

Russia May Delay New Surveillance Legislation Until 2023

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United Russia party member Irina Yarovaya **Russian State Duma**

Russia may delay implementing a strict new surveillance law for five years.

The new measures, which were introduced last year as part of controversial new anti-terror legislation, were due to come into force in 2018.

But officials are now considering pushing the amendments back to 2023 in order to give struggling Russian firms more time to invest in the technology needed to comply with the legislation, Russia's Vedomosti newspaper reported Tuesday.

The new law, authored by ultraconservative United Russia lawmaker Irina Yarovaya, will require mobile operators to store customers' messages, including photos and videos, for six months. Internet companies will also face a fine of up to 1 million rubles (\$15,700) for not decoding users' data at the request of Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB).

While telecoms firms are lobbying the government to delay the law, Russia's Federal Security

Service (FSB) hopes to push forward the Kremlin's existing timetable, Vedomosti reported.

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Russia's biggest mobile operators have already publicly complained about the financial burden that the new law will create, with the country's four largest telecoms writing a joint letter to the head of Russia's upper house of parliament.

They said that the law would cost billions of dollars to implement, a claim dismissed by Yarovaya as “an excuse.”

Russian Internet giant Yandex also complained that the legislation could lead to “excessive limitations on the rights of companies and users.”

Both the FSB and Russia's Communications Ministry have refused to comment.

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