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Majority of Russians Oppose 'Sovereign Internet' Bill – Poll

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Igor Ivanko / Moskva News Agency

More than half of Russians believe the internet in Russia should continue to develop as a network "uniting the whole world," according to a study conducted by the state-funded VTsIOM pollster.

The study comes two weeks after Russia's lower house of parliament approved the third reading of a draft law that aims to increase Moscow's sovereignty over the country's internet segment, also known as the "internet isolation law." Critics say the bill would allow the Russian government to disrupt internet access and limit dissent, while its authors said that the measures are needed to defend the country from U.S. cyber security policies.

Related article: Russian Lawmakers Approve New Internet Isolation Law

Fifty-two percent of Russians were opposed to the sovereign internet bill, while 23 percent supported it, saying they believe the internet should be limited to the country's borders, the

Kommersant business daily cited the VTsIOM study as saying.

The study also found that 18 percent of Russian citizens do not use the internet and 66 percent use it on a daily basis.

Earlier this month, the Russian Association of Electronic Communications said that Russia's internet sector has contributed 3.9 trillion rubles ($60.8 billion) to the overall economy last year, an 11 percent increase from 2017.

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