

# We want our men back

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Russian soldier in 2012

Ben Johnson -While Russian men are fighting a war of bullets and bombs, many Russian women are beginning a fight of their own. Several grassroots protests are cropping up across the country, [calling for an end to indefinite mobilization](#). Primarily consisting of women, these protests are a rare public display of displeasure with the Russian government.

The use of networks has been vital in connecting women sympathetic to this cause. In simple terms, [networks](#) are a collection of nodes or entities that are linked together. Networks range in complexity and can have different types of nodes, but they all contribute to an overall purpose. In this case, the nodes are individual women trying to change a government policy. The women participating in these protests insist that they aren't unpatriotic. Rather, they are asking the government to implement troop rotations instead of indefinite mobilization. Many women have turned to social media, a type of network, to share their thoughts with one another and organize. The internet is a common link between nodes because it transcends physical location and can easily connect a vast number of individuals. Women have also sought to express their frustrations through physical demonstrations, with varying levels of success. Thus far, authorities have avoided arresting protestors and, in some cases, allowed limited physical gatherings. The Kremlin understands the potential of these protests to grow but also recognizes that jailing family members of soldiers could spark even greater resentment at home and among troops. Instead, authorities have been instructed to "[persuade, promise, \[and\] pay](#)" in order to subdue frustrated voices.

The actions taken by Russia's government are done to restrict the scale of current and future protests. [Scale](#) refers to the extent of one's actions. So far, these demonstrations have been limited, mostly occurring at the local scale. However, networks like social media can unite separate individuals in different geographical locations and groups into larger bodies, thus extending the scale to the regional or national level. Russia's ability to suppress these voices will certainly be tested as the war continues to call for more soldiers.

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