

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	719
Land:	Kina
Kilde:	Freedom House
Titel:	Freedom on the Net 2022- China
Udgivet:	18. oktober 2022
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	31. juli 2024



Document #2081782

Freedom House (Author)

Freedom on the Net 2022 - China

NOT FREE

10

/ 100

A [Obstacles to Access](#) 8 / 25

B [Limits on Content](#) 2 / 35

C [Violations of User Rights](#) 0 / 40

LAST YEAR'S SCORE & STATUS

10 / 100 Not Free

Scores are based on a scale of 0 (least free) to 100 (most free). See the [research methodology](#) and [report acknowledgements](#).

Overview

Conditions for internet users in China remained profoundly oppressive and confirmed the country's status as the world's worst abuser of internet freedom for the eighth consecutive year. During the coverage period, authorities censored social media posts critical of the government's stringent COVID-19 lockdown measures. Ordinary users continued to face severe legal and extralegal repercussions for activities like sharing news stories, talking about their religious beliefs, or communicating with family members and others overseas. Separately, authorities yielded their immense power over the tech industry through new legislation, regulatory investigations, and app store removals for alleged privacy violations. Despite the tighter constraints and risk of criminal penalties, investigative journalists, activists, bloggers, and ordinary internet users took courageous action calling for redress for government abuses, criticizing the authorities' response to the pandemic, and sharing information about other sensitive topics.

China's authoritarian regime has become increasingly repressive in recent years. The ruling Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is tightening its control

over the state bureaucracy, the media, online speech, religious groups, universities, businesses, and civil society associations, and it has undermined its own already modest rule-of-law reforms. The CCP leader and state president, Xi Jinping, has consolidated personal power to a degree not seen in China for decades, but his actions have also triggered rising discontent among elites within and outside the party. The country's human rights movements continue to seek avenues for protecting basic liberties, though at great personal cost and despite a multiyear crackdown.

Editor's Note: Tibet and Hong Kong are not covered in this report. Certain territories that are assessed separately in Freedom House's Freedom in the World report are excluded from the relevant country reports in Freedom on the Net, as conditions in such territories differ significantly from those in the rest of the country.

Key Developments, June 1, 2021 - May 31, 2022

- Authorities censored online criticism of its draconian COVID-19 lockdown measures, harassed internet users for sharing coronavirus-related information, and continued to detain journalists and activists for reporting on the pandemic (see B2, B5, and C3).
- After Chinese tennis star Peng Shuai posted on the social media platform Weibo alleging that she had been sexually assaulted and forced into a sexual relationship with former vice premier Zhang Gaoli in November 2021, censors removed her post and scrubbed any discussion of the allegations, alongside a broader suppression of online content relating to women's rights (see B2 and B8).
- As Beijing hosted the 2022 Winter Olympics in February, authorities mobilized commentators to favor progovernment narratives and manipulated online content to censor criticism (see B2 and B5).
- Regulations that took effect in March 2022 require technology platforms to ensure that automated content-recommendation systems promote CCP ideology and remove posts deemed undesirable (see B3).
- Authorities detained prominent journalists, human rights lawyers, activists, and religious and ethnic minorities for their online activities, handing down an eight-year sentence to a Falun Gong practitioner for supplying content to be published online on a Falun Gong-affiliated website (see C3).
- The Personal Information Protection Law and the Data Security Law went into effect in November and September 2021, respectively, more strictly regulating the ways Chinese tech companies collect, store, and share user data. While the laws impose privacy safeguards on the private sector, they exempt government agencies and at times mandate that companies store data domestically (see C6).

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

According to the government's China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), there were 1.03 billion internet users in China—representing 73 percent of the population—as of December 2021.¹ That figure represents an increase of 42.96 million since December 2020. Of users in the country, 99.7 percent access the internet via mobile devices.²

Chinese internet users can access high-speed internet, though connection speeds are slowed by the country's blocking and filtering apparatus (see B1). According to internet speed testing company Ookla, the country saw median mobile download speeds of 87.48 megabits per second (Mbps) and median fixed broadband download speeds of 181.9 Mbps as of May 2022.³ Connection speeds in China are slowed by the government's extensive censorship apparatus (see B1), which filters all cross-border traffic and makes the loading of content from foreign-hosted websites sluggish.⁴ Internet speeds vary significantly in different parts of the country. According to government data, the fastest available connections were in Shanghai,⁵ and the slowest were in less prosperous and more heavily censored regions, such as Xinjiang.⁶

Chinese companies have been at the forefront of building and deploying fifth-generation (5G) technology networks. As of November 2021, China had nearly 1.4 million 5G base stations and 497 million devices connected to 5G networks.⁷

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? 1 / 3

Internet access is relatively affordable for the average user, but other digital divides limit access for certain populations.

According to the China Academy of Information and Communication Technology (CAICT), the average monthly broadband expense in the first half of 2021 was 37.50 yuan (\$5.88), and the average rate for mobile users was 3.22 yuan (\$0.51) per gigabyte (GB).⁸

The digital divide between urban and rural areas narrowed during the coverage period, according to government figures. Internet penetration in cities was 81.3 percent as of December 2021, compared to 57.6 percent in rural areas, with the gap between the two narrowing by 0.2 percent.⁹ As

of December 2021, 382 million people did not have access to the internet, and 54.9 percent of those lived in rural areas.¹⁰

A3 0-6 pts

Does the government exercise technical or legal control over internet infrastructure for the purposes of restricting connectivity? 1 / 6

The Chinese government maintains control over China's gateways to the global internet, giving authorities the ability to restrict connectivity or access to content hosted on servers outside the country.¹¹ This arrangement is the foundation for the "Great Firewall," the informal name for the government's comprehensive internet censorship system. All service providers must subscribe via the gateway operators, which are overseen by the MIIT.

The government has shut down internet access in response to specific events. The most dramatic example occurred in 2009, when authorities imposed a 10-month internet blackout in Xinjiang—home to 22 million people—after ethnic violence in the regional capital, Urumqi.¹² Since then, the practice has continued sporadically on a smaller scale.

Human rights activists and their families have been subject to targeted network disconnections in previous years. Activist Wu Lijuan disclosed in October 2021 she has repeatedly experienced connectivity disruptions after being arrested.¹³ In October 2020, during the previous coverage period, authorities cut the internet connection as well as the mobile service of Xin Na and her family in Hohhot after they protested the government's policy to replace Mongolian with Mandarin as the language of instruction in elementary and middle schools in the region of Inner Mongolia.¹⁴

Network shutdowns are often explained as national security precautions. The cybersecurity law and Article 84 of a 2015 antiterrorism law introduced fines and detentions of up to 15 days for telecommunications firms and internet service providers (ISPs), as well as relevant personnel, who fail to restrict certain forms of content including "shut[ting] down related services" (see B3 and C2).¹⁵ Under Cybersecurity Review Measures implemented in June 2020,¹⁶ a government agency must conduct a national security review of the purchases of network products and services made by critical information-infrastructure operators.¹⁷

A4 0-6 pts

Are there legal, regulatory, or economic obstacles that restrict the diversity of service providers? 1 / 6

State-owned China Mobile, China Telecom, and China Unicom dominate the mobile market,¹⁸ though the government has authorized new players to enter the sector over the past few years.¹⁹ In January 2019, BT (formerly British Telecom) became the first foreign telecommunications

company to receive permission to provide internet services across the country;²⁰ as of the end of the coverage period, it remains unclear if BT has established operations. In September 2020, the State Council approved a plan allowing foreign firms to own up to 50 percent in joint ventures providing virtual private network (VPN) services for foreign companies in Beijing.²¹

Authorities exercise tight control over cybercafés and other public access points, which are licensed by the Ministry of Culture in cooperation with other state entities.²² Internet cafés remain gathering venues for video gamers. The total number of cybercafés was estimated to be approximately 125,000 in February 2021.²³

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? 0 / 4

Several government and CCP agencies are responsible for internet regulation at the local and national levels, but the system has been consolidated during Xi Jinping's tenure.

The Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC)²⁴ and the CCP's Central Cyberspace Affairs Commission oversee the telecommunications sector and regulate internet content.²⁵ The 2017 cybersecurity law identifies the CAC as the principle agency responsible for implementing many of its provisions.²⁶ The CAC reports to the Central Cyberspace Affairs Commission, a party entity that is headed directly by Xi Jinping.²⁷ Since 2014, the commission has also overseen the CNNIC, an administrative agency under the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) that issues digital certificates to websites.²⁸

The CCP has exerted even greater control over the press, film, radio, and television industries in recent years, including online video and streaming services. Since administrative restructuring occurred in March 2018, more agencies involved in media regulation, including online content, have been directly subordinated to the CCP's Central Propaganda Department, although several continue to report to the State Council.

Zhuang Rongwen has served as director of the CAC since mid-2018²⁹ and continued in that position during the coverage period, while simultaneously serving as deputy director of the CCP's Central Propaganda Department.³⁰

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 0 / 6

by international human rights standards?

The Chinese government's Great Firewall is the world's most sophisticated internet censorship apparatus. Blocked content usually contains criticism of individuals, policies, or events that are considered integral to the one-party system. The breadth of censorship is constantly growing, leaving Chinese users with access only to a highly controlled, monitored, and manipulated version of the internet.

According to GreatFire.org—an anticensorship group that tracks filtering in China—as of mid-2022, at least 188 out of the top 1,000 most visited websites and social media platforms around the world were blocked in China.³¹ Many international news outlets and their Chinese-language websites are blocked, such as those of the *New York Times*, Reuters, the *Wall Street Journal*, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). The websites of independent Chinese-language news services from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the Chinese diaspora—such as *Liberty Times* (Taiwan), Initium (Hong Kong), China Digital Times (United States), and New Tang Dynasty TV (United States)—were also blocked during the coverage period. In June 2020, amid tensions between China and India following clashes along the countries' disputed border, the *Times of India* reported that China had blocked a number of Indian news websites.³²

A wide range of other websites that might provide information critical of the Chinese government are also blocked, including those of human rights groups such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch (HRW), and Freedom House. In April 2021, authorities blocked the website of the Center for Strategic and International studies (CSIS), a Washington, DC-based think tank.³³

Most international social media and messaging platforms are blocked, including Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, Signal, Clubhouse, YouTube, Telegram, Snapchat, Line, and Pinterest, among others.³⁴ The popular discussion forum Reddit was blocked in August 2018,³⁵ while all languages of Wikipedia were blocked in late April 2019. ³⁶ A number of Google services—including Maps, Translate, Calendar, Docs, Drive, Scholar, and Analytics—remained blocked as of the end of the coverage period.

The long-standing blocks on international communications platforms have helped to enable the exponential growth of local services such as Tencent's WeChat and Sina Weibo, which are subject to the government's strict censorship demands (see B2).

Blocks on global search engines also severely limit the content available on the Chinese internet. Google's search engine has been blocked since

2012,³⁷ while the Yahoo search function was blocked in September 2018.³⁸

A minority of Chinese internet users (albeit tens of millions of users) access blocked websites with circumvention tools, such as VPNs (see B7). However, the government has intensified its restrictions on these tools since 2017, when MIIT issued a ban on the use of unlicensed VPNs.³⁹ Service providers are barred from setting up VPNs without government approval, and illegal VPN operations have been increasingly targeted for closure or blocking (see C3).⁴⁰ Blocks on VPNs typically escalate ahead of high-profile events, such as the annual plenary sessions of China's legislature.⁴¹ VPN providers have noted that a growing technical sophistication of Chinese authorities has been reflected in VPN blocking incidents.⁴² In November 2021, the CAC released a draft regulation, titled Network Data Security Management Regulations, that would punish individuals and institutions for helping users circumvent internet censorship. Presumably targeting app stores and hosting sites, the regulations would provide for penalties of up to 500,000 yuan (\$78,000).⁴³

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?

