



Mappa globale delle restrizioni di Internet

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15 gennaio 2020

Censura di Internet 2021: una mappa globale delle restrizioni di Internet

Quasi il 60% della popolazione mondiale (4,66 miliardi di persone) utilizza Internet. È la nostra fonte di informazioni istantanee, intrattenimento, notizie e interazioni sociali. Ma in quale parte del mondo i cittadini possono godere di un accesso a Internet uguale e aperto, se non ovunque?

In questo studio esplorativo, i nostri ricercatori hanno condotto un confronto paese per paese per vedere quali paesi impongono le restrizioni Internet più severe e dove i cittadini possono godere della massima libertà online. Ciò include restrizioni o divieti per torrenting, pornografia, social media e VPN e restrizioni o censura pesante dei media politici. Quest'anno abbiamo anche aggiunto la restrizione delle app di messaggistica/VoIP.

Sebbene i soliti colpevoli occupino i primi posti, alcuni paesi apparentemente liberi si classificano sorprendentemente in alto. Con le restrizioni in corso e le leggi in sospenso, la nostra libertà online è più a rischio che mai.

Abbiamo valutato ogni paese in base a sei criteri. Ognuno di questi vale due punti a parte le app di messaggistica/VoIP che ne vale uno (ciò è dovuto al fatto che molti paesi vietano o limitano determinate app ma consentono quelle gestite dal governo/fornitori di telecomunicazioni all'interno del paese). Il paese riceve un punto se il contenuto (torrent, pornografia, media, social media, VPN, app di messaggistica/VoIP) è limitato ma accessibile e due punti se è completamente vietato. Più alto è il punteggio, maggiore è la censura.

I peggiori paesi per la censura di Internet

Corea del Nord e Cina (11/11) – Nessuna mappa della censura online sarebbe completa senza questi due in cima alla lista. Non c'è niente che nessuno dei due possa censurare pesantemente grazie alla loro presa di ferro su tutta la rete. Gli utenti non sono in grado di utilizzare i social media occidentali, guardare porno o utilizzare torrent o VPN*. E tutti i media politici pubblicati nel paese sono pesantemente censurati e influenzati dal governo. Entrambi hanno anche chiuso le app di messaggistica dall'estero, costringendo i residenti a utilizzare quelle che sono state create (e probabilmente controllate) all'interno del paese, ad esempio WeChat in Cina. WeChat non solo non ha alcuna forma di crittografia end-to-end, ma ha anche backdoor che consentono a terzi di accedere ai messaggi.

Iran (10/11): l'Iran blocca le VPN (sono consentite solo quelle approvate dal governo, il che le rende quasi inutili) ma non vieta completamente il torrenting. Anche la pornografia è vietata e i social media sono sottoposti a crescenti restrizioni. Twitter, Facebook e YouTube sono tutti bloccati con crescenti pressioni per bloccare altri popolari siti di social media. Molte app di messaggistica sono anche vietate con le autorità che spingono app e servizi nazionali come alternativa. I media politici sono pesantemente censurati.

Bielorussia, Qatar, Siria, Thailandia, Turkmenistan e Emirati Arabi Uniti (8/11): Turkmenistan, Bielorussia e Emirati Arabi Uniti sono tutti presenti nella nostra ripartizione dei "peggiori paesi" nel 2020. Ma quest'anno sono stati raggiunti da Qatar, Siria e Thailandia. Tutti questi paesi vietano la pornografia, hanno pesantemente censurato i media politici, limitano i social media (sono stati osservati divieti anche in Turkmenistan) e limitano l'uso delle VPN. La Thailandia ha visto il più grande aumento della censura, inclusa l'introduzione di un divieto di pornografia online che ha visto la rimozione di 190

siti Web per adulti. Ciò includeva Pornhub (che si è classificato come uno dei 20 siti Web più visitati nel paese nel 2019).

*Anche se le VPN sono tecnicamente bloccate, alcune funzionano ancora in Cina. Questo è lo stesso con i siti Web porno in molti dei paesi sopra menzionati. Molti siti Web porno creeranno siti "mirror" per consentire l'accesso a persone in paesi soggetti a restrizioni, ma questi verranno spesso bloccati una volta che le autorità ne verranno a conoscenza.

