

European Commission is the latest to ban TikTok on government devices

Article

The news: The **European Commission** (EC) ordered all of its employees to remove **TikTok** from their corporate devices by March 15. The suspension extends to workers' personal devices if they are used for work purposes, per [TechCrunch](#).

- The EC made the announcement Thursday and **hinted that it might be going after rival social media networks.**
- “This measure aims to protect the commission against cybersecurity threats and actions which may be exploited for cyberattacks against the corporate environment of the commission,” the EC said.

Escalating pushback against TikTok: At least 25 US states, the US military, the **State Department**, the **Department of Homeland Security**, and the **Transportation Security Administration (TSA)** have [banned the app](#) on work devices, citing security concerns.

- The service, which has more than a billion active users, is being blamed for harvesting data, online addiction, and a mental health crisis among US teens, per [CNN](#).
- [India has also banned TikTok](#), and the **UK Parliament** shut down its TikTok account for fear of data leaks.
- More than 25 US higher education institutions have blocked **TikTok**, per [Best Colleges](#).

Will TikTok crumble under intensifying scrutiny? No other app, web service, or social network has received the amount of government pushback that TikTok has in the past year.

- TikTok’s standard response is to promise [investments in local data centers](#) in Europe, even if the majority of its infrastructure runs through China.
- TikTok has admitted that data on its European users can be accessed by employees in China but denies sharing information with the Chinese government. It said the same about [US user data](#).
- The investment strategy mirrors **TikTok’s attempt to appease the US government with a \$1.5 billion plan** to reorganize the company’s US operations, per [SiliconAngle](#).

Two possible outcomes:

- The US and the EC’s banning of TikTok could result in more governments and agencies banning the service until TikTok can successfully prove it operates above board.
- TikTok might find ways to decouple itself from the Chinese government, especially as the [tech cold war intensifies](#). This could be through a partial sale or partnership with a trusted entity.

TikTok Users, by Country

2023, millions

Asia-Pacific

257.5

Central & Eastern Europe

87.0

Latin America

162.5

Middle East & Africa

195.0

North America

111.4

Western Europe

95.3

Note: internet users of any age who access their TikTok account via any device at least once per month

Source: eMarketer, December 2022

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