The government requires locally hosted websites, social media platforms, and other tech companies to proactively monitor and remove significant amounts of banned content and accounts. They can face severe punishment for failure to comply.

The scale of content removals, website closures, and social media account deletions continued to expand during the coverage period, reaching new types of platforms and extending to topics that were previously uncensored. Censored topics often involve news, commentary, or criticism related to the CCP, its officials, and foreign affairs, as well as content related to health, safety, and civil society.⁴⁴ Content that violates long-standing taboos is consistently and systematically censored, including the June 4, 1989, Tiananmen massacre; Taiwanese independence; and the government's repression of marginalized communities like ethnic minorities in Xinjiang and Tibet.

The CAC regularly launches "rectification" and "clean-up" campaigns to pressure websites and social media platforms to more effectively police content. In March 2022, the CAC launched a campaign to "clean up" the "chaos" of live streaming, short video sharing, and other platforms. It removed over 22 million messages, "dealt with" 1.34 billion accounts, removed over 2,160 apps, and shut down over 3,200 websites.⁴⁵ From the end of 2018 to October 2021, the number of apps in China's app

stores fell by 40 percent amid clean-up campaigns.⁴⁶ Companies such as Douban, Zhihu and Weibo were fined by authorities throughout 2021 for allowing “illegal” information on their platforms.⁴⁷

The authorities pressure Chinese internet companies to tightly enforce censorship regulations or risk suspensions, fines, blacklisting, closure, or even criminal prosecution of relevant personnel. This has intensified under the cybersecurity law that took effect in 2017. The CCP’s Propaganda Department and its local subsidiaries issue almost daily instructions to news websites and social media platforms on what content to restrict.⁴⁸ Baidu, the country’s dominant internet search engine, reported deleting over 56 billion items deemed “malicious information” in 2021, an increase from 51.6 billion in 2020.⁴⁹

Censors increasingly target “self-media,” a category that includes independent writers, bloggers, and social media celebrities (see B6). Overall, tens of thousands of these accounts have been shut down.⁵⁰ In September 2021, amid an ongoing crackdown against content deemed to be financial misinformation, Weibo banned 52 accounts that specialized in financial advice, some with millions of followers.⁵¹

In May 2022, China’s largest open-source code platform Gitee closed its public repositories, stating that “all new open-source repositories shall be manually reviewed before they are officially made public.” It was believed that the closure was due to a government directive.⁵²

International companies also respond to censorship demands or pressure from the authorities to restrict online content. In August 2021, the popular language learning app Duolingo was removed from some app stores in China.⁵³ In October 2021, LinkedIn shut down its service in China, citing a “significantly more challenging operating environment.” For years, LinkedIn had been criticized for practicing self-censorship in the country.⁵⁴ In February 2022, the popular LGBT+ dating app Grindr removed itself from app stores in China, citing a new privacy law.⁵⁵ The search engine Bing, owned by Microsoft, blocks search results that the Chinese government deems sensitive in China. In June 2021, Bing restricted image and video results for the phrase “tank man”—referencing the famous image of protestor facing down tanks during the 1986 Tiananmen Square protests, which Bing likely censors in China—in countries including the United States, Germany, and Switzerland. Microsoft attributed the incident to “accidental human error.”⁵⁶

Apple has since 2017 been blocking a list of sites generated by Tencent on its iPhone browser, restricting websites deemed politically sensitive by the CCP.⁵⁷ In May 2021, the *New York Times* reported that since 2017, roughly 55,000 active apps have disappeared from Apple’s App Store in China, including hundreds of VPN services.⁵⁸ In June 2021, Apple announced that it would not roll out its new privacy measure, Private Relay, in China,

citing regulatory concerns.⁵⁹ As of June 2022, Greatfire.org had identified 9,835 apps that were unavailable in Apple's China store compared to other app stores, including over 202 news apps, as well as entertainment, gaming, sports, weather, and travel apps.⁶⁰

Security officials have increasingly resorted to harassing and coercing users to delete content, particularly from Twitter, which is blocked in China. A small but savvy community of internet users access Twitter via circumvention tools, enabling participation in the types of conversations that are heavily censored within the Great Firewall. Over the past several years, numerous users faced reprisals for their Twitter activities including prison time, with many forced to delete their posts en masse (see C3 and C7).⁶¹ In December 2021, the *New York Times* reported that Chinese authorities used sophisticated investigative software to track government critics on foreign social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, and to order them to delete their posts.⁶²

Content that criticizes the government's repression of online speech was strictly censored. In February 2022, Tencent shut down Peking University law professor He Weifang's sixth WeChat account, prompting him to handwrite a letter in protest, stating that the shutdowns made daily activities like "transport, shopping and public health code screenings impossible," and violated his civil rights.⁶³ Another Peking University professor's WeChat account was suspended for three days after he reposted He's letter. WeChat also removed a speech by a Tsinghua University professor in which she criticized the state of rule of law in China.⁶⁴

The COVID-19 pandemic, which first emerged in the city of Wuhan in Hubei province in late 2019, continued to be one of the most censored topics during the coverage period. In November 2021, a performance art piece created by students at the Beijing Film Academy, in protest of the school's strict coronavirus lockdown measures, was quickly removed by Weibo. The piece depicted iron cages with a banner "don't leave the cage unless strictly necessary."⁶⁵

During the COVID-19 lockdown in Shanghai from March to May 2022, numerous social media posts criticizing the government's draconian measures or asking for help were removed.⁶⁶ In May, censors removed a video posted online that showed police had attempted to force residents into an isolation camp, despite them having tested negative for the virus. A resident was recorded in the video saying, "we are the last generation, thank you very much," which internet users adopted as a meme to illustrate the despair many in China felt.⁶⁷ Censors also pursued the removal of "Voices of April," a video featuring audio recordings of people in Shanghai sharing about the harsh lockdown restrictions; Weibo even briefly restricted the word "April" to limit its spread.⁶⁸ In another case, Weibo banned an account that belonged to the founder of Trip.com, one

of China's largest travel agencies, after he commented on the potential negative impact of the lockdown on life expectancy.⁶⁹

In January, in the run up to the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics, authorities warned athletes and others who would attend the events of "certain punishment" for behavior or speech that is against "Chinese laws and regulations."⁷⁰ In February, censors took down a screenshot of a comment made on Instagram by Eileen Gu, a US-born athlete competing for China, about using VPNs to circumvent content restrictions.⁷¹ In February, during the Olympics, authorities asked Finnish cross-country skier Katri Lylynpera to remove photos she had posted on Instagram showing water leaking in an Olympic Village building.⁷²

In May and June 2022, around the time of the anniversary of the Tiananmen Massacre, authorities censored posts related to the event. The social media accounts of popular pro-CCP blogger Sai Lei Huajin were suspended after he posted a video on the platform Bilibili attacking the US-based news outlet CNN, which included a clip of the Tank Man, apparently by accident.⁷³ On June 3, online celebrity Li Jiaqi's live stream was cut off when he held up a tank-like ice cream sculpture.⁷⁴

Content related to marginalized ethnic, religious, and linguistic groups is also restricted. Keywords related to the persecuted Falun Gong spiritual group consistently appear on leaked lists of prohibited terms. Reference to the banned Church of the Almighty God spiritual groups are also reportedly marked as politically sensitive, with mobile users facing account deactivation for sharing religious information.⁷⁵ Many Cantonese live streamers using ByteDance's popular Douyin app (the Chinese version of TikTok)⁷⁶ have been banned for not broadcasting in Mandarin.⁷⁷ In October 2021, the language-learning app Talkmate announced that Tibetan and Uyghur courses would be indefinitely removed due to "government policies."⁷⁸ In December 2021, five state agencies released new regulations banning the transmission of religious content online without a government license.⁷⁹ In a January 2022 announcement, authorities in the province Qinghai banned all religion-related Tibetan social media groups.⁸⁰

LGBT+ content has been heavily restricted on China's internet since 2017, when the China Netcasting Services Association labeled homosexuality as "abnormal sexual behavior."⁸¹ ⁸² In July 2021, WeChat permanently suspended the accounts of over a dozen college LGBT+ groups,⁸³ and shut down an account of an LGBT+ news site a month later.⁸⁴ In February 2022, Weibo censored a hashtag referencing the removal of LGBT+ content in the American television show *Friends*.⁸⁵

Women's rights content, including the #MeToo movement, continues to be censored. In September 2021, a court in Beijing dismissed a landmark sexual harassment case brought against a prominent state-television host

(see B8). Posts and videos of the scene outside of the courthouse were removed from Weibo, and some accounts were suspended.⁸⁶ In November 2021, Chinese tennis star Peng Shuai posted on Weibo alleging that she had been sexually assaulted and forced into a sexual relationship with former vice premier Zhang Gaoli. Her post was quickly removed. Censors also massively scrubbed away posts alluding to Peng's case. At one point, the word "tennis" as well as the tennis ball emoji were banned, as were references to the famous Chinese historical figure Zhuge Liang, whose name shares the same initials as Zhang Gaoli.⁸⁷

In June 2022, a surveillance video in which a group of men assaulted a group of women after they rejected their sexual advances and harassing behavior in a restaurant in Tangshan went viral and caused outrage online. In response, Weibo removed accounts that it deemed "incited gender confrontation."⁸⁸ A blogger reporting on the case was arrested (see C3).

In February 2022, after Russia invaded Ukraine, Chinese social media companies took down thousands of posts, including some that showed sympathetic views toward Ukraine. WeChat removed a joint statement by five Chinese professors protesting Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Weibo also removed posts about antiwar protests outside of China and silenced celebrities who objected to the war.⁸⁹

Automation is also playing an increasingly important role in censorship. The University of Toronto-based research group Citizen Lab in August 2019 revealed image-filtering capabilities on the popular social media platform WeChat that targeted users' creative efforts to circumvent text-based censorship through image-based commentary.⁹⁰ As of 2022, Alibaba, Tencent, and ByteDance had also emerged as industry leaders in content moderation and censorship technologies that intentionally target political content, selling the systems to other Chinese companies as well as foreign clients.⁹¹

B3 0-4 pts

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

Censorship decisions are arbitrary, opaque, and inconsistent, due to weak rule of law in China's political system and because so many individuals and processes are involved. Regulations issued by government and CCP agencies establish censorship guidelines. The impact of content restrictions may vary depending on factors like timing, technology, and geographic region. ISPs reportedly install filtering devices differently, including in the internet backbone or even in provincial-level internal networks.⁹² Lists of prohibited websites and sweeping censorship directives are closely held secrets, but are periodically leaked. There are no formal avenues for appeal, and they cannot be challenged in the

courts. Criticism of censorship is itself censored.⁹³ There is also no transparency surrounding private companies' day-to-day censorship in China, and users similarly lack avenues for appeal.

Article 84 of a 2015 antiterrorism law introduced fines and detentions of up to 15 days for telecommunications firms and ISPs, as well as relevant personnel, who fail to "stop transmission" of terrorist or extremist content; "shut down related services"; or implement "network security" measures to prevent the transmission of such content (see C2).⁹⁴ The cybersecurity law, in effect since 2017, also provides legal grounds for officials to instruct network operators to stop transmission of certain content to protect public security, among other restrictions (see A3).

