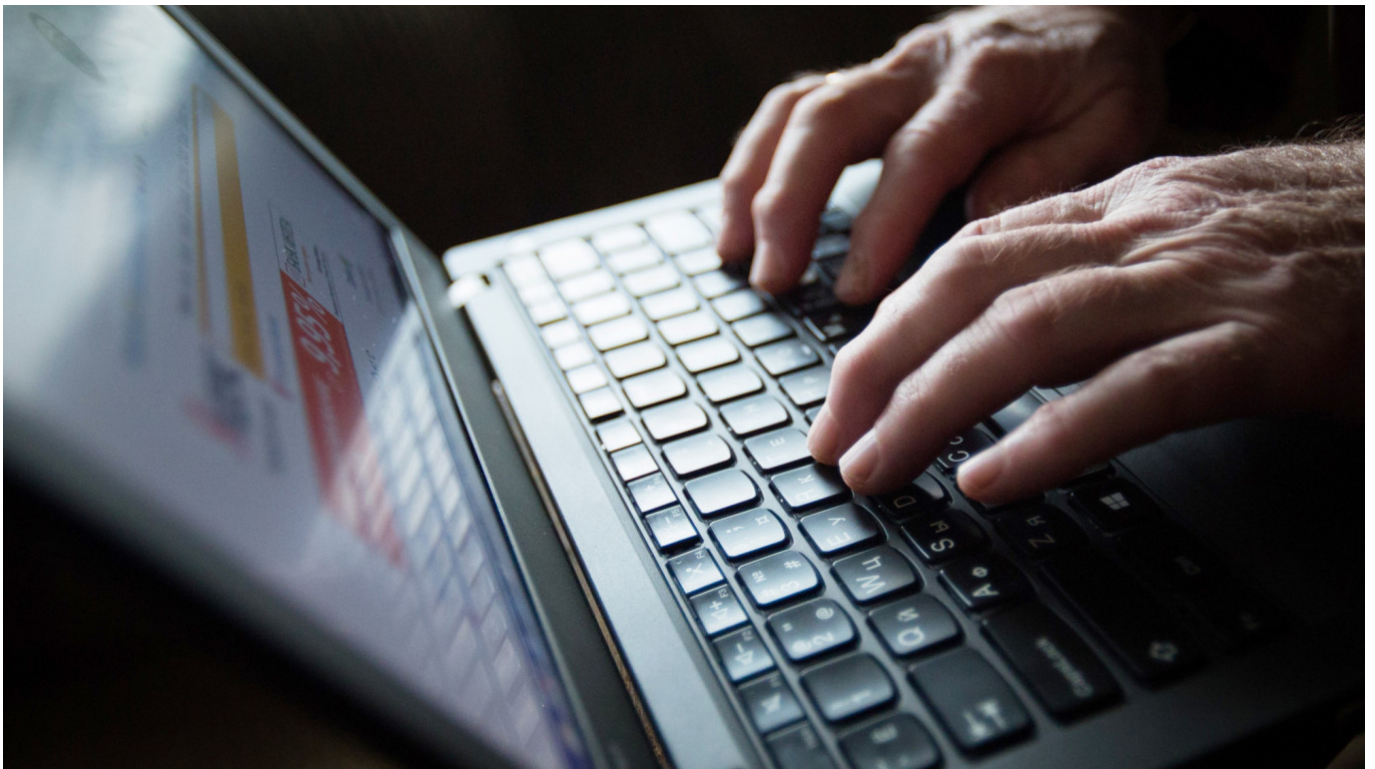


Russia Probes YouTube for 'Abusing' Dominant Position – Regulator

By [AFP](#)

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Moscow is stepping up its efforts to control the Russian segment of the internet. **Moskva News Agency**

Russia has launched a probe against YouTube for "abusing" its dominant position in the market by making "biased" decisions about comment moderation, a government regulator said on Monday.

The move comes as Russia ramps up pressure on foreign tech platforms, with Moscow stepping up its efforts to control the Russian segment of the internet.

The Federal Anti-Monopoly Service said that YouTube's rules relating to the suspension or deletion of accounts are "opaque, biased and unpredictable."

"This leads to sudden blocking and deletion of user accounts without warning and justification," the anti-monopoly regulator said in a statement.

It added that "such behaviour can lead to the infringement of the interests of users" and the

"restriction of competition."

Related article: [Russia Extends Twitter Slowdown, Deadline to Remove Content](#)

The regulator said it had launched the probe after receiving a complaint from the Regional Public Centre for Internet Technologies (ROTsIT), a group presenting itself as defending the interests of Russian internet users.

"The fact that the publication and broadcasting of video content in Russia can be regulated by the legislation of other countries is not correct," ROTsIT said in a statement in December announcing its complaint.

Russia regularly fines foreign internet companies like Facebook and Google, which owns YouTube, for failing to comply with its legislation.

Earlier this month Russia fined Twitter and TikTok for failing to remove calls for people to join opposition protests.

Authorities had in January accused foreign social media platforms of interfering in Russia's domestic affairs by not deleting calls to rallies in support of jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny.

President Vladimir Putin that month complained about the growing influence of large technology companies that he said are competing with states.

In December, Russian lawmakers passed legislation that gave authorities the power to block internet platforms like YouTube if they are deemed to have censored content produced by Russians.

Russia has banned a number of websites that have refused to cooperate with authorities, such as LinkedIn.

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