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Microsoft Blocks Russian Corporate Clients From Cloud Services, Vendor Says

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Microsoft has started blocking Russian corporate clients from using its cloud services in compliance with Western sanctions, a Russian distributor of the tech company's products Softline said Friday.

"Microsoft has apparently approved a list of products to be disconnected. Rolling shutdowns began yesterday evening," Softline said on its Telegram channel dedicated to supporting its customers that use foreign cloud services.

The ban complies with the EU's 12th sanctions package adopted in December, which ordered companies in and outside the bloc to stop exporting products and technology to Russia by March 20. Microsoft had reportedly agreed to postpone the bans, which do not affect individual customers.

Softline warned at the time that Russian companies could also lose access to Amazon and Google cloud services due to the EU sanctions but reassured users it "has all the necessary resources to promptly migrate from foreign cloud services," including its own Russian-registered products.

Related article: Russia's Emigre Tech Workers Eye Jobs at Western Firms as Moscow Clamps Down on Working Abroad

Microsoft announced it would suspend new sales and significantly scale down operations in Russia soon after the Kremlin launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

Many top tech companies, including Apple and Intel, suspended their operations in Russia or left the country altogether.

Last year, Russian media reported that Google started blocking its workspace apps like Gmail, Docs, and Sheets for Russian companies sanctioned by the United States. Around 30% of Russian companies' corporate information is stored on Google Workspace services.

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