

Russia Fines Google For Breaching Data Storage Law

By [AFP](#)

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A Moscow court found Google guilty of breaching data localization laws. **TNS via ZUMA Wire / TASS**

Russia has fined Google over \$40,000 for failing to store the data of Russian users on local servers, a court spokeswoman said Thursday, the first time the U.S.-based tech giant has been fined for the offense.

The Russian government has been seeking to tighten control over the Russian segment of the web and develop a so-called "sovereign internet" and has said foreign technology companies must store Russian users' data in the country.

Moscow's Tagansky district court on Thursday found Google guilty of breaching data localization laws and fined the company 3 million rubles (\$41,000), a court spokeswoman told state news agency RIA Novosti.

The maximum penalty is six million rubles.

This is the first time the U.S. company has been penalized for breaching the controversial law passed in 2014 that requires the personal data of Russian users to be stored inside Russia.

Twitter and Facebook were fined last year for failing to comply while the networking website LinkedIn was blocked by Russia after it refused to move the data of Russian users.

In recent months, Russia has been taking legal action against foreign tech companies, especially social networks, for failing to delete content on the request of the state media watchdog.

Kremlin critics say the government uses the pretext of protecting minors and fighting extremism to remove content linked to the opposition, which is largely based online.

During protests in support of jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny in January, authorities accused internet platforms of interfering in Russia's domestic affairs by not deleting posts calling for minors to join the rallies.

Facebook and Google have been handed fines for failing to remove illegal content, while Twitter had its services throttled by Russia's government media regulator earlier this year.

The media watchdog also threatened to ban Twitter completely if the prohibited content was not removed.

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