kazan has a lot of environmental

problems caused by the building of the waste-burning plant. There is an ongoing conflict between federal and local security services. In addition, there are conflicts related to demolition of historic buildings and use of the native Tatar language.

Matches at Kazan Arena:

June 16: France vs. Australia
 June 20: Iran vs. Spain
 June 24: Japan vs. Senegal
 June 27: South Korea vs. Germany
 June 30: Round of 16, C1 vs. D2
 July 6: Quarterfinals, QF5 vs. QF6

Contacts:

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4 – Moscow

Capital of Russia
Population: 12.5 million
 Moscow is the centre of government in addition to being the federal decision centre, causing the city to be a centre for demonstrations as well. Some of Moscow’s main struggles involve overpopulation, traffic jams, corruption and nationalism.

Matches at Spartak Stadium:

June 16: Argentina vs. Iceland
 June 19: Poland vs. Senegal
 June 23: Belgium vs. Tunisia



Contact information

Please contact the Norwegian Helsinki Committee for phone numbers of contacts. For the sake of security, download and use safe communication tools like Telegram, Signal or WhatsApp in correspondence. Bear in mind that the Russian government is attempting to block the use of Telegram.



11 Cities – 64 Matches

June 27: Serbia vs. Brazil
July 3: Round of 16, H1 vs. G2

Matches at Luzhniki Stadium:

June 14: Russia vs. Saudi Arabia
June 17: Germany vs. Mexico
June 20: Portugal vs. Morocco
June 26: Denmark vs. France
July 1: Round of 16, B1 vs. A2
July 11: Semifinals, SF3 vs. SF4
July 15: Final, FN1 vs. FN2

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5 – Nizhny Novgorod

Nizhny Novgorod region

Population: 1.2 million

The use of torture and impunity are widespread in Nizhny Novgorod. In addition, the demolition of historic architecture and corruption are among the main challenges.

Matches at Nizhny Novgorod Stadium:

June 18: Sweden vs. South Korea
June 21: Argentina vs. Croatia

June 24: England vs. Panama
June 27: Switzerland vs. Costa Rica
July 1: Round of 16, D1 vs. C2
July 6: Quarterfinals, QF1 vs. QF2

Contacts: Olga Sadovskaya,
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Against Torture
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6 – Rostov-on-Don

Rostov region

Population: 1.1 million

Rostov is the 10th-largest city in south Russia, and is located close to Crimea. Its infrastructure is poor, involving very bad roads. Corruption, persecution of LGBTIs and crime are also widespread. Ahead of the upcoming World Cup there have been a lot of “measures” taken to clean the city, involving the catching and killing of stray dogs.

Matches at Rostov Arena:

June 17: Brazil vs. Switzerland
June 20: Uruguay vs. Saudi Arabia
June 23: South Korea vs. Mexico
June 26: Iceland vs. Croatia
July 2: Round of 16, G1 vs. H2

Contacts:

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7 – St. Petersburg

Northwest Russia

Population: 5.3 million

St. Petersburg has a lot of challenges related to taking care of the national heritage. The use of torture, impunity and nationalism are also widespread. In addition, the Norwegian football magazine Josimar exposed the use of North Korean slaves in the building of the Zenit Arena.

Matches at Saint Petersburg Stadium (Zenit Arena):

June 15: Morocco vs. Iran
June 19: Russia vs. Egypt
June 22: Brazil vs. Costa Rica
June 26: Nigeria vs. Argentina
July 3: Round of 16, F1 vs. E2
July 10: Semifinals, SF1 vs. SF2
July 14: Third place play-off, PO1 vs. PO2

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8 – Samara

Samara region

Population: 1.1 million

The oil city Samara struggles with poor infrastructure and bad water quality. In addition, Samara has serious environmental problems due to waste from surrounding factories and the burning of rubbish. Persecution of activists and LGBTIs is also widespread.

Matches at Samara Arena:

June 17: Costa Rica vs. Serbia
June 21: Denmark vs. Australia
June 25: Uruguay vs. Russia
June 28: Senegal vs. Colombia
July 2: Round of 16, E1 vs. F2
July 7: Quarterfinals, QF7 vs. QF8

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com

9 – Saransk

Mordovia

Population: 300,000

The region struggles with serious economic problems, and its public debt is the largest in Russia, amounting to over 176 per cent of the region's income. The region can therefore be declared bankrupt. In addition, some of the

other challenges involve the poor quality of regional management, corruption and bad roads. There have also been reports of severe conditions and inhumane treatment of prisoners.

Matches at Mordovia Arena:

June 16: Peru vs. Denmark
June 19: Colombia vs. Japan
June 25: Iran vs. Portugal
June 28: Panama vs. Tunisia

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10 – Sochi

Krasnodar region

Population: 429,000

The former Olympic city struggles with conflicts between security services as well as impunity, persecutions of activists and arbitrary arrests. In addition, Sochi has severe environmental problems in relation to “unauthorised construction” and dumping of rubbish in the sea. Persecutions of environmental activists are widespread.

