

Facebook and Instagram remain banned in Russia for 'extremist' activities | The Verge

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A judge in the Tverskoy Court of Moscow has ruled to ban Meta based on Facebook and Instagram for engaging in "extremist activities," as initially reported by Russian state-owned media outlet *TASS*. Judge Olga Solopova said "The court has ruled to grant the Russian Prosecutor General's Office's lawsuit," according to *Interfax*. The ban will block Meta from doing business or opening new branches in the country and will take effect "immediately." It doesn't include WhatsApp.

Last week, Facebook and Instagram outlined a moderation policy allowing users in Ukraine and other eastern European countries to call for violence against Russian soldiers. The platforms initially told moderators to allow posts with calls for the death of Russian President Vladimir Putin and Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, but later narrowed its policy with guidance explicitly banning calls for violence against Russian citizens or any heads of state, according to *Reuters*.

"We believe that the company's operations are subject to a ban in connection with the engagement by it in extremist activities," an official for Russia's communications regulator Roskomnadzor said during the hearing, according to a report by *Interfax*. The Russian prosecutor general's office requested the ban, along with Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB).

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