I paesi che hanno aumentato la censura nel 2021

Se confrontiamo i punteggi per ciascun paese dal nostro studio del 2020 al nostro studio del 2021, ci sono tre paesi che sembrano aver aumentato la loro censura. Uno, come abbiamo già visto, è la Thailandia. Il secondo, la Guinea, ha visto un aumento delle restrizioni delle restrizioni sui media politici, sospensioni o minacce di sospensione su diversi siti Web durante le elezioni di ottobre 2020, nonché restrizioni sui social media durante questo periodo (e anche prima del voto di marzo).

Il terzo è forse il più sorprendente, però. La Grecia ha ricevuto solo un punto nel nostro primo studio per la sua limitazione del torrenting (che si verifica in tutti i paesi studiati). Ma nella nostra rivisitazione del 2021, segna 3. Ciò è dovuto all'aumento delle azioni contro il torrenting e alle restrizioni sui media politici. Reporters sans frontières ha suggerito che si è verificata una diminuzione della libertà di stampa durante il 2020. I media che erano critici nei confronti del governo sono stati omessi o hanno ricevuto cifre sproporzionatamente esigue dagli sgravi fiscali.

Ai canali televisivi pubblici è stato ordinato di non trasmettere un video che mostrasse il primo ministro ignorare le regole di blocco nel febbraio 2021. La copertura della crisi dei rifugiati è stata pesantemente limitata. E i giornalisti sarebbero stati ostacolati dalla polizia durante un evento commemorativo. Nell'aprile 2021 è stato assassinato anche un famoso giornalista greco di cronaca nera, Giorgos Karaivaz.

Censura online in Europa

18 paesi hanno vietato o chiuso i siti di torrenting. Alcuni hanno anche introdotto misure ma non stanno ancora bloccando i siti web (Bulgaria, Croazia, Cipro, Repubblica Ceca, Estonia, Ungheria, Liechtenstein, Lituania, Lussemburgo, Malta, Polonia, Slovacchia e Slovenia). Poiché non bloccano i siti di torrenting, questi non sono stati classificati come "siti bloccati" e sono invece classificati come "limitati".

Mentre i siti Web di torrenting sono spesso bloccati in Spagna (ecco perché è classificato come aver chiuso i siti di torrenting), le regole consentono il torrenting per uso personale (download per visualizzare ma non per caricare o distribuire).

L'Ucraina limita la pornografia online mentre Bielorussia e Turchia vietano/bloccano completamente il contenuto.

I media politici sono limitati in 12 paesi. Come abbiamo già visto, la Grecia si è unita a questa lista quest'anno, così come l'Ungheria e il Kosovo.

Due paesi censurano pesantemente i media politici: Bielorussia e Turchia.

Nessun paese europeo blocca o vieta i social media, ma cinque lo limitano. Questi sono Bielorussia, Montenegro, Spagna, Turchia e Ucraina.

La Turchia limita l'uso delle VPN mentre la Bielorussia le vieta del tutto.

Le app di messaggistica e VoIP sono illimitate in tutta Europa.

Censura online in Nord America

Canada, Messico e Stati Uniti hanno vietato o chiuso i siti di torrent. Cuba è l'unico paese a limitare la pornografia online, a censurare pesantemente i suoi media politici e a limitare le VPN.

Altri sei paesi (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Messico, Nicaragua e Panama) hanno alcune restrizioni sui loro media politici. Gli Stati Uniti hanno visto un miglioramento in

quest'area quest'anno poiché le restrizioni sui media politici sono diminuite dall'ultima elezione presidenziale.

Cuba e Honduras hanno restrizioni sulle piattaforme di social media.

Le app di messaggistica e VoIP sono soggette a restrizioni in Belize, Cuba e Messico. Cuba ha limitato l'accesso ai social media e a WhatsApp in seguito alle proteste antigovernative. In Messico, alcuni ISP bloccano i servizi VoIP, mentre i fornitori di telecomunicazioni del Belize offrono i propri servizi VoIP vietandone altri.

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Internet Censorship 2021: A Global Map of Internet Restrictions



Internet Censorship 2021: A Global Map of Internet Restrictions

ct comparitech.com/blog/vpn-privacy/internet-censorship-map/

January 15, 2020



Nearly 60 percent of the world's population (4.66 billion people) uses the internet. It's our source of instant information, entertainment, news, and social interactions.

But where in the world can citizens enjoy equal and open internet access – if anywhere?