Matches at Fisht Stadium:

June 15: Portugal vs. Spain
June 18: Belgium vs. Panama
June 23: Germany vs. Sweden
June 26: Australia vs. Peru

June 30: Round of 16, A1 vs. B2
July 7: Quarterfinals, QF3 vs. QF4

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11 – Volgograd

Volgograd region

Population: 1 million

Volgograd's main struggles involve poor infrastructure, bad roads and corruption. There are frequent protests demanding social rights, involving demands for increased salaries and reduction of debts. In addition, there is still an ongoing search for soldiers who died during World War Two.

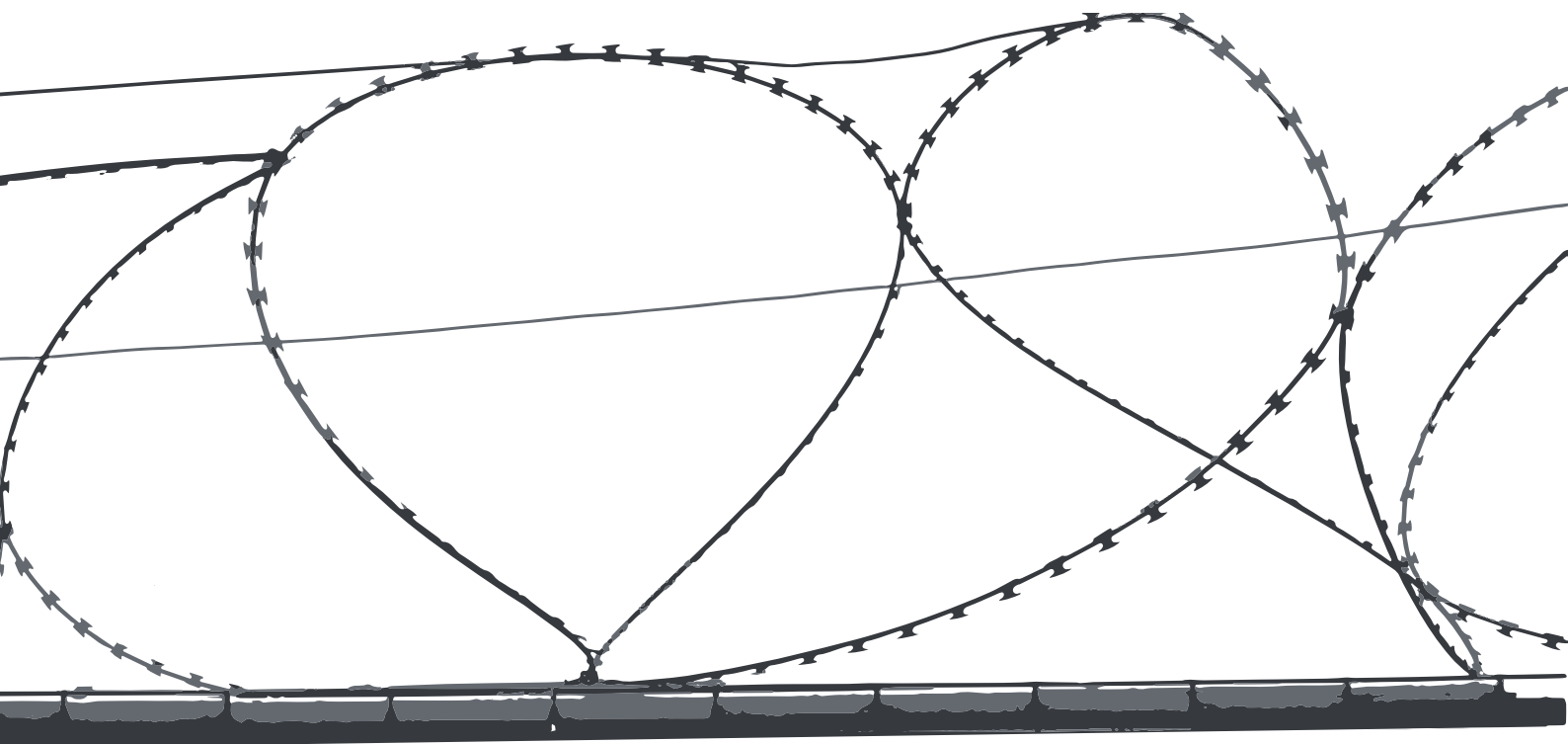
Matches at Volgograd Arena:

June 18: Tunisia vs. England
June 22: Nigeria vs. Iceland
June 25: Saudi Arabia vs. Egypt
June 28: Japan vs. Poland

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