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Russia Fines WhatsApp, Snapchat, Tinder for Data Law Violations

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A Russian court fined U.S. tech giants WhatsApp, Snapchat and Tinder on Thursday for refusing to store the personal data of Russian users inside the country, Interfax news agency reported.

U.S. company Meta, the owner of messaging service Whatsapp, was ordered by Moscow's Tagansky District Court to pay 18 million rubles ($298,136), according to Interfax, while messaging app Snapchat was told to pay 1 million rubles and dating app Tinder 2 million rubles.

Russian law requires tech companies to store the data they hold on Russian users locally – a requirement international firms have been repeatedly fined for violating.

A Russian court ordered the blocking of business networking platform LinkedIn in 2016 for breaking data protection laws and it has been inaccessible for Russian users ever since.

U.S. tech companies including Google, Facebook and Twitter have also previously been penalized for failing to abide by Russia's internet regulations.

Instagram and Facebook were banned in Russia in March after their parent company — Meta — was labeled "extremist" by the authorities.

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