

Russia fines Radio Free Europe for breaching foreign agent law

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Communications regulator Roskomnadzor says it has drawn up 166 protocols against Radio Liberty/Radio Free Europe. (Photo: RT)

Moscow, February 11 (RHC)-- Russia's media regulator says it has fined the Russian-language service of U.S.-funded Radio Liberty/Radio Free Europe nearly \$150,000 over non-compliance with its "foreign agent" law, in a penalty that could increase.

Groups or individuals identified as "foreign agents" in Russia must disclose their sources of funding and label publications with the relevant tag or face fines.

Communications regulator Roskomnadzor said Wednesday that it had drawn up 166 protocols against Radio Liberty/Radio Free Europe, which was ruled a foreign agent in 2017, and its director for failing to

label nine of the U.S. outlet's websites operating in Russia.

Roskomnadzor said that a court has so far considered 40 of those protocols and ruled in favor of a fine in each instance, which the U.S. outlet has been incurring since late January. "The total sum of the fines has reached 11 million rubles (\$148,730 or 122,750 euros)," Roskomnadzor told AFP.

Legislation allowing authorities to brand such organizations "foreign agent" was originally passed in 2012. But it was expanded in 2017 to include media organizations after RT TV network (former Russia Today) was declared a foreign agent in the United States.

Russia further expanded the legislation in December to include individuals and increased the potential penalties for failing to comply with its provisions, with possible prison sentences of up to five years. The law will also bar those individuals from holding municipal government positions.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/index.php/en/noticias/internacionales/247498-russia-fines-radio-free-europe-for-breaching-foreign-agent-law>



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