In this exploratory study, our researchers have conducted a country-by-country comparison to see which countries impose the harshest internet restrictions and where citizens can enjoy the most online freedom. This includes restrictions or bans for torrenting, pornography, social media, and VPNs, and restrictions or heavy censorship of political media. This year, we have also added the restriction of messaging/VoIP apps.

Although the usual culprits take the top spots, a few seemingly free countries rank surprisingly high. With ongoing restrictions and pending laws, our online freedom is at more risk than ever.

We scored each country on six criteria. Each of these is worth two points aside from messaging/VoIP apps which is worth one (this is due to many countries banning or restricting certain apps but allowing ones run by the government/telecoms providers within the country). The country receives one point if the content—torrents, pornography, news media, social media, VPNs, messaging/VoIP apps—is restricted but accessible, and two points if it is banned entirely. The higher the score, the more censorship.

The worst countries for internet censorship

1. **North Korea and China (11/11)** – No map of online censorship would be complete without these two at the top of the list. There isn't anything either of them doesn't heavily censor thanks to their iron grip over the entire internet. Users are unable to use western social media, watch porn, or use torrents or VPNs*. And all of the political media published in the country is heavily censored and influenced by the government. Both also shut down messaging apps from abroad, forcing residents to use ones that have been made (and are likely controlled) within the country, e.g. WeChat in China. Not only does WeChat have no form of end-to-end encryption, the app also has backdoors that enable third parties to access messages.
2. **Iran (10/11)**: Iran blocks VPNs (only government-approved ones are permitted, which renders them almost useless) but doesn't completely ban torrenting. Pornography is also banned and social media is under increasing restrictions. Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube are all blocked with increasing pressures to block other popular social media sites. Many messaging apps are also banned with authorities pushing domestic apps and services as an alternative. Political media is heavily censored.
3. **Belarus, Qatar, Syria, Thailand, Turkmenistan, and the UAE (8/11)**: Turkmenistan, Belarus, and the UAE all featured in our "worst countries" breakdown in 2020. But this year they are joined by Qatar, Syria, and Thailand. All of these countries ban pornography, have heavily censored political media, restrict social media (bans have also been seen in Turkmenistan), and restrict the use of VPNs. Thailand saw the biggest increase in censorship, including the introduction of an online porn ban which saw 190 adult websites being taken down. This included Pornhub (which featured as one of the top 20 most visited websites in the country in 2019).

*Even though VPNs are technically blocked, some do still work in China. This is the same with porn websites in many of the aforementioned countries. Many porn websites will create "mirror" sites to give access to people in restricted countries, but these will often be blocked once authorities become aware of them.

