

Russian Telecoms Are Selling Users' Location Data to Authorities

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Russia's top telecom operators are selling the location data of their clients for millions of dollars to Moscow's City Hall, the Vedomosti business daily has reported.

The Russian capital already fields one of the world's largest facial-recognition systems, with 174,000 surveillance cameras expected to enter into operation this year. Meanwhile, new anti-terror legislation that entered into force last summer requires Russia's top telecoms to store users' communications for six months.

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Authorities in Moscow are using the SIM card data that tracks cellphone users' day-to-day movements on public transport, Vedomosti [reported](#) Monday.

Moscow's City Hall spent 101.8 million rubles (\$1.5 million) in 2018 and 516 million rubles

overall since 2015 on the geospatial data, according to procurement data cited by the daily.

Nikolai Legkodimov, a Russian partner at the KPMG global auditor, warns that local authorities could misuse the big data for political campaigning or ad services.

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