The CAC and other bodies routinely introduce new rules and guidelines to further refine online restrictions, with an increasing focus on user-generated content. In September 2021, the CAC published a new guideline requiring platforms to "promote socialist core values" in algorithmic systems.⁹⁵ Subsequent regulations issued in December 2021, which took effect in March 2022, impose requirements on platforms' recommendation algorithms to ensure they remove "illegal and undesirable content," adhere to "mainstream values," and promote "positive energy." They also impose algorithmic transparency requirements on companies and require them to permit users to decide whether to enable automated content recommendation systems.⁹⁶

In June 2022, after the coverage period, the CAC published draft guidelines that would require websites with commenting features to review the contents of all comments and remove "illegal and harmful" information.⁹⁷

In March 2021, China's National Radio and Television Administration (NRTA) published draft amendments to the Radio and Television Law expanding its coverage to include online video broadcasters and platforms.⁹⁸ The amendments specify nine types of banned content, including content that "endangers security," "slanders Chinese culture," or does not help youth "establish the correct world view."⁹⁹

In November 2020, the NRTA released new regulations for the country's massive live streaming industry, which requires that platforms notify authorities ahead of time of celebrity and foreigner appearances, and that they promote accounts that embody core socialist values.¹⁰⁰ In November 2021, the NRTA released a five-year blueprint specifying new rules designed to regulate content on live streaming and short video platforms, including a mechanism that will punish producers of what the CCP considers toxic culture.¹⁰¹

B4 0-4 pts

Do online journalists, commentators, and ordinary users practice self-censorship?

Self-censorship among ordinary users and journalists is common and takes place amid an increasing risk of account closures, real-world reprisals, and legal penalties for online commentary (see B2, C3, and C7). Self-censorship is also exacerbated by nationalistic netizens' intimidation and online harassment of those who they perceive as harming the reputation of China.

There is evidence that WeChat users are increasingly self-censoring to preempt the closure of their accounts or other penalties, since WeChat is relied on for messaging, banking, ride-hailing, ordering food, booking travel, and more (see B2).¹⁰² The app's critical role in daily life, alongside platform moderators' growing propensity to close accounts rather than delete objectionable posts, has increased pressure on users to self-censor.

Self-censorship is pervasive among members of persecuted groups, especially Uyghurs, whose WeChat activities are closely monitored. Many block their own family members living abroad to avoid being detained for having foreign contacts.¹⁰³

Despite these pressures, various examples emerged during the coverage period of internet users speaking out on sensitive topics. In August 2021, the CCP's flagship mouthpiece, the *People's Daily*, posted on Weibo characterizing the Taliban, Afghanistan's new government, as a benign civic organization founded by refugee students. The article elicited a backlash by netizens, who viewed it as a whitewash of the group's crimes. The uproar led the *People's Daily* to delete the post.¹⁰⁴ In January 2022, images of a woman chained in a hut with a padlock dangling from her neck prompted a public uproar over the Chinese government's long-standing failure to address sex trafficking. Despite authorities' attempts to censor discussions about the incident, users kept it in the public eye for months.¹⁰⁵

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? 0 / 4

The government has significant control over digital news media and other information sources. Online discussion is subject to extensive manipulation. Websites and social media accounts, other than those operated by official news outlets, are not legally allowed to produce news content, though the definition of what constitutes "news" is unclear. Propaganda officials systematically instruct internet outlets to amplify content from state media and downplay news that might generate public criticism of the government.¹⁰⁶

For instance, in January 2022, the CAC released a list of 10 online keywords and phrases that highlighted the CCP's key propaganda

narratives for 2021. The list includes the 100th anniversary of the CCP's founding, the digital economy, and antitrust regulations.¹⁰⁷ In September 2021, after Huawei executive Meng Wanzhou was released from house arrest in Canada after the United States and China reached an agreement to defer her prosecution, authorities gave detailed guidance on how to celebrate her return, according to leaked propaganda directives. Stories of Meng's release occupied 9 of the top 10 trending hashtags on Weibo.¹⁰⁸

The Provisions on the Governance of the Online Information Content Ecosystem, implemented in March 2020,¹⁰⁹ categorize online content as either encouraged positive content, discouraged negative content, or illegal content. Encouraged material includes "spreading party doctrine," while negative categories include "excessive celebrity gossip" and sensationalist headlines. According to the rules, the encouraged content must be actively promoted in prominent online locations such as on web portal home pages, pop-up windows, hot topic lists, and default search results.¹¹⁰ They also call for online content providers to promote officially approved "mainstream values" via algorithms. Most of these actions had been occurring for years, but the provisions consolidate them into a single set of rules.

Paid commentators, known informally as the 50 Cent Party, are employed to post progovernment remarks and influence online discussions.¹¹¹ Such commentators are known for reporting users who post offending statements, deliberately muddying the facts of particular incidents,¹¹² and coordinating smear campaigns against government critics.¹¹³ According to a report released in December 2020, a robust government-funded industry of automated online commenting floods social media platforms with desired posts, even under the direction of small local agencies.¹¹⁴

Since 2017, content manipulation and disinformation campaigns have increasingly extended even to platforms that are blocked in China, including Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube,¹¹⁵ demonstrating an ability to influence online discourse internationally.¹¹⁶ A June 2021 report by ProPublica uncovered hundreds of videos on YouTube in which Uyghurs refuted—in almost identical language—then US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's claims about severe human rights violations in Xinjiang.¹¹⁷

According to a December 2021 *New York Times* study and March 2022 Associated Press reporting, Beijing has employed hundreds of "influencers" to push propaganda on TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook.¹¹⁸ A joint February 2022 investigation by ProPublica and the *New York Times* found a network of over 3,000 inauthentic accounts that had been created to promote Chinese state media propaganda about the Olympics.¹¹⁹

In addition to paid commentators, local authorities have mobilized *ziganwu*—volunteer commentators motivated by ideology rather than money—to promote the government’s narratives online.¹²⁰ A document leaked in 2015 revealed hundreds of thousands of “youth league online commentators” in China’s higher education institutions, tasked with turning students against supposed “Western” democratic values.¹²¹ Throughout 2021, nationalistic internet users attacked science blogs and feminist and LGBT+ accounts for their being “anti-China,” leading to those accounts and websites shutting down.¹²²

B6 0-3 pts

**Are there economic or regulatory constraints that negatively 0 /
affect users’ ability to publish content online? 3**

Growing censorship demands, licensing requirements, and data-localization mandates have made it more expensive to run an internet-specific company, including online news outlets, in China. While large companies have been able to absorb the rising operational costs, new and smaller players operate with increasing difficulty. Arbitrary regulatory decisions have also contributed to an unstable investment climate.¹²³

Under CAC regulations on managing internet news and information services that came into effect in 2017,¹²⁴ only traditional media or state-controlled enterprises may obtain a license to gather or disseminate news online.¹²⁵ Regulations from 2016 restrict foreign investment in online publishing and require at least eight full-time editorial or publishing staff members.¹²⁶ In addition, CAC rules have made it harder for both independent media and individual bloggers, journalists, and writers to sustain themselves financially.¹²⁷ Commercial media outlets such as Caixin, known for relatively aggressive and investigative reporting, have suffered from falling profits due to censorship and ad hoc directives requiring major news portals and other aggregators to favor state media.

In January 2021, the CAC further restricted online self-publishing (individuals or companies that only publish through social media), requiring independently operated accounts to obtain a permit and prohibiting them from commenting on a list of topics.¹²⁸

In October 2021, the CAC released an updated version of the Internet News Information Source List, containing over 1,300 authorized news outlets that can be republished by other news services—four times as many as the CAC’s 2016 list. The list removed Caixin and added the social media accounts of state media and government agencies.¹²⁹ In August 2021, China’s top economic regulator released a draft regulation that would ban private investment in the media, including for the establishment or operation of news sites.¹³⁰ The draft regulation would add further economic barriers for online outlets.

B7 0-4 pts

China's online information landscape is significantly less diverse than it had been before Xi Jinping came to power due to increasing censorship. This strict censorship of critical viewpoints and foreign information sources has also empowered nationalist and conservative voices, contributing to their being disproportionately represented in Chinese cyberspace.¹³¹ Nevertheless, the internet still provides narrow avenues for critical discussion and enables the sharing of information on some important social and political issues, particularly when users devise creative workarounds to information controls, such as wordplay, to disguise discussion.¹³²

The stringent penalization of groups perceived as a political threat has effectively diminished the online space for civil society in recent years.¹³³ While groups that work on less sensitive issues have a vigorous online presence, organizations and topics that were tolerated in previous years—such as feminist groups—have faced increasing scrutiny.

Many members of marginalized ethnic, religious, and linguistic groups attempt to use the internet to disseminate banned content, but these views remain underrepresented online. For example, Uyghur-language content and relevant news reporting have been heavily censored, and many ordinary Uyghur users have been detained (see B2 and C3); Islamophobic commentary is permitted to circulate widely.¹³⁴

Tens of millions of internet users bypass censorship with circumvention technology or creative workarounds. Although hundreds of VPN services are inaccessible,¹³⁵ various options remain available.¹³⁶

Within the Great Firewall, netizens deploy humorous neologisms, homonyms, and cryptic allusions to substitute for banned keywords, forcing censors to filter seemingly innocuous terms like “rice bunny,” which is pronounced “mi tu” in Mandarin and has become a well-known alternative for the intermittently censored #MeToo hashtag.¹³⁷ For the past several years, the word “Xinjiang” and the human rights abuses documented across the region had been taboo on the Chinese internet. Netizens thus used “XJ” and “new jiang” (“xin” means new in Chinese) to try to circumvent censorship.¹³⁸ In a similar vein, “JC” was used to reference the police (“jin cha” means police), and “zf” for government (“zhengfu” means government).¹³⁹

Although tolerance of investigative journalism has declined dramatically over the past decade,¹⁴⁰ some intrepid reporters continue to expose wrongdoing by companies and officials, focusing on topics that are less likely to draw censorship online and occasionally triggering national conversations. In September 2020, during the previous coverage period, a *People* magazine report that shed light on the lack of labor protections

for delivery drivers put a critical spotlight on two of China's biggest online food delivery companies.¹⁴¹

B8 0-6 pts

Do conditions impede users' ability to mobilize, form communities, and campaign, particularly on political and social issues? 1 / 6

The role of social media in providing a vibrant space for activism in China has waned significantly due to stricter internet controls under Xi Jinping.¹⁴² Growing censorship of popular apolitical platforms such as dating, video-sharing, live streaming, and blockchain applications in recent years has effectively closed avenues users had used to disseminate information and mobilize. Chinese internet users also mobilized around posts documenting the hardship of the COVID-19 lockdown imposed from March to May 2022 in Shanghai (see B2).

