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Freedom on the Net 2025 - Armenia



Key Developments, June 1, 2024 – May 31, 2025

Armenia’s online environment remained open during the coverage period, with limited website blocking and few content removal orders. However, the authorities detained people for their online criticism of the government, and individuals in the country have faced surveillance using commercial spyware products.

- In October 2024, amendments to a pair of laws regulating online gambling came into force, mandating the blocking of foreign and other gambling websites that lack a license to operate in Armenia. Beginning in February 2025, internet service providers blocked some gambling sites, though access was restored by the end of the coverage period (B1).¹
- In May 2025, the Ministry of Justice introduced a draft law that would require media outlets to remove “slanderous” content at the behest of authorities. Two days after the draft law was presented, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said media outlets should “quickly self-regulate” or risk the imposition of government restrictions (B2, B3, and B5).²
- In May 2025, Vazgen Saghatelian and Narek Samsonyan, who had been detained in March 2024 for criticizing the government on their podcast *Imnemnimi*, were acquitted of their hooliganism charges. They had initially been held in custody for two months and then placed under administrative supervision pending trial (C3).³
- In April 2025, blogger Artur Chakhoyan was beaten by several men after arguing with a government official during a public meeting at an administration building in Nor Nork, a district of Yerevan. While four of the assailants were reportedly charged, Chakhoyan and an opposition politician were also charged with hooliganism committed through “the use of information or communication technologies” (C3 and C7).⁴

Political Overview

Armenia experienced a significant transition following mass antigovernment protests and elections in 2018 that forced out an entrenched political elite. The government has since worked to address long-standing problems including systemic corruption, opaque policymaking, a flawed electoral system, and weak rule of law. The country has been seriously affected by military pressure from

Azerbaijan in recent years. In September 2023, nearly the entire ethnic Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh, which had enjoyed de facto independence from Azerbaijan since 1994, fled to Armenia after the Azerbaijani military defeated local defense forces and took full control of the territory.

This report has been abridged for Freedom on the Net 2025 due to [ongoing budget constraints](#). Please consider making a [donation](#) to support future editions of this vital resource.

For additional background information, see last year's [full report](#).

A Obstacles to Access

A1 0-6 pts

Do infrastructural limitations restrict access to the internet or the speed and quality of internet connections?	5 / 6
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A2 0-3 pts

Is access to the internet prohibitively expensive or beyond the reach of certain segments of the population for geographical, social, or other reasons?	2 / 3
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A3 0-6 pts

Does the government exercise technical or legal control over internet infrastructure for the purposes of restricting connectivity?	6 / 6
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A4 0-6 pts

Are there legal, regulatory, or economic obstacles that restrict the diversity of service providers?	5 / 6
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A5 0-4 pts

Do national regulatory bodies that oversee service providers and digital technology fail to operate in a free, fair, and independent manner?	2 / 4
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B Limits on Content

B1 0-6 pts

Does the state block or filter, or compel service providers to block or filter, internet content, particularly material that is protected by international human rights standards?	5 / 6
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Score Change: The score declined from 6 to 5 because a limited number of gambling websites were temporarily blocked during the coverage period.

B2 0-4 pts

Do state or nonstate actors employ legal, administrative, or other means to force publishers, content hosts, or digital platforms to delete content, particularly material that is protected by international human rights standards?	3 / 4
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B3 0-4 pts

Do restrictions on the internet and digital content lack transparency, proportionality to the stated aims, or an independent appeals process?	3 / 4
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B4 0-4 pts

Do online journalists, commentators, and ordinary users practice self-censorship?	3 / 4
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B5 0-4 pts

Are online sources of information controlled or manipulated by the government or other powerful actors to advance a particular political interest?	2 / 4
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B6 0-3 pts

Are there economic or regulatory constraints that negatively affect users' ability to publish content online?	3 / 3
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B7 0-4 pts

Does the online information landscape lack diversity and reliability?	3 / 4
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B8 0-6 pts

Do conditions impede users' ability to mobilize, form communities, and campaign, particularly on political and social issues?	6 / 6
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C Violations of User Rights

C1 0-6 pts

Do the constitution or other laws fail to protect rights such as freedom of expression, access to information, and press freedom, including on the internet, and are they enforced by a judiciary that lacks independence?	3 / 6
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C2 0-4 pts

Are there laws that assign criminal penalties or civil liability for online activities, particularly those that are protected under international human rights standards?	3 / 4
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C3 0-6 pts

Are individuals penalized for online activities, particularly those that are protected under international human rights standards?	4 / 6
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C4 0-4 pts

Does the government place restrictions on anonymous communication or encryption?

3 /
4

C5 0-6 pts

Does state surveillance of internet activities infringe on users' right to privacy?

2 / 6

C6 0-6 pts

Does monitoring and collection of user data by service providers and other technology companies infringe on users' right to privacy?

5 /
6

C7 0-5 pts

Are individuals subject to extralegal intimidation or physical violence by state authorities or any other actor in relation to their online activities?

3 /
5

*Score Change: The score declined from 4 to 3 because a blogger was beaten and charged with hooliganism in April 2025.*⁵

C8 0-3 pts

Are websites, governmental and private entities, service providers, or individual users subject to widespread hacking and other forms of cyberattack?

1 /
3

Footnotes

- 1 Grisha Balasnyan, "Armenia Mulls Shutting Down 1,000 Unlicensed Foreign Gambling Websites," Hetq, December 13, 2024, <https://hetq.am/en/article/171539>; Telegram, Ostrich Nest, "Ну чтож, вот АрмКомНадзор и заработал," February 24, 2025, <https://t.me/ostrichnest/99>; 0xVirtualCake, "Armenia started blocking gambling websites," Xeovo Hub, February 2025, <https://hub.xeovo.com/posts/76-armenia-started-blocking-gambling-websit...>
- 2 Naira Bulghadarian Gayane Saribekian, "Armenian Government Accused Of Planning Curbs On Press Freedom," Azatutyun, May 9, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33409582.html>.
- 3 Arshaluys Barseghyan, "Armenian anti-government podcast hosts acquitted of hooliganism charges after insulting PM," May 5, 2025, <https://oc-media.org/armenian-anti-government-podcast-hosts-acquitted-o...>
- 4 Astghik Bedevian, "Yerevan Official Charged But Not Sacked After Assault," Azatutyun, May 1, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33402327.html>
- 5 Astghik Bedevian, "Yerevan Official Charged But Not Sacked After Assault," Azatutyun, May 1, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33402327.html>