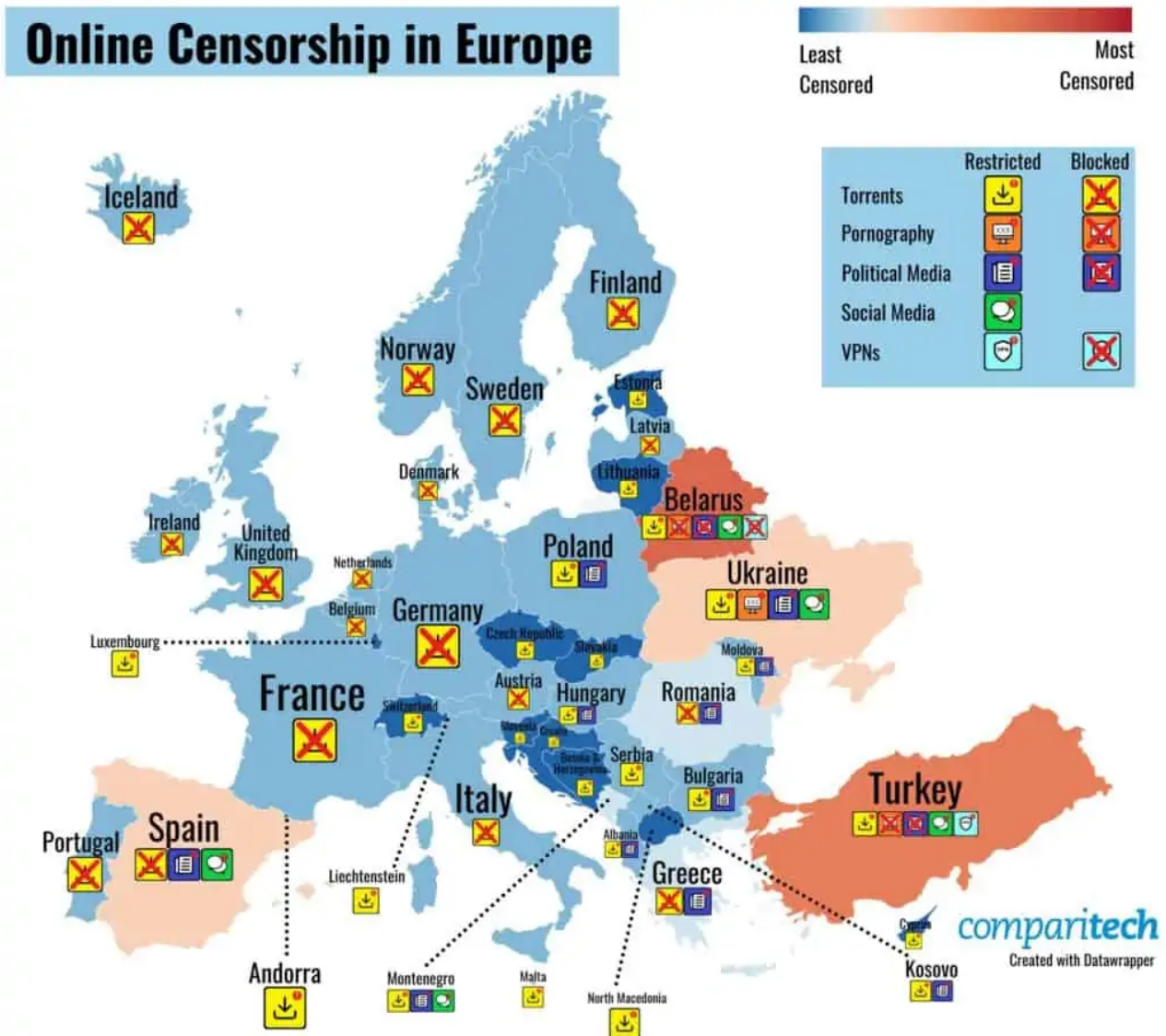
The countries that have increased censorship in 2021

If we compare the scores for each country from our 2020 study to our 2021 study, there are three countries that appear to have upped their censorship. One, as we have already seen, is Thailand. The second, Guinea, saw increased political media restrictions suspensions or threats of suspension across several websites during the October 2020 elections as well as social media restrictions during this time (and ahead of the vote in March, too).

The third is perhaps the most surprising, though. Greece received a mere one point in our first study for its restriction of torrenting (which occurs in every country studied). But in our 2021 revisit, it scores 3. This is due to increased actions against torrenting and restrictions on political media. Reporters without Borders suggested there was a decrease in press freedom during 2020. Media outlets that were critical of the government were omitted or given disproportionately small figures from tax rebates.

Public TV channels were ordered not to broadcast a video that showed the prime minister disregarding lockdown rules in February 2021. Coverage of the refugee crisis was heavily restricted. And journalists were reported to have been obstructed by police at a commemorative event. A renowned Greek crime journalist, Giorgos Karaivaz, was also assassinated in April 2021.

Online censorship in Europe



- 18 countries have banned or shut down torrenting sites. A number have also introduced measures but aren't blocking websites as of yet (Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia). As they aren't blocking torrenting sites, these haven't been scored as having "sites blocked" and are instead scored as being "restricted."
- While torrenting websites are often blocked in Spain (hence why it is classed as having shut down torrenting sites), rules do permit torrenting for personal use (downloading to view but not to upload or distribute).

- Ukraine restricts online pornography while Belarus and Turkey ban/block the content entirely.
- Political media is restricted in 12 countries. As we have already seen, Greece joined this list this year as did Hungary and Kosovo.
- Two countries heavily censor political media – Belarus and Turkey.
- No European countries block or ban social media but five do restrict it. These are Belarus, Montenegro, Spain, Turkey, and Ukraine.
- Turkey restricts the use of VPNs while Belarus bans them entirely.
- Messaging and VoIP apps are unrestricted across Europe.

