

Russia Blocks Meta's Twitter Competitor App – Lawmaker

July 07, 2023



Threads is a new app from the parent company of Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp. **Stefani Reynolds / AFP**

Russia has blocked U.S. tech giant Meta's competitor app to Twitter just a day after its launch, a senior Russian lawmaker [said](#) Friday.

Threads — a "[public conversation](#)" app built by Instagram developers — was downloaded by more than 30 million people after going live on Apple and Android app stores on Thursday.

"This service is being de facto blocked [in Russia]," said Anton Gorelkin, a senior member of the State Duma, Russia's lower house of parliament.

Moscow [banned](#) Meta products Facebook and Instagram in March 2022 after authorities accused the company of tolerating "Russophobia" during Russia's military campaign in Ukraine, making the popular social media platforms inaccessible to Russian users without the use of a VPN.

Related article: [Russia Adds Meta to List of 'Terrorist and Extremist' Orgs](#)

Gorelkin, the deputy chair of the State Duma's Committee on Information Policy, Technology and Communication, said Threads was "seriously integrated" with Instagram's user base and server infrastructure.

"Therefore, it's already impossible for Russian users to access this service without the help of a VPN," he told Russia's state-run news agency TASS.

Multiple users in Russia told The Moscow Times they were unable to access the app without a VPN.

Threads was the [top-charting](#) iPhone app in Russia on Friday despite the challenges in accessing it.

Meta's WhatsApp messenger was exempt from last year's ban after a court ruled that it is not used to post public statements.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/07/07/russia-blocks-metas-twitter-competitor-app-lawmaker-a81773>