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Moscow Plans Expanded Social Credit-Style Tracking System – Open Media

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Four in five Russians are expected to have state-gathered "digital profiles" by 2025. **Sergei Savostyanov / TASS**

Moscow plans to track its residents' "loyalty" with detailed digital profiles akin to China's social credit system, the Open Media news website reported Tuesday, citing public documents.

Moscow City Hall has since 2017 been collecting the gender, age, income level and relationship to other people signed up to its mos.ru website as part of the internet activity monitoring system called IS STATS.

Open Media reported that Moscow City Hall placed a 280 million ruble ($3.7 million) tender last week to expand the system's capabilities.

The digital profiles will now include information about Muscovites' violations, fines, debts and participation in various events, according to the cited documentation. The data will be compared with information from public Wi-Fi networks and mobile phone operators.

Moscow City Hall will be able to divide the data into groups that include “signs of loyalty,” according to Open Media.

The purpose of the digital profiles is to “continuously monitor user activity” throughout Moscow, develop detailed analytics based on areas of activity, “rapidly identify emerging trends” and “respond promptly to changes in the situation in the city,” according to the report.

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Moscow City Hall’s Department of Information Technology (DIT) maintains that the collected data will be anonymized. Experts, however, warn that the system will be open to abuse.

“I’m almost sure that the information in this system will be personalized down to every citizen,” Stanislav Shakirov, the founder and technical director of the Roskomavoboda internet rights group, told Open Media.

“Most likely, it will be possible to buy the information on the black market at some point,” Shakirov said, citing Moscow’s vast network of surveillance cameras with facial recognition as an example.

Around the country, four in five Russians are expected to have state-gathered "digital profiles" by 2025.

Observers compare Russia’s digital profiles with China’s Social Credit System, which rewards or punishes citizens based on individual scores derived from their personal characteristics, behavior and credit history.

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