Yet while overt activism on political issues is exceedingly rare, China's #MeToo movement continues to demonstrate that citizens can organize around select social causes, and that their efforts sometimes have a real-world impact. Despite heavy censorship of the global campaign, #MeToo encouraged several Chinese students to speak out online about their experiences with sexual harassment, leading to a few instances of positive change. The civil code, released in June 2020, bans sexual harassment,¹⁴³ a move seen as a response to numerous cases of professors harassing female students on college campuses across the country.¹⁴⁴ In December 2020, a court in Beijing heard a landmark case involving Zhou Xiaoxuan, who sued a prominent television-show host for sexually harassing her. Around 100 people gathered outside the court to support Zhou, after first learning about the case on Chinese social media. A court dismissed her case in September 2021.¹⁴⁵

Repression of the #MeToo movement escalated during the coverage period, leading to some setbacks. Authorities heavily censored discussion of Peng Shuai's case online, limiting online mobilization in China (see B2). In September 2021, a court dismissed Zhou's case.¹⁴⁶ In August 2021, the case of an Alibaba employee accusing her male manager of rape caused an online uproar, which prompted Alibaba to fire the manager and to pressure two other senior employees to resign for failing to address the allegations. Alibaba fired the woman several months later for "false information" that damaged the company's reputation.¹⁴⁷

Online organizing for labor rights and pushing for collective action against e-commerce companies also suffered setbacks. Authorities in March 2021 detained delivery driver Chen Guojiang, who recorded videos and set up WeChat groups to organize delivery drivers.¹⁴⁸ Chen was allegedly released in February 2022, but the conditions for his release were not clear.¹⁴⁹

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, 0 / including on the internet, and are they enforced by a judiciary 6 that lacks independence?

Article 35 of the constitution guarantees freedoms of speech and publication, but such rights are subordinated to the CCP's status as the ruling party. The constitution cannot be invoked in courts as a legal basis for asserting rights. The judiciary is not independent and closely follows party directives, particularly in politically sensitive cases involving freedom of expression.

C2 0-4 pts

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

Numerous laws and regulations limit online activities, and prosecutors exploit vague provisions to imprison people for their online speech. Trials and hearings typically lack due process. It can take years for cases to move through the court system; the accused are routinely denied bail and placed in long-lasting pretrial detention.

Laws prohibiting offenses including defamation, creating disturbances, illegal commercial activities, and extortion have implications for online speech.¹⁵⁰ Defamation has been interpreted to include "online rumors," content deemed false, or online expression that "seriously harms" public order or state interests.¹⁵¹ It carries a possible three-year prison sentence under "serious" circumstances, which apply when the content in question receives more than 5,000 views or is reposted more than 500 times.¹⁵² Online messages deemed to incite unrest or protests are subject to criminal penalties under provisions punishing citizens for "picking quarrels and provoking trouble."

Crimes such as "subversion" and "separatism"—as well as inciting such actions—can draw sentences as severe as life in prison.¹⁵³ Article 300 of the criminal code punishes "using heterodox religion to undermine implementation of the law" and is often invoked against members of banned religious groups.¹⁵⁴ A 2015 amendment to the criminal code increased the maximum penalties for these crimes from 15 years to life imprisonment¹⁵⁵ and introduced penalties of up to seven years in prison for disseminating misinformation on social media.¹⁵⁶

A March 2021 amendment to the criminal code stipulated that those who "insult, slander, or infringe the reputation and honor of heroes and martyrs" can be imprisoned for up to three years.¹⁵⁷ Another law in June

2021 was introduced to ban “slander” of members of the armed forces.¹⁵⁸

The 2015 antiterrorism law bars social media users from sharing information about acts of terrorism or spreading “inhuman” images that could encourage copycat attacks (see B3 and C5).¹⁵⁹

In February 2020, amid the coronavirus outbreak, China’s top judicial and law enforcement agencies released new guidelines for judges, prosecutors, and others working in the legal system urging strong action against crimes seen as weakening disease-control efforts and undermining the CCP’s authority. Among the 10 categories of crimes listed for tighter enforcement were “spreading false information and rumors online” and “disrupting social order, especially maliciously attacking the party and government, taking the opportunity to incite subversion of state power, or overthrow of the socialist system.”¹⁶⁰

Some detentions do not require approval by a court,¹⁶¹ and individuals can be detained without trial under poor conditions in drug rehabilitation centers.¹⁶² Chinese law also contains a form of criminal detention termed “residential surveillance at a designated location”¹⁶³ where police may hold individuals in secret locations without informing their families or legal counsel for up to six months.¹⁶⁴

C3 0-6 pts

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

Chinese citizens are regularly jailed for their online activities, and the risk of being detained or imprisoned has increased considerably over the past several years. Rapid advances in surveillance technology and growing police access to user data have helped facilitate the rise in prosecutions (see C5 and C6).¹⁶⁵

During the coverage period, authorities continued to detain or prosecute people for their speech related to the COVID-19 pandemic. In March 2021, retired professor Chen Zhaozhi went on trial in Beijing for posting online that the “Wuhan pneumonia is not a Chinese virus, but Chinese Communist Party virus.” Chen, who suffers from a number of illnesses, was denied bail. As of the end of the coverage period, he remained in detention.¹⁶⁶ In September 2021, human rights activist Guo Quan was tried for “inciting subversion” after he published articles criticizing social injustice, corruption, and the government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁶⁷ In November 2021, a man in the Ningxia region was detained for nine days after he sent a meme to a group on WeChat complaining about the local COVID-19 control measures. ¹⁶⁸

In January 2022, citizen journalist and Falun Gong practitioner Xu Na was sentenced to eight years in prison for sending photos and information

about COVID-19-related restrictions in Beijing to the Epoch Times, an overseas Chinese-language website affiliated with Falun Gong, for publication online.¹⁶⁹

Journalists in China are frequently imprisoned for their work, online writing, or video posts. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), at least 50 journalists were jailed in China and Hong Kong as of December 2021, more than any other country.¹⁷⁰ In September 2021, Huang Xueqin, a prominent blogger and #MeToo activist, was detained by Guangzhou police on charge of “inciting subversion of state power,” along with labor and disability rights activist Wang Jianbing.¹⁷¹ The two remained detained a year later.¹⁷² In August 2022, after the coverage period, blogger Mao Huibin was arrested and charged with “picking quarrels and provoking trouble” after reporting on police obstruction of investigations into a gender-based assault in Tangshan.¹⁷³

Activists and human rights lawyers have been prosecuted for advocating for democratic rights and governance, exposing police abuses, unionizing efforts, and other online activities. In June 2022, after the coverage period, authorities held a closed-door trial for human rights activist Xu Zhiyong, who was first detained in February 2020, on charges of “subversion of state power,” which carries a potential life sentence.¹⁷⁴ The nationwide effort to track Xu down appeared to accelerate after he called online for Xi Jinping to step down over the government’s mishandling of the coronavirus. ¹⁷⁵ Shaanxi authorities tried human rights lawyer Chang Weiping on charges of “subversion of state power” in July 2022, after the coverage period.¹⁷⁶ Chang had released a YouTube video detailing torture he reported suffering when detained in January 2020.

In July 2021, a court in Anhui province sentenced Zhou Weilin to three-and-a-half years in prison for “picking quarrels and provoking trouble,” in retaliation for his Twitter posts and his reporting for the human rights news site Weiquest.¹⁷⁷ In November 2021, an Anhui court sentenced activist Shen Liangqing to three years in prison after convicting him of “picking quarrels and provoking trouble.” Shen had published articles exposing the abuses in the CCP’s disciplinary system and has frequently criticized the CCP on Twitter and Facebook.¹⁷⁸ Another three-year sentence was issued to human rights lawyer Chen Jiahong in December 2021, after a Guangxi court convicted him of “inciting subversion” for criticizing the CCP and calling for democratic reforms on social media.¹⁷⁹

The CCP also continued its crackdown on prominent entrepreneurs who refused to toe the party line. In July 2021, a court in Hebei province sentenced billionaire Sun Dawu, head of Dawu Agricultural and Animal Husbandry Group, to 18 years in prison on charges including “picking quarrels and provoking trouble” and assembling a crowd to attack state agencies. Sun had openly accused the government of covering up a swine flu outbreak in 2019,¹⁸⁰ had previously supported detained activist Xu

Zhiyong, and had praised the work of lawyers representing people who have criticized the ruling party, including online.¹⁸¹

An increasing number of internet users were detained for “unpatriotic” speech during the coverage period. In October 2021, Hainan authorities detained former journalist and anticorruption activist Luo Changping after he posted on Weibo mocking the portrayal of the Chinese military in a recent propaganda film.¹⁸² He received a seven-month prison sentence in May 2022.¹⁸³

Members of persecuted religious and ethnic minority groups face particularly harsh treatment for their online activities. In Xinjiang, an estimated one million people are being held in political reeducation camps or forced labor facilities,¹⁸⁴ some of whom were targeted for their online activities that included communication with relatives living abroad via WeChat.¹⁸⁵ A February 2020 leaked government document contained details of dozens of jailed or forcibly relocated Uyghurs and other Muslims. The document listed one individual who had been detained because he was friends on WeChat with a Uyghur person in Turkey; another individual was detained because they accidentally clicked on an overseas website on their phone; and a woman was sentenced in 2017 to 15 years in prison for making contact online with Uyghurs outside the country.¹⁸⁶

There are also reports that ethnic Hui Muslims inside and outside Xinjiang experience periodic detention.¹⁸⁷ In January 2020, Cui Haoxin, a Hui Muslim poet, was detained by police in the Shandong Province for posting on Twitter about repression in Xinjiang and charged with “picking quarrels and provoking trouble.”¹⁸⁸ That same month the *Washington Post* reported on the case of a Hui woman who was held at a reeducation camp for five months after she used a VPN to submit homework to the University of Washington when visiting her father in Xinjiang.¹⁸⁹

Tibetans living outside the Tibetan Autonomous Region have also been targeted for sharing information on Chinese social media or overseas websites. Tibetan activist and writer Thupten Lodoe was arrested in October 2021 in Kardze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan province and sentenced to four-and-a-half years’ imprisonment in June 2022, after the coverage period, for “inciting separatism” in social media posts.¹⁹⁰

People in the Tibetan Autonomous Region, a region which is not factored into this report’s scores (see Overview), also face arrest and prison terms for their online speech. In August 2022, after the coverage period, a teacher in Lhasa was arrested for posts on WeChat and Weibo documenting the harmful implementation of the city’s harsh COVID-19 lockdown.¹⁹¹

Many Falun Gong practitioners have been jailed in recent years for posting messages about the spiritual group or human rights abuses on social media, accessing banned websites, and possessing or sharing prohibited VPN technology.¹⁹²

C4 0-4 pts

Does the government place restrictions on anonymous 0 / communication or encryption? 4

Anonymous communication is severely limited. Under 2012 data-privacy legislation and additional 2017 rules,¹⁹³ web service companies are required to register users under their real names and national ID numbers.¹⁹⁴

Draft guidelines released by the CAC in October 2021 direct services to use real-name registration to prevent users banned for legal or platform policy violations from reregistering, and to disclose the geographic locations of users.¹⁹⁵ In March and April 2022, social media platforms like Weibo and Douyin began to display the cities or provinces of China-based users underneath posts. Users outside of China have their country displayed. ¹⁹⁶

Authorities also enforce SIM card registration,¹⁹⁷ and in December 2019 regulations took effect that require users to have their faces scanned when registering for mobile services.¹⁹⁸ All online gamers are also required to register using their name and phone number,¹⁹⁹ and real-name registration for online literature platforms became mandatory in June 2020, limiting online spaces where many novelists have turned to discuss sensitive subjects in recent years.²⁰⁰ The CAC released draft guidelines in January 2022 that extend real-name registration requirements to companies that provide image-manipulation services based on machine learning, commonly known as deepfakes.²⁰¹

Authorities in some areas have instructed public Wi-Fi providers to comply with user registration requirements.²⁰² Cybercafés check photo identification, record user activities, and at times require facial scans, sometimes in cooperation with law enforcement.

