

Russian Bill Seeks to Criminalize News That Leads to International Sanctions

By [Bloomberg](#)

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Russian lawmakers are seeking to criminalize the publication of materials that leads to sanctions imposed against the country or individuals, the latest in a host of legislation to tighten control over the flow of information.

Mikhail Emelyanov, a lawmaker for the pro-Kremlin Just Russia party, is proposing amendments to the criminal code to impose a maximum term of five years in prison and fines of 5 million rubles (\$77,500) for publishing such materials. A separate bill he submitted would outlaw the “collection, transfer and distribution” of such information.

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“It’s expected that these measures will change the paradigm of information exchange:

Uncontrolled transfer of information to foreign counteragents will be replaced by a regime providing doses of only necessary and harmless information,” Emelyanov wrote in an explanatory note to the bills.

President Vladimir Putin has steadily tightened restrictions on news and social media, particularly those favored by anti-Putin activists banned from appearing on state television. Putin recently signed laws on punishing online media and individuals with fine or imprisonment for publishing “fake news” or material that’s deemed insulting to government bodies and officials.

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