Online censorship in North America



- Canada, Mexico, and the United States have banned or shut down torrenting sites.
- Cuba is the only country to restrict online pornography, heavily censor its political media, and restrict VPNs.
- Six other countries (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Panama) have some restrictions across their political media. The US saw an improvement in this area this year as restrictions on political media have eased since the last presidential election.
- Cuba and Honduras have restrictions across social media platforms.
- Messaging and VoIP apps are met with restrictions in Belize, Cuba, and Mexico. Cuba restricted access to social media and WhatsApp following anti-government protests. In Mexico, some ISPs block VoIP services, while Belize telecoms providers offer their own VoIP services while banning others.

Online censorship in South America

Online Censorship in South America

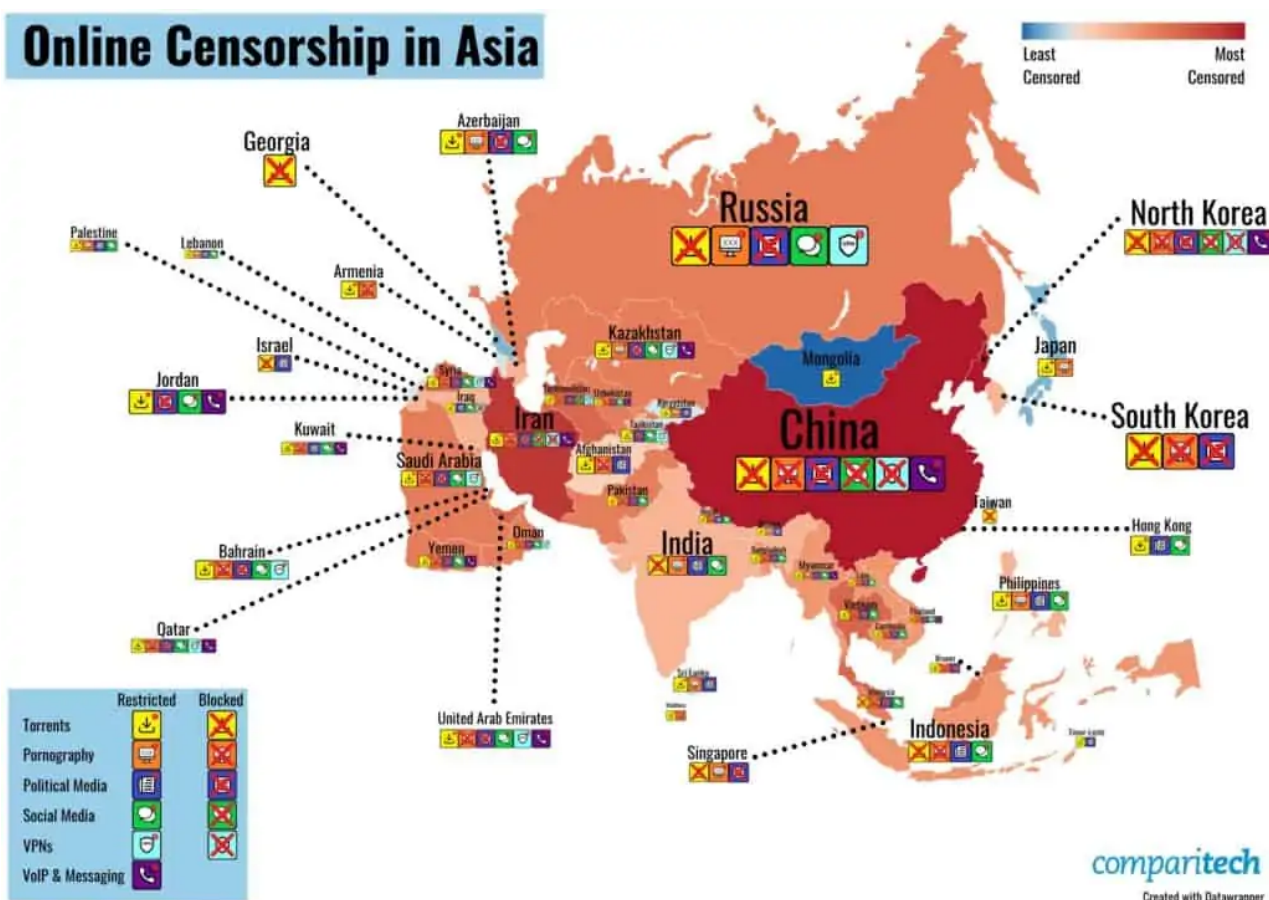


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- Argentina is the only country to actively block torrenting websites while Venezuela is the only one to restrict online pornography.