Measures that erode anonymity disproportionately target groups that are perceived as threats to the regime. In Xinjiang, Uyghurs have been required since 2015 to register with their real names when purchasing electronic devices with storage, communication, and broadcast features. Stores selling such equipment are also required to install software that provides police with real-time electronic records on transactions.²⁰³

The use of encryption is also severely restricted. The 2015 antiterrorism law requires companies to offer technical support to decrypt information at the request of law enforcement agencies, among other provisions.²⁰⁴ Regulations for the Administration of Commercial

Encryption dating to 1999, and related rules from 2006, separately require a government regulator to approve encryption products used by foreign and domestic companies.²⁰⁵ In January 2020, a law took effect that requires critical information-infrastructure providers to apply for a review by the CAC if their use of encryption technologies is viewed as potentially impacting national security.²⁰⁶

In May 2021, the *New York Times* reported that Apple abandoned the encryption technology it typically uses when storing user data in China after the Chinese government prohibited the technology (see C6).²⁰⁷

C5 0-6 pts

Does state surveillance of internet activities infringe on users' 0 / right to privacy? 6

Online surveillance is pervasive and highly sophisticated, and privacy protections from government infringement under Chinese law are minimal. In recent years, the Chinese government has increasingly moved toward big-data integration with the help of private companies, essentially consolidating in various databases a wide array of information on individuals, including their online activities.

Through an examination of more than 76,000 local government procurement documents published between 2004 and May 2020, a study by ChinaFile found that in 2019 alone authorities in one third of Chinese counties purchased surveillance equipment, including facial recognition-enabled cameras, databases for storing citizen information and images, and Wi-Fi sniffers, which are used to monitor internet traffic.²⁰⁸ Much of the equipment is connected to Project Sharp Eyes, which aims to cover all key public spaces in China by video surveillance.

When conducting investigations, the authorities have unfettered access to user communications and data on certain popular platforms, as indicated by reports of users being punished for their presumably private conversations, particularly on WeChat. A June 2022 *New York Times* investigation into bids for government surveillance contracts compiled by ChinaFile found that police have sought to use international mobile subscriber identity (IMSI)-catchers and Wi-Fi sniffers to extract information about people's mobile phone usage, like social media handles and whether they have downloaded apps deemed problematic.²⁰⁹

Residents of Xinjiang are subject to severely invasive surveillance tactics. A leaked list of Uyghur detainees examined in a December 2020 report by HRW showed how Chinese authorities are using big-data technology to arbitrarily detain Muslims in Xinjiang. Dated from late 2018, the list from Xinjiang's Aksu Prefecture names 2,000 people flagged by the police's Integrated Joint Operations Platform (IJOP) for surveillance and detention. The research showed that the vast majority of the people on the list were targeted by police for nonviolent and mundane behavior like owning

multiple cell phones, receiving phone calls from relatives in foreign “sensitive countries,” wearing religious clothing, using Skype, or studying the Quran. Some of the punished actions appear to have taken place years or even decades ago—such as studying the Quran in the mid-1980s or staying overnight in another part of Xinjiang in 2013.²¹⁰

Surveillance technologies and policies deployed in one part of China are often later expanded to other parts of the country, with Xinjiang emerging as a particularly important testing ground.²¹¹ Chinese border police are reported to have installed surveillance apps on the phones of tourists traveling in Xinjiang, which grant authorities the ability to extract user data and identify politically and culturally sensitive material stored on the person’s phone.²¹² In 2019, reports emerged that Chinese border officers were beginning to check the photographs, messages, and apps on the phones of anyone arriving in China from Hong Kong for evidence of their support for the prodemocracy protest movement in the city.²¹³

Existing, albeit geographically disparate, data sets assembled through surveillance efforts could feed into “social credit” systems that create an assessment of individuals’ online activities and other personal data; a few municipalities are currently testing such systems,²¹⁴ which have been subject to criticism within and outside China due to privacy and other concerns. A fully integrated national social credit system does not yet exist, and questions have been raised about how widespread and effective local pilot efforts have been.²¹⁵ Nevertheless, an individual listed as problematic by municipal or provincial authorities under such systems could face restrictions on movement, education, and financial transactions. By contrast, those highly rated in Alibaba’s Sesame Credit scoring system or in municipal ratings of local governments like Xiamen and Fuzhou can win privileged access to private services, deposit waivers, free library book borrowing, or shorter lines at airport security.²¹⁶

C6 0-6 pts

Does monitoring and collection of user data by service providers and other technology companies infringe on users’ right to privacy? 0 / 6

Internet-specific companies are required under numerous laws and regulations to assist the government in monitoring users’ online activities. Recent regulations include a September 2018 rule that provides security authorities with broad powers to enter the premises of all internet service companies to inspect and copy any information deemed important to cybersecurity.²¹⁷ The regulatory package complemented the 2017 cybersecurity law’s requirement that network operators assist police and security agencies with criminal investigations or national security operations.²¹⁸

Other surveillance laws include a 2013 amendment to the criminal procedure code that lays out a vague review process for allowing police

monitoring of people's electronic communications, which the Ministry of Public Security permits in many types of criminal investigations.²¹⁹ The State Secrets Law obliges telecommunications companies to cooperate with authorities investigating leaked state secrets, or risk losing their licenses.²²⁰

Individuals or entities that refuse to comply with government requests for surveillance assistance risk detention or criminal punishment. A National Intelligence Law adopted in 2017 states that those deemed to be obstructing national intelligence work can be subject to 15 days of administrative detention and further criminal charges.²²¹

Various regulations outline requirements for companies to retain and make user data available to officials.²²² CAC rules issued in 2016 oblige Chinese app providers to register users and keep user activity logs for 60 days.²²³ ISPs are required to retain user information for 60 days and submit it to the authorities upon request, without judicial oversight or transparency.²²⁴

Tencent—the parent company of WeChat and QQ, two of the world's most widely used social media platforms—directly assists the Chinese government with surveillance. Research by Citizen Lab found in early 2020 that WeChat was monitoring messages and images sent by users registered outside of China, scanning them for politically sensitive key words and retaining the relevant conversations in order to train the platform's censorship system.²²⁵ In October 2021, after a netizen backlash over apps accessing users' photo libraries, WeChat pledged that it would stop accessing users' photos.²²⁶

The e-commerce giant Alibaba also helps the government with surveillance. In 2019, research published by the Open Technology Fund revealed evidence that the government's Study the Great Nation app, which was designed by Alibaba to promote the CCP's ideology and encourage the study of "Xi Jinping thought" in particular, was built with a backdoor that could grant the authorities access to users' internet browsing histories, text messages, photos, and other personal information.²²⁷

In September 2021, a Lithuanian government security audit found that a Xiaomi phone included software modules specifically designed to leak data to Chinese authorities and censor information related to topics the Chinese government considered sensitive. The assessment also found suspicious activities on a Huawei phone.²²⁸

The 2017 cybersecurity law mandates that internet companies store the data of Chinese residents on servers based in the country, a practice that makes it easier for the government to access user information. In 2018, Apple's iCloud began storing the data of its Chinese users in partnership

with Guizhou-Cloud Big Data, a state-run company;²²⁹ a second data center is expected to open in Inner Mongolia.²³⁰ A May 2021 report from the *New York Times* further clarified how Chinese government workers operate Apple-owned data centers in the country, detailing their physical control of computers and administration of other technology.

COVID-19-related “health code” apps—which determine an individual’s risk of being exposed to COVID-19—developed by regional officials in partnerships with major Chinese tech firms Alibaba and Tencent, do not adhere to privacy-by-design standards. For example, the privacy policy of Beijing’s app did not state any time limit on the retention of data.²³¹ A *New York Times* investigation showed that the Alipay Health Code app automatically shared data with the police.²³² Authorities appear to have used the health code app system to arbitrarily restrict movements of citizens involved in activism. For example, in June 2022, after the coverage period, people involved mobilizing to demand banks in Henan unfreeze their deposits had their health codes turned red before a planned protest.²³³

Location tracking under China’s “Zero Covid” strategy sparked debates about extensive surveillance. In November 2021, over 82,000 residents in Chengdu received phone messages saying that they had been marked “time-space companions” because their location data showed that they had come within an 800-meter radius with an infected person for longer than 10 minutes within the last 14 days.²³⁴

In January 2022, in the run up to the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics, an investigation published by Citizen Lab found that the My2022 app, which all attendees of the event were required to install, included vulnerabilities that could lead to the leak of personal data.²³⁵

The government also seeks to proactively counter efforts to evade surveillance. In March 2021, the CAC announced that it started talks with 11 social media platforms, including ByteDance, Tencent, Alibaba, Xiaomi, and Kuaishou, to explore how to counteract deepfake technologies and voice-changing software, which are often used by activists to elude identification by government authorities.²³⁶ The platforms were instructed to report back with security assessments and improved risk-prevention and control measures for the technologies.

Several new government efforts were aimed to regulate how Chinese tech companies collect, share, and store users’ data. The Personal Information Protection Law (PIPL) went into effect in November 2021.²³⁷ The law, which applies to all organizations and individuals in China seeking to access Chinese citizens’ data, is the country’s first comprehensive legislation about the protection of personal information. However, the law exempts government agencies from data protection obligations and

requires certain companies to store sensitive data on servers located in China, which leaves them vulnerable to government access.²³⁸

In March 2021, the CAC issued the Provisions on the Scope of Necessary Personal Information for Common Used Mobile Internet Applications, defining what constitutes “necessary personal information” that mobile internet applications can require consumers to provide.²³⁹ Regulators subsequently alleged that over 100 apps—including those from Chinese tech giants Tencent and Baidu—violated the rules.²⁴⁰ Separately, in July 2021, authorities asserted that the ride-hailing app Didi illegally collected users’ personal information; the app was pulled from China-based app stores.²⁴¹ In December 2021, authorities ordered app stores to remove over 100 apps, including the relatively liberal forum Douban, for data privacy and security violations among other offenses.²⁴²

In May 2020, the National People’s Congress passed the country’s first civil code, which included a provision that requires an individual’s consent for private companies to collect, share, or disclose their digital and biometric data. The provisions come amid growing public concern in China over data collection, hacking, and potential leaks by private companies.²⁴³

In September 2021, the new Data Security Law²⁴⁴ took effect. The law imposes extensive data security obligations for businesses—not only regulating data processing and management activities within China, but also those outside of China that would purportedly harm China’s national security or the public interest of Chinese citizens or organizations. It requires companies to obtain approval from the state prior to sharing data with a foreign judicial or law enforcement entity.²⁴⁵

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? 0 / 5

Cases of extralegal intimidation and violence involving internet users are widespread, including in detention. People detained in ordinary criminal cases often experience torture, and political and religious prisoners experience even worse treatment.²⁴⁶

Law enforcement officials frequently summon individuals for questioning in relation to online activity, an intimidation tactic referred to euphemistically as being “invited to tea.”²⁴⁷ For example, activists who expressed opposition to the Chinese government’s attempts to exercise greater political control over Hong Kong have been summoned.²⁴⁸

Activists have also been experienced movement restrictions during sensitive political events, effectively keeping them away from their normal online activities.²⁴⁹ In May and June 2021, ahead of the 33rd anniversary of the Tiananmen Massacre, police restricted the movement and

communication of families of Tiananmen victims and activists, including Hu Jia, Gao Yu, and Zhang Lifan.²⁵⁰

Members of marginalized religious and ethnic minority groups are among the internet users most vulnerable to extralegal detention, torture, and killing. In Xinjiang, some of the estimated one million Uyghurs and other Muslims were taken to reeducation camps as a result of their online activities.²⁵¹ Those detained or imprisoned typically suffer harsh conditions and often torture,²⁵² resulting in long-term health problems and sometimes death.

