



## **Melissa Hooper**

Melissa Hooper is a lawyer, a rule of law expert, and the Director of Human Rights and Civil Society program at Human Rights First.

Ms. Hooper's research focuses on Russia's foreign policy strategies influencing and undermining democratic institutions, and the intersection between these strategies and anti-democratic trends in neighboring countries, most recently in Central Europe. She recently investigated Russia's use of non-governmental organizations to spread anti-democratic ideas and disinformation in Europe; explored the link between Russian disinformation and hate speech in the European Union and the United States; and analyzed the proliferation of Russian-style laws and policies targeting independent institutions such as civil society, media, and the judiciary in Hungary and Poland.

Ms. Hooper is the author of Poland's New Front: A Government's War Against Civil Society (Aug 2017 report), The non-governmental sector: pro-Russia tools masquerading as independent voices (Foreign Policy Centre; Apr 2017), the issue brief Russian Influence in Europe: Six Ways (Other Than Hacking) Russia is Exploiting Divisions and the Rise of Xenophobia in Europe (Jan 2017), and Russia's Bad Example, a description of Russian-style anti-free expression and anti-NGO laws (2016). She has undertaken extensive research and work experience in Russia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan.