

Russia Continues Fall in Internet Freedom Ranking — Freedom House

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Alexander Avilov / Moskva News Agency

Russia's rating in the World Internet Freedom Index has fallen for the sixth consecutive year according to a report [published](#) by Freedom House on Thursday.

The annual survey ranks 65 countries on a 100-point scale — with higher scores corresponding to a greater degree of internet censorship. Countries are classified as “free,” “not free” or “partially free” based on criteria such as rights violations and countrywide internet access.

Russia now ranks 53rd in the report with 65 points, behind Thailand and Gambia, and is classified as “not free.”

The report criticized the Russian government’s [decision](#) to block the Telegram messenger app earlier this year over “its refusal to make encrypted data accessible to the Federal Security Services.”

Related article: [Russia Begins Blocking Telegram App](#)

The organization further slammed Russia for the [adoption](#) of anti-terror legislation known as the “Yarovaya laws,” which require Russian telecom companies to store users’ communications for six months after they are made. The legislation, which came into force in July, has been labeled by activists as “Russia's big brother law.”

In April this year, thousands of protesters [gathered](#) in Moscow to express their support for internet freedom. Following the government’s ban on Telegram, Russians across the country also [flew](#) paper planes from their windows in solidarity with the messaging app.

According to Freedom House, Russia’s decline in internet freedom is part of a general trend, with 26 countries in total seeing their internet freedoms curbed in the past year.

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