

Russian Wikipedia Faces Ban Due to Anti-Piracy Law, Director Says

By [The Moscow Times](#)

July 10, 2013

The  Moscow Times

Russia's controversial anti-piracy law may cause the biggest online encyclopedia, Wikipedia, to be blocked in the country, the executive director of Wikimedia Russia said.

The legislation was pushed through parliament in less than three weeks and will come into force on August 1. It will allow copyright holders to ask courts to block access to allegedly pirated content as well as hyperlinks to such content. Whole websites can be blacklisted under the law, which appoints a single court in Moscow to handle all copyright-related complaints nationwide.

Stanislav Kozlovsky, the executive director of Wikimedia Russia, which manages the Russian Wikipedia, told the Digit.ru news website that all Wikipedia articles have hyperlinks to sources. It is possible that these sources are not the legitimate holders of the content, and Wikimedia does not have enough resources to check millions of hyperlinks.

Under the bill, Internet service providers are free to choose whether they block the IP address of a suspected copyright violator or restrict access to a page containing questionable content.

Kozlovsky said that the majority of Russian Internet service providers are technically able to only block the IP address of a suspected violator. In this case, Russian Internet users will be denied access not only to the Russian segment of Wikipedia, but to the whole service, which holds articles in 284 languages.

Over the last nine months, Russia has passed two bills regulating domestic Internet use, including an extrajudicial blacklist for websites and a radical anti-piracy law, which opponents have dubbed the "Russian SOPA" after its rejected U.S. analogue.

Wikipedia previously faced sanctions under another Internet regulation law, allowing extrajudicial blacklisting of web content deemed to be promoting suicide, child pornography or drug use.

Russia's telecoms regulator warned Wikipedia in early April that it was blacklisting an article that contained information about ways to smoke cannabis. The website's management decided to edit the article rather than delete it. The watchdog once again included that article on its blacklist of prohibited websites in early May.

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