

[RU] Ban of “undesirable” sites introduced

IRIS 2018-1:1/39

*Andrei Richter
Comenius University (Bratislava)*

On 25 November 2017, President Vladimir Putin signed into law sets of amendments to the Federal Statute on information, information technologies and protection of information (IT Law, see IRIS 2014-3/40 and 2014-6/31) that provide additional powers to the Prosecutor-General and Roskomnadzor, the governmental supervisory authority in media, communications and personal data traffic (see IRIS 2012-8/36), on blocking websites without a court decision. They are now empowered to use the procedure envisioned in the 2013 amendments to the same law (see IRIS 2014-3:1/40) on blocking websites containing content such as calls to unsanctioned public protests and to “extremist” activities, to any information of “undesirable organisations” or “information that allows one to access such information or materials”.

Such foreign or international NGOs are recognised in Russia under the Federal Statute “On measures to influence persons involved in violations of fundamental human rights and freedoms, rights and freedoms of citizens of the Russian Federation” (as amended in 2015) by the Prosecutor-General or his deputies in coordination with the Foreign Ministry. To qualify, such an NGO should be found to present “a threat to the foundations of the constitutional system of the Russian Federation, the country's defence capability or the security of the state.”

The new statute entered into force on 25 November 2017.

Back in 2015, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Dunja Mijatović, warned that the law would have a negative effect on freedom of expression, media freedom and pluralism of opinions.

The current OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Harlem Désir, when referring to the draft statute, stated that “the government's efforts to increase control over information online remain reason for concern”.

О внесении изменений в статьи 104 и 153 Федерального закона «Об информации, информационных технологиях и о защите информации» и статью 6 Закона Российской Федерации «О средствах массовой информации»

<http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/Document/View/0001201711250002?index=0&rangeSize=1>

Federal Statute of 25 November 2017 N 327-FZ "On amendments to articles 104 and 153 of the Federal Statute on information, information technologies and protection of information and article 6 of the Statute of the Russian Federation on the mass media"

О мерах воздействия на лиц, причастных к нарушениям основополагающих прав и свобод человека, прав и свобод граждан Российской Федерации

http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_139994/

Federal Statute of 28 December 2012 N 272-FZ "On measures to influence persons involved in violations of fundamental human rights and freedoms, rights and freedoms of citizens of the Russian Federation"

OSCE Representative calls on President of Russia to veto new restrictive law that would have negative effect on free expression, free media, Riga, 20 May 2015

<http://www.osce.org/fom/159081>

OSCE Representative, Désir, in Moscow, calls on Russian Federation to urgently step up efforts to ensure safety of journalists and media freedom, Moscow, 23 November 2017

<http://www.osce.org/fom/358456>

