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Russia Drops to Bottom 20 of World Press Freedom Index

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Valery Tenevoy / unsplash

Russia has continued to see a precipitous decline in press freedom as the country's military campaign in Ukraine entered its second year, according to the annual press freedom rankings published by Reporters Without Borders (RSF) on Wednesday.

Russia placed 164th out of the 180 countries surveyed in the ranking, a nine-point drop from last year amid what RSF called a "final purge" of the media landscape enabled by the war in Ukraine.

"Systemic censorship and the forced exodus of independent Russian and foreign media outlets have freed up space for the dissemination of coordinated propaganda by pro-government media," RSF said.

Russia's propaganda apparatus was swiftly imposed on the Ukrainian territories seized by Russian forces in the invasion, RSF said, adding that in doing so Ukrainian media had been replaced, independent TV channels had been jammed and local journalists had been hunted

down.

The Paris-based nonprofit highlighted the “record time” in which Russia managed to establish its media arsenal in occupied Ukraine while banning, blocking, or labeling domestic independent media as “foreign agents.”

RSF compiles its annual press freedom rankings based on how easy it is to disseminate information independently without the threat of violence.

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