Online commentators expressing views critical of the Chinese government or deemed to harm China's international reputation face increased bullying, harassment, and other real-world repercussions from nationalistic online users. In August 2021, a campaign by nationalist netizens targeted prominent virologist Zhang Wenhong, accusing him of undermining Beijing's "Zero Covid" pandemic control strategy after he suggested that China must learn to live with the virus.²⁵³ In March 2022, Zhang was again attacked online and has not appeared in public since later that month, leading to speculations that he was punished by authorities for his views.²⁵⁴

People in Tibet, a region that is not covered by this report (see Overview), also face physical violence for their online activity. For example, HRW reported in July 2021 that Tibetan monk Choegyal Wangpo was arrested and severely beaten in 2019 after police found his phone at a café, which contained WeChat messages to other monks in Nepal. The police then raided his village and detained approximately 20 other monks.²⁵⁵

C8 0-3 pts

Are websites, governmental and private entities, service providers, or individual users subject to widespread hacking and other forms of cyberattack? 0 / 3

China remains a top source of global cyberattacks,²⁵⁶ though those with commercial targets have declined or become harder to trace.²⁵⁷ Attacks known to have originated in China can rarely be linked directly to the state, and much of the activity appears decentralized and uncoordinated. However, many attacks employ sophisticated technology, and experts believe that Chinese military and intelligence agencies either sponsor or condone technical attacks on political targets both within and outside China.

The government's mass surveillance also leaves people's personal information vulnerable to breaches. In July 2022, after the coverage period, hackers claimed to have accessed a Shanghai police database that contained records associated with one billion Chinese citizens.²⁵⁸

Websites associated with Uyghurs have faced frequent cyberattacks, while China-based hackers have deployed various phishing campaigns to infiltrate these communities in exile and collect information about them. In May 2021, during the previous coverage period, cybersecurity firms Check Point and Kaspersky reported that hackers were employing a malicious Microsoft Word file purporting to be from the UN Human Rights Council. The companies alleged that the likely goal of the attack was to introduce malware on a target's electronic device, particularly prominent Uyghurs, including in China.²⁵⁹ Uyghur activists living in exile reported hacking attempts throughout the coverage period.²⁶⁰

Footnotes

- ¹“China has 1.032 billion internet users, 73% penetration rate,” February 25, 2022, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202202/1253226.shtml>.
- ²China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), “The 49th Statistical Report on China’s Internet Development,” February 2022, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220520160114/https://www.cnnic.net.cn/hlw...>
- ³“China Median Speeds,” Ookla Speedtest Global Index, accessed September 22, 2022, <https://www.speedtest.net/global-index/china>.
- ⁴Charlotte Gao, “China’s Great Firewall: A Serious Pain in the Neck for European and US Companies,” The Diplomat, June 21, 2018, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/06/chinas-great-firewall-a-serious-pain-in-...>
- ⁵China Law Translate, “Cybersecurity Law,” July 4, 2016, <http://www.chinalawtranslate.com/cybersecurity2/?lang=en>
- ⁶China Power Team, “How web-connected is China?,” China Power, April 18, 2019, <https://chinapower.csis.org/web-connectedness/>.
- ⁷CAC, “建成基站139.6万个，终端用户近5亿户——5G成经济增长新引擎,” CAC, December 27, 2021, http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2021-12/27/content_5664728.htm.
- ⁸CAICT, “中国宽带发展白皮书,” September 2021, https://pdf.dfcfw.com/pdf/H3_AP202109291519270217_1.pdf?1632921062000.p...
- ⁹China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), “The 49th Statistical Report on China’s Internet Development,” 2022, <https://www.cnnic.net.cn/hlwfzyj/hlwzxbg/hlwtjbg/202202/P02022040740348....>
- ¹⁰China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), “The 49th Statistical Report on China’s Internet Development,” 2022, <https://www.cnnic.net.cn/hlwfzyj/hlwzxbg/hlwtjbg/202202/P02022040740348....>

- 11Qin Chem, "Inkstone Explains: How China engineers an alternative internet for its people," Inkstone news, Jun 11, 2020, <https://www.inkstonenews.com/tech/inkstone-explains-how-china-engineers...>
- 12Alexa Olesen, "Welcome to the Uighur Web," Foreign Policy, April 21, 2014, <http://atfp.co/1jmJCYH>
- 13"【中國觀察】北京上訪的陷阱," Epoch Times, October 2, 2021, <https://www.epochtimes.com/b5/21/10/2/n13275694.htm>; see also "China's Great Firewall Grows Higher Ahead of Party Congress," RFA, October 12, 2017, <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/firewall-10122017152509.html>.
- 14Chinese Human Rights Defenders (CHRD), "新娜：断网至今 我现终于可以出来在外面蹭网了! [Xin na: Until today I was disconnected, now I can go out and use someone else's internet connection]," October 21, 2020, https://wqw2010.blogspot.com/2020/10/blog-post_51.html.
- 15Drew Foerster, "China's Legislature Gears Up to Pass a Sweepingly Vague Cybersecurity Law," American Bar Association, May 2, 2016, http://www.americanbar.org/publications/blt/2016/05/02_foerster.html; China Law Translate, "Counter-Terrorism Law (2015)," China Law Translate, December 27, 2015, <https://www.chinalawtranslate.com/en/counter-terrorism-law-2015/>
- 16Ouyang Shijia and Ma Si, "Cybersecurity rule to take effect June 1," China Daily, April 28, 2020, <https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202004/28/WS5ea78912a310a8b241152323...>; CAC, "网络安全审查办法[Cyber Security Review Measures], CAC, April 27, 2020, "http://www.cac.gov.cn/2020-04/27/c_1589535450769077.htm
- 17China Law Translate, "Cybersecurity Review Measures," China Law Translate, May 7, 2020, <https://www.chinalawtranslate.com/en/cyber-security-review/>
- 18Alan Weissberger, "China's big 3 mobile operators have 9 Million 5G subscribers in advance of the service; Barron's: China to lead in 5G deployments," Techblog, October 7, 2019, <https://techblog.comsoc.org/2019/10/07/chinas-big-3-mobile-operators-ha...>
- 19Lan Xinzheng, "Full-Pricing Autonomy," Beijing Review, May 26, 2014, http://www.bjreview.com.cn/business/txt/2014-05/26/content_621017.htm; Paul Mozur and Lorraine Luk, "China to Liberalize Telecommunications Pricing," Wall Street Journal, May 9, 2014, <http://on.wsj.com/1NFam3s>; 毛启盈, "工信部支持民资进入转售业务 打破垄断发文还不够 [MIIT supports private capital entering network leasing business, more antimonopoly policy is needed]," 搜

狐 Sohu, December 30, 2015, <http://it.sohu.com/20151230/n432995626.shtml>.

- 20Global Services, BT, "First global telco to receive domestic telecoms licenses in China," January 24, 2019, <https://www.globalservices.bt.com/en/aboutus/news-press/bt-first-global...>
- 21Global Times, "China opens up VPN joint venture to foreign investors," September 07, 2020, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1200193.shtml>.
- 22These include the Public Security Bureau and the State Administration for Industry and Commerce. "一看就明白全程图解网吧牌照申请流程图" [A look at an illustration of the whole course of the cybercafe license application process]," Detail.Zol.com, http://detail.zol.com.cn/picture_index_100/index997401.shtml.
- 23Dahe News, "2020年全国网吧共倒闭12888家 网吧行业急需解锁新技能 [In 2020, 12,888 internet cafés will close across the country. The internet café industry urgently needs to unlock new skills]," Sina.com, March 26, 2021, <https://finance.sina.com.cn/chanjing/cyxw/2021-03-26/doc-ikknsck174792....>
- 24Central Cyberspace Affairs Commission website, accessed June 28, 2021, <http://www.cac.gov.cn/>.
- 25David Feng, "Chinese Cyber Administration Office Goes Online," Tech Blog 86, December 31, 2014, <https://web.archive.org/web/20150112152942/http://www.techblog86.com/20...>; National Law Review, "More Officials Appointed to Lead Film and Media Authorities in China," National Law Review, July 31, 2018, <https://www.natlawreview.com/article/more-officials-appointed-to-lead-f...>
- 26Drew Foerster, American Bar Association, "China's Legislature Gears Up to Pass a Sweepingly Vague Cybersecurity Law," May 2, 2016, http://www.americanbar.org/publications/blt/2016/05/02_foerster.html
- 27Paul Mozur, "In China, Internet Czar Is Taking a Blunt Tone," Bits (blog), New York Times, October 31, 2014, <http://nyti.ms/1GELosY>; Shannon Tiezzi, "Xi Jinping Leads China's New Internet Security Group," Diplomat, February 28, 2014, <https://thediplomat.com/2014/02/xi-jinping-leads-chinas-new-internet-se...>
- 28Kathleen Wilson, "Revoking Trust in one CNNIC Intermediate Certificate," Mozilla Security Blog, March 23, 2015, <https://blog.mozilla.org/security/2015/03/23/revoking-trust-in-one-cnni...>

- 29 Timothy P. Stratford, Jason Goldberg and Christopher Adams, "More Officials Appointed to Lead Film and Media Authorities in China," Global Policy Watch, July 31 2018, <https://www.globalpolicywatch.com/2018/07/more-officials-appointed-to-l...>
- 30 Xinhua, "Senior CPC official stresses united front work in Internet sector," Xinhua Net, November 28, 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-11/28/c_138590257.htm
- 31 "Censorship of Alexa Top 1000 Domains in China," GreatFireChina, <https://en.greatfire.org/search/alexa-top-1000-domains>
- 32 The Times of India, "Indian newspapers, websites not accessible in China," updated June 30, 2020, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/china/indian-newspapers-websi...>
- 33 Mark Magnier, "China blocks US think tank Centre for Strategic and International Studies website following critique on sanctions," SCMP, April 17, 2021, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3129932/china-blocks-....>
- 34 GreatFire, "Censorship of Alexa Top 1000 Domains in China," GreatFireChina, <https://en.greatfire.org/search/alexa-top-1000-domains>; Sherisse Pham, "China adds Pinterest to list of banned sites," CNN, March 17, 2017, <http://money.cnn.com/2017/03/17/technology/pinterest-banned-china/>; Stephanie Yang, "China Appears to Block Popular Encrypted Messaging App Signal," The Wall Street Journal, March 16 2021, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/china-appears-to-block-signal-one-of-last-....>
- 35 Chauncey Jung, "Reddit Blocked In China," Supchina, August 12, 2018, <https://supchina.com/2018/08/12/reddit-blocked-in-china/>
- 36 "Wikipedia blocked in China in all languages," BBC, May 14, 2019: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-48269608>
- 37 Michael Kan, "Google blocked in China by censors, unclear how long it will last," Info World, November 9, 2012, <https://www.infoworld.com/article/2615782/google-blocked-in-china-by-ce...>
- 38 Rachel Mok, "Yahoo search is now blocked in China," Startup Living China, August 31, 2018, <https://startuplivingchina.com/yahoo-search-now-blocked-china/>
- 39 BBC, "中国打击代理服务器“非法经营” 网民忧无法翻墙 [China cracks down on 'illegal operation' of proxy servers]," January 23,

2017, <https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/chinese-news-38714639>.

