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Digital Rights NGO Roskomsvoboda Shuts Down

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Artyom Kozlyuk **Vladimir Andreyev / URA.RU / TASS**

The independent digital rights group Roskomsvoboda said on Thursday that it would shut down after 13 years of advocating against and monitoring government restrictions on the internet.

Artyom Kozlyuk, who heads Roskomsvoboda, said the organization had been inactive since early September, noting that the reason was a lack of "human resources."

"As for me personally, I want to get away from public and civic work entirely. A lot of mental stress and psychological fatigue have built up," he wrote in a post on Telegram.

Activists from the unofficial Pirates Party of Russia launched Roskomsvoboda in 2012 in response to the Russian government's move to create a centralized registry of banned websites. The organization had served as a key source of information about internet censorship and restrictions.

Russia's Justice Ministry labeled Roskomsvoboda a "foreign agent" in December 2022.

Kozlyuk said the current political climate in Russia has made continuing his work impossible.

"Despite the understandable feelings of bitterness and disappointment now, this was a very important undertaking over 13 years," he wrote.

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