

Russia Ranked 148 in World Press Freedom Index – Reporters Without Borders

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Russia has been ranked 148 out of 180 countries in the World Press Freedom Index published by international media watchdog Reporters Without Borders on Wednesday.

Russia improved its ranking by four places since last year, returning to the position it occupied from 2012-14. Pakistan and Mexico are ranked 147 and 149 respectively.

Despite the slight improvement on the previous year, Reporters Without Borders described the situation regarding the freedom allowed to journalists in Russia as “difficult”.

The watchdog noted that media freedom has declined steadily in the post-Soviet states, linked with media policy in Russia.

“Russia’s behavior has legitimized the growing repression throughout the region because Moscow acts as a regional 'model,' albeit a negative one as regards media freedom,” Reporters Without Borders said.

Contrary to this trend, Ukraine rose 22 places in the ranking due to “a significant decline in violence and to some long-awaited reforms.” Challenges currently facing the media in Ukraine include “the oligarchs' grip on the media and the 'information war' with Russia.”

Finland remains at the top of the Index since 2010. It is followed by the Netherlands, Norway and Denmark. The bottom three positions are occupied by Turkmenistan, North Korea and Eritrea.

”There has been a deep and disturbing decline in respect for media freedom at both the global and regional levels,” the watchdog said, citing reasons including the increasing authoritarian tendencies of governments, tighter government control of state-owned media, security situations and the impact of ideologies.

The Index is based on an evaluation of media freedom that measures pluralism, media independence, the quality of the legal framework and the safety of journalists in 180 countries. It is not an indicator of the quality of journalism in each country.

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