

Medvedev Orders Plan for Cheaper Internet

By [The Moscow Times](#)

January 21, 2013

The  Moscow Times

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has ordered ministers to develop a plan to reduce the price of high-speed residential Internet, according to a statement posted on the government's website on Monday.

The finance, communications and press, and economic development ministries will have until April 1 to outline steps to “significantly” reduce the price that households pay to connect to the Internet.

Medvedev also ordered the ministries to develop proposals for creating “world-class” IT research centers based on existing academic institutions and scientific organizations.

According to the four-point order, the ministries will also have to figure out how to improve intellectual property protection abroad for Russian inventions and expand tax breaks to small IT companies and organizations at home.

About 58 percent of Russians use the Internet at least twice a year, according to a survey by the state-owned VTsIOM pollster published last year.

But Internet usage varies wildly throughout Russia's 83 regions, with 72 percent of Muscovites using the web, compared to just 2.7 percent of people in Ingushetia, a region in the restive North Caucasus, according to RIA-Novosti.

And according to Euromonitor International, Russia still lags far behind Western Europe, where 78 percent of the population is online, compared to 49 percent in Russia.

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