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Russia to Probe Netflix for 'Gay Propaganda' Violations – Vedomosti

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Russian police will probe Netflix for allegedly streaming content that contains so-called "gay propaganda" without labeling it properly, the Vedomosti business daily reported Thursday.

The Interior Ministry confirmed to the newspaper that it will look into a complaint against the U.S. streaming platform filed by Olga Baranets, the so-called "public commissioner for the protection of the family," within 30 days.

Baranets reportedly took issue with Netflix marking some of its LGBT-themed content with a "16+" rating.

Current laws allow "deviant" content, with the exception of pedophilia, to be broadcast or streamed with an "18+" rating.

Netflix's "colorful collection of films and TV series tells about the lives of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people," Baranets told Vedomosti.

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But the publication reported, citing an unnamed Netflix source, that the platform did not find any LGBT content with an "16+" age rating during an internal review.

Law enforcement authorities usually file misdemeanor charges against violators of Russia's controversial law banning "gay propaganda" toward minors.

Earlier in November, a Moscow court fined Russia's Muz-TV music video channel 1 million rubles ($14,000) after its awards show featured gender-flipping stars and what viewers said resembled a same-sex wedding.

Though human rights activists and Western states criticize the 2013 "gay propaganda" law, President Vladimir Putin's socially conservative support base has largely supported it, with opinion polls showing entrenched anti-LGBT attitudes.

The definition of marriage as a union between a man and a woman is now also enshrined in Russia's Constitution following a nationwide vote on constitutional amendments in 2020.

The probe of Netflix follows Vedomosti's report earlier this month that Russia's internet watchdog is considering sweeping bans of "perverted" television shows and movies on streaming platforms.

Its proposed rules would for the first time affect online streaming and could lead to movies like "50 Shades of Grey" and shows like "Billions" being blocked by Russian internet providers.

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