

# Facebook and Vietnam's New Cybersecurity Law | The Interpreter

By Sarah Logan

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Taking a look at Vietnam's new cybersecurity law, which gives the government more leeway to monitor and censor Facebook, Sarah Logan argues that it is important for tech companies to consider the legacy of their platforms and the effect that this legacy will have on users. She suggests that, in the case of Facebook in Vietnam, the platform has come to dominate political life, and that switching to a platform less-affected by the new law may be too difficult for consumers.

As any good activist knows, "fake news" is not only in the eye of the beholder, but also the eye of the enforcer.

In Vietnam, this message has particular resonance. The country has recently intensified attempts to monitor and police Vietnam's Facebook-dominated online political discussion. For now, these efforts have culminated in the country's new cybersecurity law, passed in early June, which will come into force on 1 January 2019.

The online environment has long been a safe space for political discourse in a country where such discussion is often dangerous.

The new law not only hardens existing regulations but also introduces [new](#) ones, forcing technology companies to store information on local servers, open local offices, hand over potentially vast amounts of user data, including personal information, and censor users' posts.

[...]

Facebook in Vietnam is a legacy issue. It was created for American commercial interests and adapted by locals inadvertently in service of those interests as well as

their own. For Vietnamese users, Facebook is a mode of interaction essential to political life. The platform's emphasis on personal relationships, networks, openness, and global relationships has helped it grow leaps and bounds in a country and within a diaspora community that has for so long been denied the ability to build communities of interest, especially of political interest.

Source: [Facebook and Vietnam's New Cybersecurity Law | The Interpreter](#)