

Ukraine Disappears From U.S. Top Piracy Offenders List

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Ukraine received the designation after "several years of growing concern over widespread [intellectual property] theft", the 2013 Special 301 Report said.

Ukraine, long branded by the U.S. one of the world's leading piracy havens for the laxity in its intellectual property law enforcement, has disappeared from its list of worst offenders.

In April 2013, Ukraine was classed by the U.S. Trade Representative, or USTR, as a "priority foreign country," a designation reserved for the most egregious flouters of intellectual property law. Ukraine was the only country to make that grade. Russia was placed on the "priority watch list," the next category down.

Ukraine received the designation after "several years of growing concern over widespread [intellectual property] theft, including the growing entrenchment of [intellectual property rights] infringement that is facilitated by government actors," the 2013 Special 301 Report said.

The new report, released on April 30, does not include Ukraine on its list, saying instead that although Ukraine's intellectual property policies are detrimental to U.S. commercial interests, the USTR would not take action against Kiev "due to the current political situation." Russia, meanwhile, remains on the watch list.

The U.S. has aligned itself strongly with the government in Ukraine that replaced ousted President Victor Yanukovych in February, support that has only become more staunch with Russia's annexation of Crimea from Ukraine in March and the descent of the country's eastern regions into chaos.

The 2014 report added that USTR "remains committed to addressing the problems" highlighted in the 2013 report, and that it appreciated Ukraine's efforts to address these concerns.

Countries included on the Special 301 report may face WTO action, or be subject to unilateral U.S. trade sanctions in response to intellectual property shortcomings. But Ukraine's absence from the list may not mean the country is safe from penalization — the omission "is only a delay associated with the situation in the country," Microsoft Ukraine's general director, Dmitry Schimke, told Liga.net.

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