- Political media is restricted in half (6) of the South American countries we covered. It is also heavily censored in Venezuela with persistent attempts to control the news and silence independent media outlets.
- Ecuador and Venezuela have social media restrictions.
- None of the countries have restrictions or bans VPN use at present.
- Three countries have restricted messaging/VoIP apps (Brazil, Guyana, and Venezuela). As well as VoIP apps being banned by Brazil's largest ISP, a bill threatened to mandate traceability in private messaging (however, at the time of writing, this hasn't yet been signed into law).

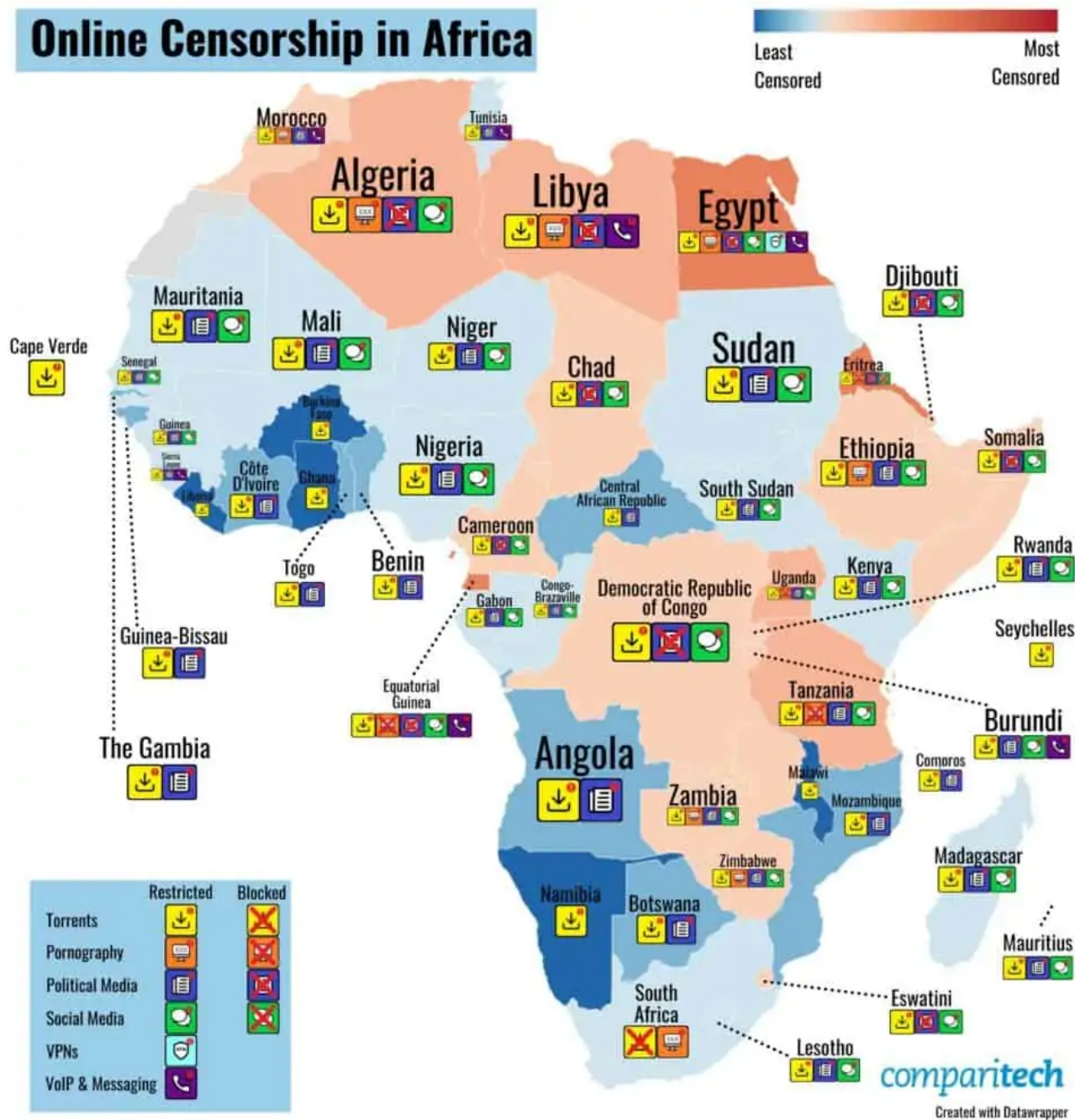
Online censorship in Asia



- 12 Asian countries have blocked or banned torrenting sites.
- The majority of Asian countries have restrictions on online pornography (40 out of the 49 we covered—82 percent) with 27 of these having full bans/blocks.
- Political media is also heavily restricted and censored in Asia. 43 (88 percent) of the countries we covered have restrictions, with the majority (28) being subject to heavy censorship.
- A large number (32) of these countries restrict social media platforms in some way. China, Iran, North Korea, and Turkmenistan go one step further and enforce full bans across popular social media platforms.
- Four countries have full bans on VPN use (China, Iran, Iraq, and North Korea), and a further 11 impose restrictions.

- Messaging and VoIP app restrictions are also commonplace in Asia with 13 countries implementing some form of limitation. Although Russia did ban Telegram in 2018, this was lifted in June 2020. However, as the government continues to look for ways to restrict websites and apps from outside the country, this could change at any time.

Online censorship in Africa



- South Africa is the only African country to actively shut down torrenting sites.

- 14 African countries have restrictions when it comes to online pornography with four of these having full bans (Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Tanzania, and Uganda). New regulations in Tanzania further defined pornography as a type of “prohibited content.”
- Most of the African countries we covered (43 of 53–81 percent) restrict political media. 11 of these enforce heavy censorship with Algeria, Cameroon, and Chad all upping their suppression of political commentary since our last study.
- 60 percent of the African countries we covered implement social media restrictions but only one of these–Eritrea–has gone so far as to continually block access to social media sites.
- Egypt is the only country to restrict VPN use. Despite VPNs being legal, many VPN providers’ websites and servers are blocked (these are the best options when choosing a VPN in Egypt).
- Egypt is also one of the seven countries to have restrictions surrounding the use of messaging/VoIP apps. The others are Burundi, Equatorial Guinea, Sierra Leone, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia.

Online censorship in Oceania



