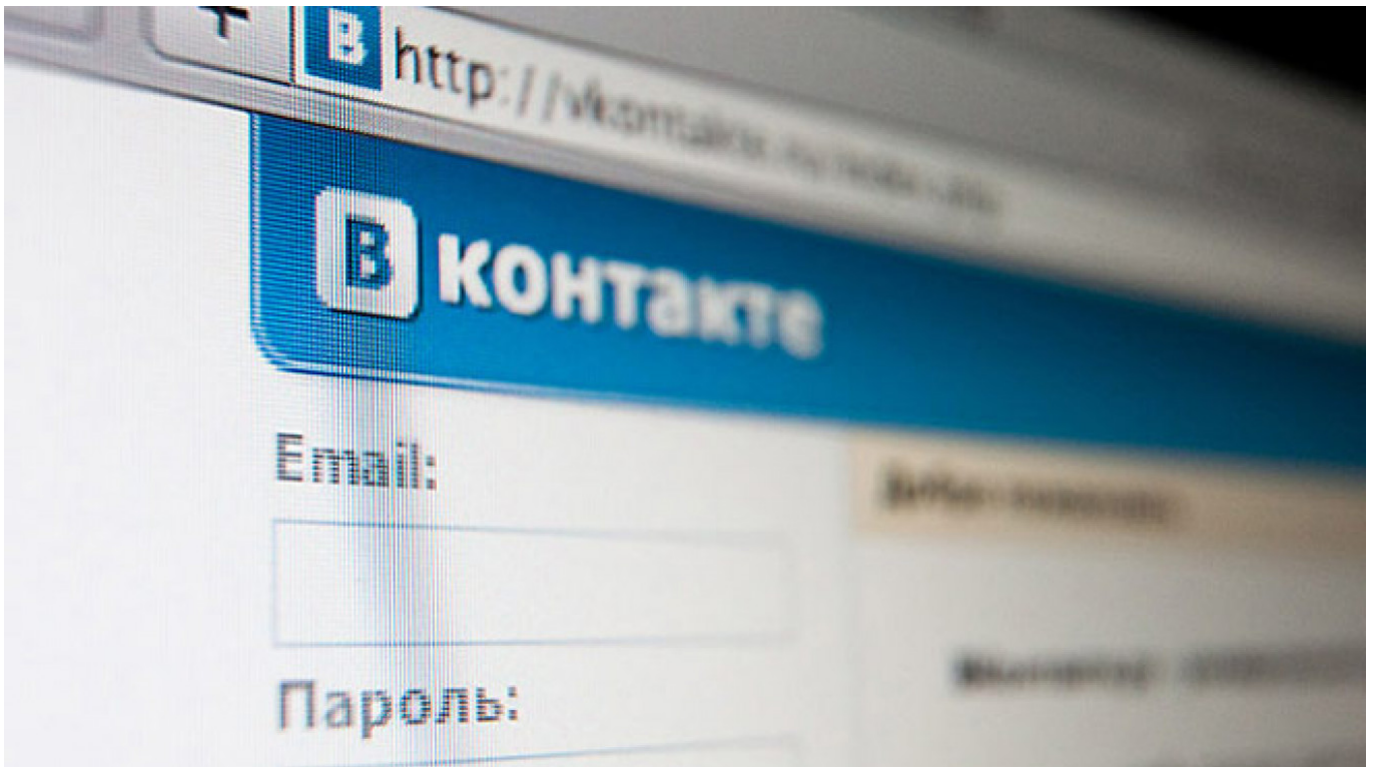


Russian Media Watchdog Blacklists 5 VKontakte Pages for 'Gay Propaganda'

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The illegal content on the VKontakte group pages must be removed within three working days, the media watchdog said.

Russia's media watchdog has included five groups on the VKontakte social network in its registry of banned pages for containing content deemed "gay propaganda," the agency said Monday.

In an online statement, Roskomnadzor cited a Barnaul District Court ruling as saying the five group pages on VKontakte contained "propaganda promoting non-traditional sexual relations among teenagers," which was outlawed in Russia in 2013.

"The group names and content clearly target children and teenagers," the statement said.

The pages contain "personal ads for non-traditional relations, open depictions of non-traditional sexual relations between teenagers and adults and other kinds of illegal information," the statement said.

VKontakte spokesman Georgy Lobushkin said on his personal page that one of the groups that has been targeted is "Deti-404" (Children 404) — a support group for LGBT teenagers whose founder, Yelena Klimova, was fined 50,000 rubles (\$755) in January under the so-called gay propaganda law.

The illegal content on the VKontakte group pages must be removed within three working days, the media watchdog said. Lobushkin said VKontakte was studying the information received from Roskomnadzor.

If the page administrators fail to comply, it could lead to the entire VKontakte website being blocked because it uses the secure protocol https, which does not allow some external providers to block individual webpages, the Takiye Dela website said Monday.

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