[RU] Increased penalties for the dissemination of information online

IRIS 2021-2:1/30

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A new edition of Article 128-1 of the Russian Federation's Criminal Code was adopted by the State Duma on 23 December and signed by the President on 30 December 2020. It introduces harsher penalties for slander, or the dissemination of intentionally false information that defames a person, "or a number of persons that are not individually defined". It specifies that slander disseminated online or in the mass media shall now be punished with a fine of up to one million Russian rubles (RUB) - about EUR 11 000 - or up to two years' imprisonment; slander by those holding a management position shall be punished with a fine of up to RUB 2 million or with up to three years' imprisonment; slander claiming somebody has an infectious disease shall be punished with a fine of up to RUB 3 million or with up to four years' imprisonment; and slander that accuses someone of committing grave crimes, with a fine of up to RUB 5 million or with up to five years' imprisonment. Thus, imprisonment for slander has been reintroduced in Russia after it being abolished in July 2012.

A set of amendments to the Code of the Russian Federation on Administrative Offences, adopted by the State Duma on 16 December and signed by the President on 30 December 2020, introduces several new norms. A new norm to its Article 6.13 introduces a ban on the online "propaganda" of drugs and related substances. In the case of legal entities, the fine shall be between RUB 1 million and RUB 1.5 million, or the suspension of activities for up to 90 days. If committed by a foreigner, the offender may now be expelled from Russia. Article 13.34 has been amended to significantly increase the fines for communication operators who disobey Roskomnadzor's orders to restrict access to online resources; fines of up to RUB 500 000 can be issued, increasing to RUB 800 000 for those who repeatedly violate the Code within a 12-month period.

Another set of amendments to protect the personal data of a number of categories of public officials was adopted by the State Duma on 23 December and signed by the President on 30 December 2020. In particular, they amend the Federal Statute "On the state protection of judges, officials of law enforcement and oversight bodies" (N 45-FZ of 20 April 1995). They prescribe a ban on providing data on those who work in the judiciary, in prosecution, in investigation, in the military police, or in special units of the Armed Forces and other law enforcement authorities, as well as in various regulatory and oversight agencies, irrespective of whether their life, health or property is at risk. In practice, it will

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allow the state to withhold information about the “protected persons”, “persons close to them”, and their property, from all existing public records, such as real estate deeds and state registers of legal entities and individual entrepreneurs.

О внесении изменения в статью 128-1 Уголовного кодекса Российской Федерации),

http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/Document/View/0001202012300058

Federal Statute “On amendment to Article 128-1 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation”

О внесении изменений в Кодекс Российской Федерации об административных правонарушениях

http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/Document/View/0001202012300056

Federal Statute “On amendments to the Code of the Russian Federation on Administrative Offences”

О внесении изменений в отдельные законодательные акты Российской Федерации в части обеспечения конфиденциальности сведений о защищаемых лицах и об осуществлении оперативно-розыскной деятельности

http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/Document/View/0001202012300041

Federal Statute “On amendments to certain legal acts of the Russian Federation with regard to providing confidentiality of data on protected persons and on investigation activities”

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