- 40Jingjing Ma, "New regulations set rules for Internet access services sector: experts," Global Times, January 22, 2017, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1030188.shtml>
- 41Wong Siu-san and Sing Man, "China Mobilizes The 'Masses' to Join Nationwide Security Ops Ahead of Oct. 1," RFA, September 25, 2019. <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/anniversary-surveillance-0925201...>
- 42Sophia Yan, "China blocks internet searches abroad as Xi under pressure ahead of major speech," The Telegraph, March 5, 2019, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/03/05/china-blocks-internet-searc....>
- 43Office of the Central Cyberspace Affairs Commission, "Notice of the Cyberspace Administration of China on Public Comments on the Regulations of the Administration of Network Security (Draft for Comment)," November 14, 2021, http://www.cac.gov.cn/2021-11/14/c_1638501991577898.htm.
- 44Sarah Cook, "The News China Didn't Want Reported in 2017," Diplomat, January 27, 2018, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/01/the-news-china-didnt-want-reported-in-2...>
- 45The Cyberspace Administration of China, "打击谣言、治理算法..... 2022年“清朗”系列专项行动将重点整治这些网络乱象 [Fighting rumors, governance algorithms... The "Qinglang" series of special actions in 2022 will focus on rectifying this online chaos]," March 17, 2022, http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2022-03/17/content_5679589.htm.
- 46Jane Zhang, "China's Big Tech Crackdown: number of apps falls by 40 percent over 3 years amid new data laws and clean-up campaigns," South China Morning Post, December 21, 2021, <https://www.scmp.com/tech/tech-trends/article/3160457/chinas-big-tech-c....>
- 47Coco Feng, "China tightens control of internet speech amid regulatory action against popular online communities," South China Morning Post, December 21, 2021, <https://www.scmp.com/tech/big-tech/article/3160560/china-tightens-contr....>
- 48"Directives from the Ministry of Truth," China Digital Times, accessed October 8, 2020, <https://chinadigitaltimes.net/china/directives-from-the-ministry-of-tru...>
- 49Sohu, "百度发布2020年信息安全治理年报 [Baidu release 2020 annual report on information security governance]," Sohu, February 9, 2021, https://www.sohu.com/a/449673757_161795; "Environmental, Social and Governance Report," Baidu,

2021, <https://esg.baidu.com/resource/1ecd4d7e-c148-6e91-8dd5-556f11239ccc/Bai...>

- 50赫海威, “中国“标题党女王”的倒下: 咪蒙为何被封杀 [Why China Silenced a Clickbait Queen in Its Battle for Information Control],” New York Times Chinese, March 19, 2019, <https://cn.nytimes.com/china/20190319/china-bloggers-internet/dual/>
- 51Jane Zhang, “Weibo bans 52 accounts, some with millions of followers, in campaign against financial misinformation on social media,” South China Morning Post, September 2, 2021, <https://www.scmp.com/tech/policy/article/3147334/weibo-bans-52-accounts...>
- 52Coco Feng, “Gitee, China’s answer to GitHub, to review all code by temporarily closing open-source projects to the public,” South China Morning Post, May 19, 2022, <https://www.scmp.com/tech/big-tech/article/3178323/gitee-chinas-answer-....>
- 53Reuters, “Duolingo app no longer available on some Chinese app stores,” August 5, 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/duolingo-app-no-longer-available-so...>
- 54Derek Saul, “Microsoft’s LinkedIn leaves China following charges of censorship,” Forbes, October 14, 2021, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/dereksaul/2021/10/14/linkedin-leaves-china....>
- 55Scott Nover, “Grindr removed itself from Chinese app stores in China, citing a new privacy law,” Quartz, January 31, 2022, <https://qz.com/2120086/grindr-removed-itself-from-apples-app-store-in-c....>
- 56Liza Lin, “Scholars on LinkedIn are being blocked in China without telling them why,” June 25, 2021, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/academics-bristle-over-linkedin-blocking-t....>
- 57Jane Li & Matthew De Silva, “This is the blacklist Apple uses to censor the internet in China,” Quartz, October 31, 2019, <https://qz.com/1737232/apple-and-tencent-use-this-blacklist-to-censor-s...>
- 58Jack Nicas, Raymond Zhong & Daisuke Wakabayashi, “Censorship, Surveillance and Profits: A Hard Bargain for Apple in China,” The New York Times, May 17, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/17/technology/apple-china-censorship-da...>
- 59Stephen Nellis and Paresh Dave, “Apple’s new ‘private relay’ feature will not be available in China,” Reuters, June 7,

2021, <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/apples-new-private-relay-feature-wi...>

- **60**Great Fire, "3636 apps are unavailable in the China (mainland) App Store," Apple Censorship, <https://applecensorship.com/na/CN?!=en>
- **61**Paul Mozur, "Twitter Users in China Face Detention and Threats in New Beijing Crackdown," New York Times, January 10, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/10/business/china-twitter-censorship-on...>; Yaxue Cao, "China Steps up Nationwide Crackdown to Silence Twitter Users – the Unmediated Story," China Change, December 5, 2018, <https://chinachange.org/2018/12/05/china-steps-up-nationwide-crackdown-...>
- **62**Muyi Xiao and Paul Mozur, "A digital manhunt: How Chinese police track critics on Twitter and Facebook," December 31, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/31/technology/china-internet-police-twi...>
- **63**Mimi Lau, "Chinese free speech advocate takes aim at Tencent over WeChat account shutdown," South China Morning Post, February 7, 2022, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/3166139/chinese-free-s....>
- **64**Mimi Lau, "Chinese free speech advocate takes aim at Tencent over WeChat account shutdown," South China Morning Post, February 7, 2022, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/3166139/chinese-free-s....>
- **65**JW Mu, "2021: The year in censored terms on the Chinese internet," SupChina, December 29, 2021, <https://supchina.com/2021/12/29/2021-the-year-in-censored-terms-on-the-....>
- **66**Radio Free Asia, "Student expelled from Chinese university over placard protest at campus lockdown," May 04, 2022, <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/expelled-04052022150034.html>.
- **67**Li Yuan, "'The Last Generation': The disillusionment of young Chinese," The New York Times, May 24, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/24/business/china-covid-zero.html>.
- **68**Nectar Gan, "'Voices of April': China's internet erupts in protest against censorship of Shanghai lockdown video," CNN, April 25, 2022, <https://www.cnn.com/2022/04/25/china/china-covid-beijing-shanghai-mic-i...>
- **69**Eunice Yoon, @onlyyoontv, "Trip.com boss James Liang banned on social media Weibo for 'violation of laws and regulations'.

Demographer Liang recently estimated #China #Covid19 lockdowns would cut 4 days per month of life expectancy. (Beijing had vowed to target critics of zero-covid). \$TCOM," May 23, 2022, <https://twitter.com/onlyyoontv/status/1528919019671015424>.

- 70Eva Dou, "China warns foreign Olympic athletes against speaking out on politics at Winter Games," The Washington Post, January 19, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/olympics/2022/01/19/china-winter-....>
- 71Bryan Ke, "Eileen Gu's comment advocating VPN workaround for Chinese censorship is in turn censored," Yahoo News, February 15, 2022, <https://news.yahoo.com/eileen-gu-advocating-vpn-workaround-230011385.ht....>
- 72Tyson Otto, "China orders Olympic star to delete photos," News Corp Australia, February 12, 2022, <https://www.news.com.au/sport/winter-olympics/china-orders-olympics-sta....>
- 73China Digital Times, " 半秒坦克人画面换一年“刑期”？赛雷话金被全网封禁 [Half a second of Tank Man screen changed to a one-year prison term? Sai Jei Jin was banned from the whole network]," May 18, 2022, <https://chinadigitaltimes.net/chinese/681643.html>.
- 74Wenxin Fan, "Chinese influencer's ice-cream pitch inadvertently introduces fans to Tiananmen Square Massacre," June 5, 2022, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/chinese-influencers-ice-cream-pitch-inadve....>
- 75Li Changshan, "For Mobile Users in China, One 'Wrong' Word Means Punishment," Bitter Winter, October 6, 2020, <https://bitterwinter.org/for-mobile-users-in-china-one-wrong-word-means....>
- 76Manish Singh, "Douyin, TikTok app in China, hits 400 million daily active users," Tech Crunch, January 7, 2020, <https://techcrunch.com/2020/01/06/douyin-tiktok-app-in-china-hits-400-m....>
- 77David Paulk, "THREAD about how Douyin, the Chinese version of #TikTok, is banning livestreamers for speaking Cantonese instead of Mandarin," Thread Reader, April 1, 2020, <https://threadreaderapp.com/thread/1245299840944201729.html>
- 78Oliver Young, "Language learning app emphasizing linguistic diversity deletes Tibetan and Uyghur languages," China Digital Times, November 2, 2021, <https://chinadigitaltimes.net/2021/11/language-learning-app-emphasizing....>
- 79Nandini Dwivedi, "China issues regulations restricting online religious content," JURIST, December 23,

2021, <https://www.jurist.org/news/2021/12/china-issues-regulations-restrictin...>

- ⁸⁰Chakmo Tso, "Tibetan online religious groups banned in Qanghai," Radio Free Asia, January 24, 2022, <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/online-01242022171520.html>.
- ⁸¹Rik Glauert, "EXCLUSIVE: China throws out court challenge against gay online content ban," Gay Star News, October 26, 2018, <https://www.gaystarnews.com/article/exclusive-china-throws-out-court-ch...>
- ⁸²Rik Glauert, "Court challenge of China's LGBTI content ban loses appeal," Gay Star News, April 15, 2019, <https://www.gaystarnews.com/article/court-challenge-of-chinas-lgbti-con...>
- ⁸³Shawn Yuan, "LGBTQ in China lament 'dark day' after social media crackdown," Al Jazeera, July 13, 2021, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/7/13/china-lgbtq>
- ⁸⁴Alex Yu, "Translation: LGBTQ site's WeChat account shuttered after report on homophobic backlash against hostel," China Digital Times, August 20, 2021, <https://chinadigitaltimes.net/2021/08/lgbtq-sites-wechat-account-shutte...>
- ⁸⁵Reuters, "Chinese fans of 'Friends' angry after show re-released with censorship," February 13, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/chinese-fans-friends-angry-after-sh....>
- ⁸⁶Nectar Gan and Steve George, "An intern took on one of China's biggest TV stars in a landmark #MeToo case. She lost, but vowed to fight on," CNN, September 15, 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/09/15/china/xianzi-zhu-jun-sexual-harassment-c....>
- ⁸⁷Paul Mozur, Muiy Xiao, Jeff Kao, and Gray Beltran, "Beijing silenced Peng Shuai in 20 minutes, then spent weeks on damage control," The New York Times, December 8, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/12/08/world/asia/peng-shuai-ch...>
- ⁸⁸Frances Mao, "Tangshan and Xuzhou: Fury and questions over China's treatment of women," BBC News, June 24, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-61906803>.
- ⁸⁹Shen Lu, "How China is dealing with misinformation about Ukraine," Protocol, March 2, 2022, <https://www.protocol.com/newsletters/protocol-china/china-social-media-...>

