

Study Shows Internet Access Lacking in Rural Areas

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A man carrying water in a village in the Kostroma region, one of many settlements with deficient infrastructure. **Vladimir Filonov**

People living in more than a third of Russia's small towns and villages have no access to the Internet, a new government study shows.

Despite the boom in Internet use in Russia, some 6,700 localities have no opportunity to get online, the Communications and Press Ministry said on its website.

The figure represents 38 percent of the 17,500 towns and villages with populations of between 500 and 10,000 people in Russia.

About 1,300 places, or 7.6 percent, also have no access to cellular networks, according to the study published late last week.

The majority of black spots for Internet and cellular services are in the republics of Dagestan

and Karachayev-Cherkessia and the Stavropol region in the Caucasus mountains, the southern steppes of the Republic of Kalmykia, the Yamal-Nenets autonomous district in the far north and the Novosibirsk region in Siberia.

The federal government plans to provide Internet access by 2018 to 93 percent of Russia's population of 143 million.

About 52 million Russians, or 45 percent of the adult population, went online daily as of last summer, the state-run pollster Public Opinion Foundation said in September.

About 57 million logged on at least once a month, according to the survey of 30,000 respondents, which did not specify a margin of error.

In 2003, just 3 million went on line each day and 8 million at least once a month, according to the pollster's data, demonstrating the explosive growth in Internet use in Russia in the past decade.

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