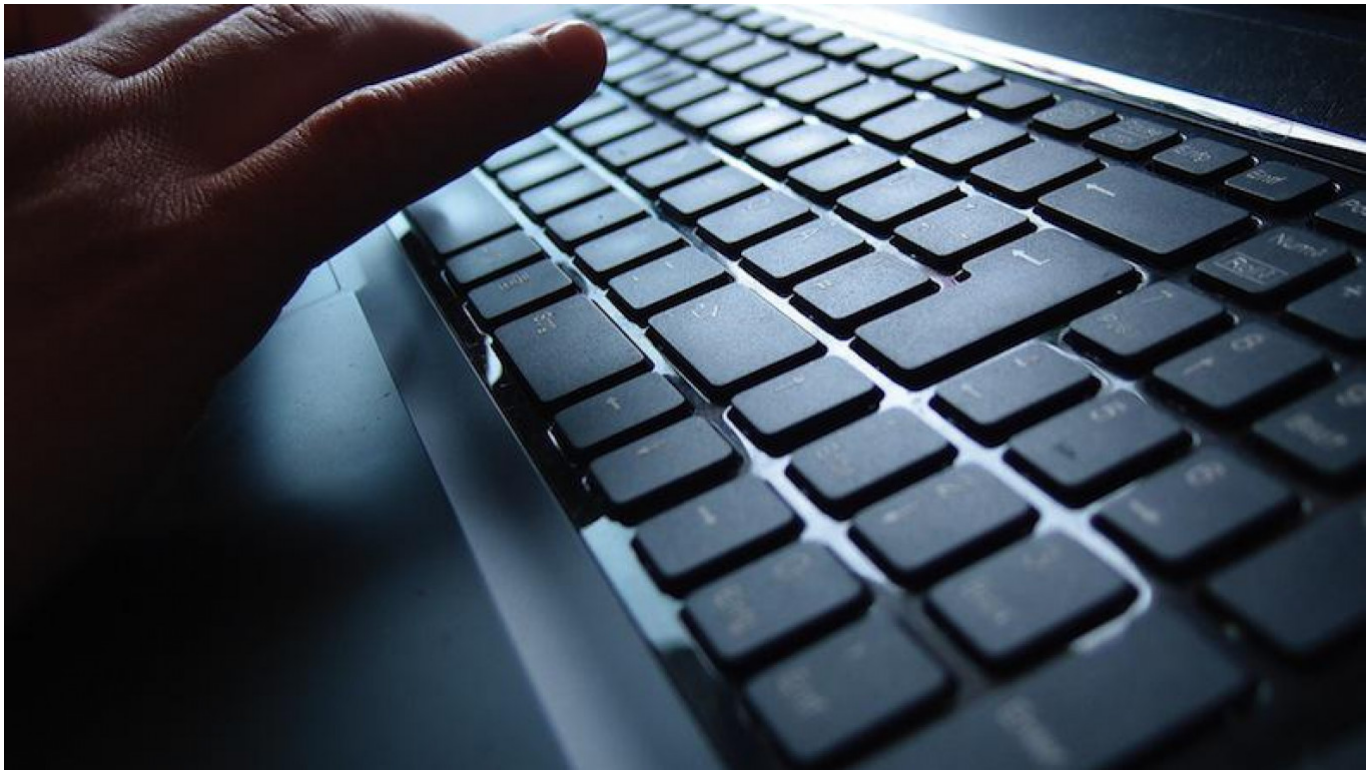
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Russia’s Culture Ministry Contemplates Fining for Illegal Downloads

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Russia’s Culture Ministry is contemplating introducing fines for Internet users who download pirated content, the Kommersant newspaper reported Wednesday.

“The Culture Ministry supports harsher anti-pirating legislation, [and] we are working on it with lawmakers from the State Duma,” Culture Minister Vladimir Medinsky said. He added that fines are one of the measures under consideration by the authorities.

"If we don't pass and implement the kind of stricter anti-pirating legislation common in civilized countries, we can say goodbye to the author or creator as an entity capable of earning a living," Medinsky said.

Earlier this year, the Russian authorities blocked several popular websites containing free content.

In January, state media watchdog Roskomnadzor blocked Rutracker, a torrent tracker often accused of violating copyrights. In March, the Moscow City Court ruled in favor of blocking the Flibusta online library and two if its mirror websites.

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