

Russia a Leader in Social Media Use

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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From voice-over IP to Vkontakte, Russians are connecting on the Internet. **Vladimir Filonov**

NEW YORK — Most of the world is interconnected thanks to e-mail and social-networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, according to a new poll released Tuesday, with Russia's passion for virtual interaction ranking especially high.

Eighty-five percent of people around the globe who are connected online send and receive e-mails and 62 percent communicate through social-networking sites, particularly in Indonesia, Argentina and Russia, which have the highest percentage of users.

More than eight in 10 Indonesians and about 75 percent of people in Argentina, Russia and South Africa visit social media sites, the new Ipsos-Reuters poll showed.

Although Facebook and other popular social-networking sites, blogs and forums were founded in the United States, the percentage of users was lower at six in 10, and in Japan it fell to 35 percent, the lowest of the 24 countries in the global survey.

"Even though the number in the United States was 61 percent, the majority of Americans are using social media sites," said Keren Gottfried, research manager at Ipsos Global Public Affairs.

The fact that more than six in 10 people worldwide use social networks and forums, she added, suggests a transformation in how people communicate with each other.

"It is true interconnection and engagement with each other. It is not just about a message back and forth but building messages across communities and only the meaningful messages stick," she explained.

"It looks like a majority of the world is communicating this way," she said, adding that the numbers were more than half in almost every country polled.

Ipsos questioned a total of 19,216 adults around the world in the online survey.

E-mail usage was highest in Hungary, where 94 percent of people communicated online. The numbers were similar in Sweden, Belgium, Indonesia, Argentina and Poland.

Saudi Arabia, where 46 percent of people said they communicate via e-mail, had the lowest usage, followed by India at 68 percent and Japan at 75 percent. In all the other countries, eight or nine out of 10 people were e-mail users.

Although Americans and Japanese are thought to be very tech-savvy, voice-over IP, audio conversations conducted via an Internet connection, were not very popular in both countries with less than 10 percent of people using the relatively new technology compared with 36 percent in Russia, 32 percent in Turkey and 25 percent in India.

Ipsos questioned people in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Britain, Canada, China, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the United States.

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