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Is the law on the Sovereign Runet so terrible?

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On November 1, amendments to the laws “On Communications” and “On Information”, which are known as the Law on Sovereign Internet (Runet), adopted in the spring of 2019, come into force. Authorities claimed that it was taken to protect the Russian segment of the Network from a possible outage. However, critics say the document brings Russia closer to the closed Internet – similar to China or North Korea. The authors of the law are senators Andrei Klishas and Lyudmila Bokova, as well as deputy Andrei Lugovoi.

The law stipulates that Roskomnadzor (ILV) will take over Internet governance in Russia if it is at risk. All data transfer points abroad and traffic routing, including using special equipment, will go under the control of the department. ILV will actually be able to inspect traffic passing between the client and the provider and block access to objectionable sites without warning.

When a threat arises, a centralized management regime will begin to operate with possible isolation from the World Wide Web. In this case, it will be forbidden to send traffic outside Russia.

The law requires operators to install on the networks technical means of countering threats (TSPU), which will allow filtering traffic and restricting access to prohibited sites.

What will be changed?

In general, the law gives the state the right to control the Internet, and at the same time, to “protect” us from undesirable information to the state.

- ▶ From time to time, according to experts, users will feel consequences of insulating work. For example, attacks on providers and attempts to change the infrastructure, in reality, will lead to a deterioration in the quality of communication for all categories of consumers – from ordinary people to mega-corporations.
- ▶ In most cases, providers are no longer responsible for blocking. Roskomnadzor will block access using equipment installed by providers.
- ▶ As a result, in November, the market for VPN providers will be divided into legal and illegal. The former will comply with the orders of Roskomnadzor and, with a high degree of probability, will not allow to bypass blocked resources. The second ones will face the constant blocking of their servers – it will be possible to access blocked resources with their help, but the connection will be unstable, and the VPN addresses themselves will constantly change.

The exception is the Kaliningrad region. This is due to the fact that the region is cut off from the main Russian territory, which is why it is impossible to disconnect from foreign infrastructure. In addition, isolation, presumably, will be able to avoid the Russian embassy and consulate abroad.

If you have doubts or suspicions that Your activities may be affected by the adoption of this initiative – you can always ask for help or advice from the experts of GRATA International.

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