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Russia Adopts Law Giving Internet Users the 'Right to Be Forgotten'

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Users will now need to provide specific references to the web pages they wanted deleted and web companies will have 10 days to comply with the request.

Russia's parliament gave its final approval on Friday to a law that would require Internet search engines to remove users' personal information from their results.

The bill, passed by the State Duma lower house in its third reading, seeks to emulate European Union rules on the "right to be forgotten," under which search engines must take down certain results that appear under a search of a person's name.

Under the new Russian legislation, Internet users will have the right to request the removal of information that is incorrect or "no longer relevant because of subsequent events or actions," the TASS news agency reported.

The regulation, which now needs to be signed into law by President Vladimir Putin, has been criticized by Russian web companies who are concerned about balancing rights to personal privacy against the freedom of information.

"We believe that control over dissemination of information should not restrict free access to public data. It should not upset the balance of personal and public interests," said Russia's biggest search engine Yandex.

After discussing the draft with search engine providers, the Duma approved some minor changes to the bill, Yandex added.

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TASS reported that search engines would also not be required to remove information about an applicant's criminal record.

"Yandex and other Internet companies have criticized this legislation from the moment we heard about it," Yandex said in a statement. "Unfortunately, many important changes, from our point of view, have not been implemented."

Google in Russia was not immediately available for comment.

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