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Kremlin Urged to Save Russia's Local Media as Crisis Hits

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AP/Dmitry Lovetsky

Towns across provincial Russia could be left without local media if the Kremlin doesn't intervene, a State Duma deputy has warned.

United Russia politician Anton Gorelkin urged the government to shift funding from national news channels to provincial media outlets, the Tayga Info news website reported.

The former journalist warned the Duma Committee on Information Policy, that Information Technology and communications advertising for local newspapers and television channels was rapidly drying up thanks to Russia's economic crisis.

"There are certain media outlets with a very narrow and specific audience which get solid public funding year after year. If they cease to broadcast tomorrow, no one will notice," Gorelkin said. "It's time to trim their budgets and transfer that money to the regional media," he said

The deputy was still quick to defend state government outlets such as RT, the Kremlin's foreign-language broadcaster, claiming that the channel was vital for representing Russia in the "political arena."

The Russian government is already considering plans to slash media budgets, cutting $200 million by 2019.

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