

Russia Begins Throttling Telegram Over Content Moderation Disputes

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Alexander Avilov / Moskva News Agency

The Russian government has begun throttling download speeds on Telegram, citing accusations that the messaging app has failed to promptly comply with requests to remove flagged content, a senior lawmaker in the lower-house State Duma [said](#) Friday.

Telegram users in Russia [reported](#) problems with download speeds earlier in the day. An anonymous source in the telecommunications sector had told media outlets in Moscow that the slowdown was the result of newly imposed government restrictions.

State Duma lawmaker Andrei Svintsov, who serves as deputy chairman of the lower house of parliament's Committee on Information Policy, Technology and Communications, confirmed the measures and linked them to Telegram's handling of content moderation demands.

"The company's management does engage with authorities, but the speed of their response is apparently insufficient," Svintsov told the news outlet NSN.

“For example, there are still anonymous channels writing absolute nonsense, and they haven’t been blocked quickly enough in Russia,” the lawmaker said.

There was no immediate comment from the state media regulator Roskomnadzor about the throttling of download speeds on Telegram.

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In August, Roskomnadzor began [restricting](#) voice and video calls on WhatsApp and Telegram as part of what it described as an anti-fraud initiative, a move both companies criticized.

Svintsov said Friday that Russian authorities were still waiting for Telegram to ban channels that “publish outright lies and distorted facts” about the war in Ukraine, as well as information “used to manipulate the stock market.”

He suggested the latest slowdown measures were a “signal” to Telegram for it to step up its content moderation efforts.

“If the violations are fixed, the slowing will stop,” Svintsov told NSN. “Everything needs to be cleaned up. I believe we should become the first country in the world to completely abandon online anonymity.”

State Duma lawmakers [suggested](#) last month that Russia could block Telegram as soon as major pro-Kremlin channels fully switch to the government-backed messaging app Max.

Svintsov, meanwhile, has [indicated](#) that WhatsApp could be fully blocked in Russia by the end of 2026.

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