The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia To Grant Police Access to Bank Customers' Biometric Data

December 19, 2017



Pixabay / MT

Russia's police and intelligence services will gain access to bank customers' biometric data without their consent under new legislation making its way through the State Duma.

Russia's Communications Ministry and the Central Bank are overseeing a pilot project that will use personal biometric data to remotely verify bank account applications by late 2018. The Rostelecom state telecoms provider will operate the project, despite widespread concerns over state surveillance, data storage and privacy rights.

Related article: Russia's New Personal Data Law Will Be Hard to Implement, Experts Say

A state deputy co-authoring the bill was cited as saying that "law enforcement officers will not have unlimited access to the system" and that data would only be provided after official requests, the Vedomosti business daily reported Tuesday.

According to the draft bill, Rostelecom would be required to share bank customers' biometric data without their consent with Russia's Interior Ministry and Federal Security Service (FSB).

The data collected will include facial images and voice recordings, and may be expanded to iris recognition, palm and fingerprint scanning, according to Rostelecom.

"If a person is law abiding then they will have no reason to worry," Elman Mekhtiev, the vice-president of the Russian Association of Banks, was cited as saying by Vedomosti.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2017/12/19/russia-to-grant-police-access-to-bank-customers-biometric-data-a59987