

# Banijay, ZDFE become latest firms to freeze activity in Russia amid Ukraine invasion



Demonstrators in New York protest Russia's invasion of Ukraine

European production and distribution group Banijay and German distributor [ZDF Enterprises](#) (ZDFE) have become the latest big names in television to freeze their business activities in Russia following the country's attack on Ukraine.

Banijay owns a production company in Russia, WeiT Media, but said today it was suspending all activity in the territory.

A statement issued this morning said: "We are utterly saddened by the horrendous situation in Ukraine and our thoughts go to all those affected.

"As a vast global content production and distribution business, we, like most of the industry, have long historically had deals in place across Russia. However, in light of recent events, we have taken the decision not to activate any new agreements in the region relating to production, distribution (sales and licensing) and general commercial matters, thereby freezing our activity there until further notice."

The company is also in the process of donating €100,000 (US\$110,800) to charitable efforts in the conflict zone.

Meanwhile, Germany's ZDF told C21 this morning: "We have halted all business negotiations, sales and acquisitions with Russian clients and partners in light of the escalating situation in Ukraine.

"On the other hand, we are fully active in supporting the acquisition of Ukrainian content from our partner Film.UA. The drama series Hide & Seek is a 100% Ukrainian-financed show in our catalogue and we are working on the best way to increase awareness around it and continue to support its producers."

Yesterday, UK-based distribution giants BBC Studios, [ITV Studios](#), Fremantle and All3Media [all confirmed](#) they were pulling their shows from Russian broadcasters and would no longer conduct business in Russia.

Last night, C21 revealed that US streaming giant Netflix was putting millions of dollars worth of original drama production in Russia [on hold](#).

The content business events circuit has also moved to [ban Russian companies and delegates](#) from attending conferences including Content London, RealScreen, KidScreen, Natpe Budapest and Banff World Media Festival.

Russia president Vladimir Putin ordered the attack on Ukraine last week and has since scaled up military action in major cities such as Kyiv and Kharkiv. The invasion has claimed the lives of more than 2,000 Ukrainian civilians, according to Ukraine's State Emergency Services, and has led to crippling economic sanctions being placed on Russia by the Western world.