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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

World Press Freedom Index Places Russia Behind Uganda

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An annual ranking composed by the Reporters Without Borders non-governmental organization has placed Russia in 148th place, behind countries such as Uganda or South Sudan.

In what it described as "a stifling atmosphere for independent journalists" in Russia, the NGO cited the legal persecution of bloggers and social media users and increased control over independent news outlets as reasons for Russia's low score.

Last year Russia also ranked 148th out of 180 countries polled in the World Press Freedom Index, but its overall score has fallen by 0.42 points since then.

"The climate has become increasingly oppressive for those who try to maintain quality journalism or question the new patriotic and neo-conservative [line,]" the NGO said in its

report published Wednesday.

Russia's score places it behind South Sudan, Bangladesh and Mexico. North Korea was deemed the country with the least press freedom, with a score of 84.98.

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