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Russia Blocked 5K Websites Per Week in 2022, NGO Says

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duma.gov.ru

Russia has blocked an average of 4,900 websites per week so far in 2022, according to an internet freedom NGO's tally published by the Kommersant business daily Monday.

According to the NGO, Roskomsvoboda, authorities restricted 14,800 websites last week alone — the highest total in a single week in several years.

While it did not name potential causes for the surge, it said it had not observed any "abnormal predominance" of certain websites over others.

Roskomsvoboda lists almost 640,000 websites that are currently blocked inside Russia.

Tax authorities (47%) and federal prosecutors (11%) account for the largest share of government agency-ordered takedowns.

Related article: Russia Has Blocked 138K Websites Since Ukraine Invasion, Prosecutor Says

Roskomsvoboda spokeswoman Natalia Malysheva told Kommersant that the Prosecutor General's Office stopped appearing in its monitoring system last month.

Russia's state internet watchdog Roskomnadzor this month submitted a draft order allowing the Prosecutor General's Office to withhold information about its decisions, according to Kommersant.

IT experts interviewed by the newspaper said authorities are shifting toward a less-transparent system when blocking websites.

Federal prosecutors have boasted of blocking or deleting 138,000 websites between the start of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February and August.

Virtually all of Russia's independent media has either been blocked or ordered to shut down since Russian forces invaded Ukraine.

Western social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter have either been blocked or restricted.

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