- Australia is the only country to strictly enforce torrenting bans/blocks and, along with Papua New Guinea, has restrictions on online pornography, too. The Australian Broadcasting Service Act 1992 illegalizes watching internet porn, establishing it as a fineable offense. However, only some towns and cities have tried to establish a full ban. Australia's [Online Content Bill](#), which is expected to come into law soon, also threatens to further restrict access to online porn in the country.
- Political media is restricted in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, and Tonga but only Papua New Guinea has the ability to restrict social media through its cybercrime law which was introduced in 2016.
- None of the Oceania countries restrict the use of VPNs or VoIP/messaging apps.

See also: [Best VPNs to watch Porn Anonymously](#).

Will online censorship become the “norm?”

While it's no great surprise to see the likes of China, Russia, and North Korea topping the list, the growing number of restrictions in many other countries is greatly concerning.

From Australia's ongoing attempts to block porn to growing political media hostility in many countries, our online freedom is something we can no longer take for granted.

Thankfully, VPNs do still offer a way for many of us to surf the net privately (and legally). But as censorship becomes increasingly common, more and more countries could join the restricted list, putting citizens' digital privacy at risk.

Methodology

To find out to what extent each country is censored, we have studied each in detail to see what restrictions, if any, they impose across torrents, pornography, political media, social media, VPNs, and messaging/VoIP apps.

We scored each country on six criteria. Each of these is worth two points aside from messaging/VoIP apps which is worth one (this is due to many countries banning or restricting certain apps but allowing ones run by the government/telecoms providers within the country). The country receives one point if the content—torrents, pornography, news media, social media, VPNs, messaging/VoIP apps—is restricted but accessible, and two points if it is banned entirely. The higher the score, the more censorship.

In some cases, countries may be scored as having banned one of these areas but residents may find ways to circumnavigate these bans, e.g. with VPNs or mirror sites. However, as the country enforces this ban by blocking websites or implementing laws, the country is scored as having banned it. On the other hand, if a country has brought in regulations to try and restrict or ban an area but users continue to be able to freely use these services/websites, the country is only scored as being “restricted” because the regulations/laws aren't being enforced.

Data researcher: George Moody

Sources

[Rsf.org](https://rsf.org)

<https://freedomhouse.org/>

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Ct1fMxC4URDj1eYBQMOWDedb9L0R1iQK4t8CNIJGrBg/edit?usp=sharing>