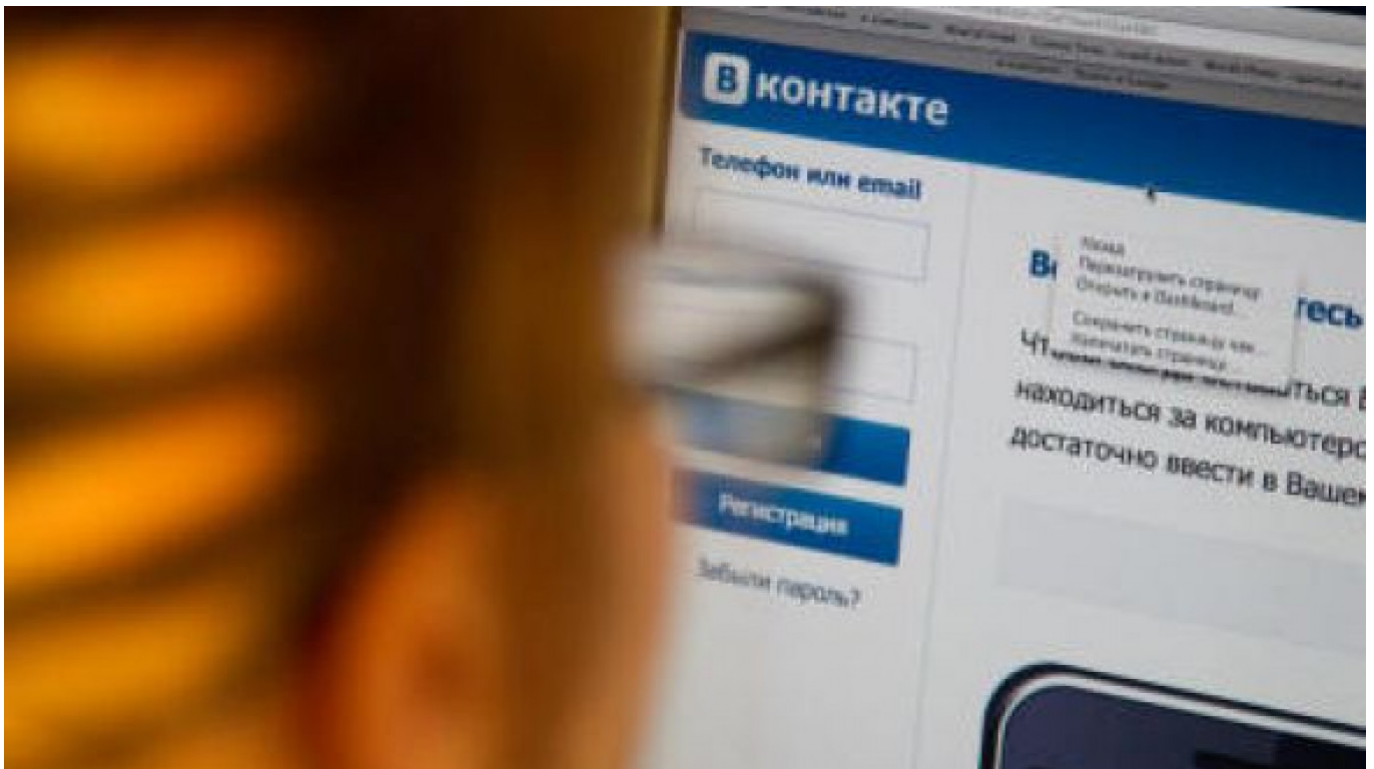


Vkontakte Access Restricted Over 'Extremist' Materials

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Users have been complaining about being unable to log in to Vkontakte since Friday. **D. Abramov**

State-controlled telecoms operator Rostelecom has partly restricted access to the Vkontakte social network, after a court ruled that some of its pages contained "extremist" materials, a news report said.

Responding to complaints by users who had been unable to access their accounts from Friday onward, Rostelecom wrote on its Twitter account Monday that the restrictions had been ordered by the Lefortovo District Court.

Rostelecom said that as an operator it has no right to initiate blocks on content and was merely carrying out the court's orders.

Rostelecom's Twitter messages provided no further details, but company officials said that the court had ruled that some of the materials posted on the platform were of an "extremist nature," Digit.ru reported.

United Russia lawmaker Mikhail Markelov recently filed a petition with the Prosecutor General's Office, requesting an investigation into supposedly offensive and extremist posts on the network.

He singled out the network's social group MDK, which posted a photo of last month's Volgograd bus bombing under a headline that read: "Terrorist attack in Volgograd. Dead bodies, cries for help," followed by an expletive.

In a separate court ruling, Vkontakte has also been blocked in Italy for posting videos without the consent of license-holder.

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