

THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

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**HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS ON  
THE FACE OF SHRINKING CIVIL  
SOCIETY SPACE  
THE CASE OF RUSSIA AND HUNGARY**

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## Abstract

Civil society has been acknowledged to be of increasing significance within the political science and the social research, emphasising its role in advancing democracy. However, in the recent years, civil society is facing an unprecedented space shrinking. Governments have worked on restricting public space, spying, found controlling and identifying the NGOs that do not comply with restricting laws as 'foreign agent'. The present master's thesis intends to study and explore the aspects of shrinking space of civil society and its effects on human rights defenders with a comprehensive focus on Russia and Hungary as the case study. I have decided to analyse these two countries with the purpose of demonstrating that restricting civil society is not only a phenomenon in countries with problematic human rights records as Russia but also a practice of fully democratic and the European Union countries as Hungary.

**Keywords:** Civil Society Space, Human Rights Defenders, freedom of speech, association and assembly, Russia, Hungary,

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