[RU] Bloggers' law adopted

IRIS 2014-6:1/31

Andrei Richter
Comenius University (Bratislava)

On 22 April 2014 the state Duma (parliament) adopted the amendments to the law "On information, information technologies and on protection of information" (see also IRIS 2014-3/40). They were signed into law on 5 May 2014.

The new legislation forces owners of open access websites and web pages (now labeled as "bloggers") visited by more than 3,000 users daily to register with the public authorities. It also imposes additional responsibility on them for verifying the accuracy and reliability of posted information, following election law, respecting reputation and privacy, restraint from using curse words, etc. Those responsible include webpage owners in social networks, blog hosting services, as well as online forums.

Separate responsibility to cooperate with the public authorities, including the law-enforcement agencies, and keep personal data lies with the hosting providers. Bloggers' personal data shall disclose real identities, traffic data, and shall be stored, on Russian territory, for 6 months after the end of relevant online activity.

Penalties for violations include high fines and blocking of websites and blogs. Roskomnadzor the governmental agency for the media and communications is assigned to develop rules for and take the responsibility of the registration.

On 23 April 2014 the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media Dunja Mijatović criticized new legislation increasing government regulation of the Internet in the Russian Federation. "If enforced the proposed amendments would curb freedom of expression and freedom of social media, as well as seriously inhibit the right of citizens to freely receive and disseminate alternative information and express critical views," Mijatović said.

The amendments come into effect on 1 August 2014.

О внесении изменений в Федеральный закон "Об информации, информационных технологиях и о защите информации" и отдельные законодательные акты Российской Федерации по вопросам упорядочения обмена информацией с использованием информационно-телекоммуникационных сетей

http://m.rg.ru/2014/05/07/informtech-dok.html

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Federal Statute of 05 May 2014 N 97-ФЗ "On Amendments to the Federal Statute 'On Information, Information Technologies and Protection of Information' and Specific Legal Acts of the Russian Federation on the Issues of Regulation of Information Exchange with the Use of Telecommunication Networks", No 398-FZ of 28 December 2013, published in Rossiyskaya gazeta official daily, N 101, 7 May 2014

Press release of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, "Attempts to overregulate Internet undermine free speech and free media in Russia, says OSCE representative", 23 April 2014

http://www.osce.org/fom/117950

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