- ⁹⁰Jeffrey Knockel, Lotus Ruan, Masashi Crete-Nishihata, and Ron Deibert, "(Can't) Picture This," The Citizen Lab, August 14, 2018, <https://citizenlab.ca/2018/08/cant-picture-this-an-analysis-of-image-fi...>
- ⁹¹Shan Li, "Made-in-China Censorship for Sale," Wall Street Journal, March 6, 2020, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/made-in-china-censorship-for-sale-11583448...>
- ⁹²Xueyang Xu, Z. Morely Mao, and J. Alex Halderman, "Internet Censorship in China: Where Does the Filtering Occur?," *Passive and Active Measurement*, (2011): 133–142, <https://web.eecs.umich.edu/~zmao/Papers/china-censorship-pam11.pdf>
- ⁹³Gary King, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E. Roberts, "How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism But Silences Collective Expression," *American Political Science Review* 107, no. 2, May 2013, 1–18, <http://j.mp/2nxNUhk>
- ⁹⁴Drew Foerster, "China's Legislature Gears Up to Pass a Sweepingly Vague Cybersecurity Law," American Bar Association, May 2, 2016, http://www.americanbar.org/publications/blt/2016/05/02_foerster.html; China Law Translate, "Counter-Terrorism Law (2015)," China Law Translate, December 27, 2015, <https://www.chinalawtranslate.com/en/counter-terrorism-law-2015/>
- ⁹⁵The Cyberspace Administration of China, "关于进一步压实网站平台信息内容管理主体责任的意见 [Opinions on further consolidating the main responsibility of website platform information content management]," September 15, 2021, http://www.cac.gov.cn/2021-09/15/c_1633296790051342.htm.
- ⁹⁶Arendese Huld, "China's Sweeping Recommendation Algorithm Regulations in Effect from March 1," China Briefing, January 6, 2022, <https://www.china-briefing.com/news/china-passes-sweeping-recommendatio....>
- ⁹⁷"国家互联网信息办公室关于《互联网跟帖评论服务管理规定（修订草案征求意见稿）》公开征求意见的通知 [Notice of the Cyberspace Administration of China on Public Solicitation of Comments on the Provisions on the Administration of Internet Thread Commenting Services (Revised Draft for Comments)]," Cyberspace Administration of China, June 17, 2022, http://www.cac.gov.cn/2022-06/17/c_1657089000974111.htm.
- ⁹⁸Huaxia, "China's broadcasting watchdog solicits public opinion for legislation," Xinhua, March 17, 2021, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-03/17/c_139817258.htm.

- 99National Radio and Television Administration, “中华人民共和国广播电视法 征求意见稿 [Radio and Television Law of the People’s Republic of China – Draft for comments],” March 16, 2021, <http://www.nrta.gov.cn/module/download/downfile.jsp?spm=chekydwncf.0.0...> 中华人民共和国广播电视法 (征求意见稿) .pdf&filename=f2a2331b46d7441581fc09a74323cfd6.pdf.
- 100Tracy Qu, “China bans over 30 live-streaming behaviours, demands qualifications to discuss law, finance, medicine,” South China Morning Post, June 23, 2022, <https://www.scmp.com/tech/big-tech/article/3182767/china-bans-over-30-l...>
- 101Shen Lu, “New regulations target scandal-ridden Chinese celebs,” Protocol, October 11, 2021, <https://www.protocol.com/bulletins/china-entertainment-regulations>.
- 102Viola Zhou, “Locked out of an online life,” Ink Stone, July 26, 2018, <https://www.inkstonenews.com/tech/chinas-wechat-increasing-censorship-i...>; Arjun Kharpal, “Everything you need to know about WeChat — China’s billion-user messaging app,” CNBC, February 3, 2019, <https://www.cnbc.com/2019/02/04/what-is-wechat-china-biggest-messaging-...>
- 103Alexandra Ma, “Relatives of China's oppressed Muslim minority are getting blocked online by their own family members, who are terrified to even tell them how bad their lives are,” Business Insiders, February 16, 2019, <https://www.businessinsider.com/family-of-uighurs-in-china-say-are-bloc...>
- 104David Bandurski, “State media post on Taliban prompts backlash,” China Media Project, August 17, 2021, <https://chinamediaproject.org/2021/08/17/state-media-post-on-taliban-pr....>
- 105Heather Barr and Yaqiu Wang, “Chained woman has become the face of bride trafficking in China,” Women’s eNews, April 5, 2022, <https://womensenews.org/2022/04/chained-woman-has-become-the-face-of-br....>
- 106Sarah Cook, “China Media Bulletin: 2017 YEAR IN REVIEW (Issue No. 125),” Freedom House, January 2018, <https://freedomhouse.org/china-media/china-media-bulletin-2017-year-in-...>
- 107China Media Project, “A listicle for cyber control,” January 13, 2022, <https://chinamediaproject.org/2022/01/13/a-listicle-for-cyber-control/>.
- 108Samuel Wade, “Welcome home, Meng Wanzhou; water down coverage of deal with U.S. Justice Department,” China Digital Times, September 28, 2021, <https://chinadigitaltimes.net/2021/09/minitru-welcome-home-meng-wanzho...>

- ¹⁰⁹Bill Bostock, "China enacted a sweeping new law that bars people from posting negative content online, and it could be used to suppress coronavirus news," Business Insider, March 2, 2020, <https://www.businessinsider.com/china-internet-ban-criticism-could-suppress-coronavirus-news>; CAC, "网络信息内容生态治理规定[Regulations on the ecological governance of network information content]," CAC, December 20, 2019, http://www.cac.gov.cn/2019-12/20/c_1578375159509309.htm
- ¹¹⁰Rebecca Davis, "China's New Internet Censorship Rules Outline Direction For Content," Variety, January 3, 2020, <https://variety.com/2020/digital/news/china-censorship-law-bytedance-12...>
- ¹¹¹Special Report, "China has the world's most centralised internet system," Economist, June 28, 2018, <https://www.economist.com/special-report/2018/06/28/china-has-the-world...>
- ¹¹²These propaganda workers are colloquially known as the 50 Cent Party due to the amount they are reportedly paid per post, though other reports have put the going rate as low as 10 cents, while some commentators may be salaried employees. See Perry Link, "Censoring the News Before It Happens," New York Review (blog), New York Review of Books, July 10, 2013, <https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2013/07/10/censoring-news-before-happens-...>; Rongbin Han, "Manufacturing Consent in Censored Cyberspace: State-Sponsored Online Commentators on Chinese Internet Forums" (paper for Annual Meeting of American Political Science Association, New Orleans, August 31–September 2, 2012), <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2106461>
- ¹¹³Murong Xuecun, "Beijing's Rising Smear Power," New York Times, September 21, 2014, <http://nyti.ms/1OvsWuZ>; 克里斯蒂安·谢泼德, "中国官媒Twitter账号被疑'僵尸粉'过多[Chinese official media Twitter account suspected of too many 'zombie follower']," FT 中文网, November 23, 2015, <http://m.ftchinese.com/story/001064972>
- ¹¹⁴Jessica Batke & Mareike Ohlberg, "Message Control: How a New For-Profit Industry Helps China's Leaders 'Manage Public Opinion,'" China File, December 20, 2020, <https://www.chinafile.com/reporting-opinion/features/message-control-ch...>
- ¹¹⁵Samantha Bradshaw and Philip N. Howard, "The Global Disinformation Order: 2019 Global Inventory of Organized Social Media Manipulation," Oxford Internet Institute, Computational Propaganda Research Project, September 4, 2019, <https://comprop.oii.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/93/2019/09/CyberT...>
- ¹¹⁶Sarah Cook, "Welcome to the New Era of Chinese Government Disinformation," Diplomat, May 11,

2020, <https://thediplomat.com/2020/05/welcome-to-the-new-era-of-chinese-gover...>; Bolsover, Gillian, and Philip Howard. "Chinese Computational Propaganda: Automation, Algorithms and the Manipulation of Information about Chinese Politics on Twitter and Weibo." *Information, Communication & Society*, 2018, pp. 1–18., doi:10.1080/1369118x.2018.1476576.

- 117 Jeff Kao, Raymond Zhong, Paul Mozur, and Aaron Krolik, "How China spreads its propaganda version of life for Uyghurs," *ProPublica*, June 23, 2021, <https://www.propublica.org/article/how-china-uses-youtube-and-twitter-t...>
- 118 Paul Mozur, Raymond Zhong, Aaron Krolik, and Aliza Aufrichtig, "How Beijing influences the influencers," *The New York Times*, December 13, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/12/13/technology/china-propaga...>; Amanda Seitz, Eric Tucker, and Mike Catalini, "How China's TikTok, Facebook influencers push propaganda," *AP News*, March 30, 2022, <https://apnews.com/article/china-tiktok-facebook-influencers-propaganda....>
- 119 Steven Lee Myers, Paul Mozur, and Jeff Kao, "How bots and fake accounts push China's version of winter Olympic wonderland," *ProPublica*, February 18, 2022, <https://www.propublica.org/article/how-bots-and-fake-accounts-push-chin...>
- 120 "Local Chinese Authorities Use Internet Slang 'Ziganwu' in Their Propaganda Recruitments," *Global Voices*, June 15, 2015, <https://globalvoices.org/2015/06/15/local-chinese-authorities-use-inter...>
- 121 Sandra Fu, "Central Committee of Communist Youth League Issues an Announcement," *China Digital Times*, January 19, 2015, <https://perma.cc/HM8P-PT9j>; Xu Yangjingjing and Simon Denyer, "Wanted: Ten million Chinese students to 'civilize' the Internet," *Washington Post*, April 10, 2015, <http://wapo.st/1NbD9tb>
- 122 Cindy Carter, "Farewell letters: A tribute to the civil society groups, bloggers, and media outlets we lost in 2021," *China Digital Times*, January 10, 2022, <https://chinadigitaltimes.net/2022/01/farewell-letters-a-tribute-to-the....>
- 123 Shan Li, "Tech Giant Tencent Caught in Chinese Regulatory Trap," *Wall Street Journal*, August 15, 2018, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/tencent-disappoints-on-earnings-as-its-gam...>
- 124 "国家网信办公布《互联网新闻信息服务管理规定》[National Network Office Announce "Regulations on the Administration of Internet News Information Services"]," *Sina*, May 4, 2017, <http://finance.sina.com.cn/roll/2017-05-04/doc->

[ifyexxhw2298844.shtml](#); China Copyrights and Media, "Internet News Information Service Management Regulations", May 2, 2017, <https://chinacopyrightandmedia.wordpress.com/2017/05/02/internet-news-i...>

- 125“网信办颁新令 矛头指向谁[Internet Information Office issues a new order],” DW, May 2, 2017, <http://www.dw.com/zh/%E7%BD%91%E4%BF%A1%E5%8A%9E%E9%A2%81%E6%96%B0%E4%B...>; “Implementing Rules for the Management of Internet News Information Service,” trans. Rogier Creemers, China Copyright and Media, May 22, 2017, <https://chinacopyrightandmedia.wordpress.com/2017/05/22/implementing-ru...>, noting: “Specifically, those applying for an Internet news information gathering and dissemination license shall be news work units (including work units share-controlled by news work units) or work units controlled by news and propaganda departments. News work units refers to newspaper or periodical publishers, radio stations, television stations, news agencies and news film studios established lawfully and with permission of relevant state departments. Share-controlled means a proportion of over 50% of the capital contribution value, or the proportion of stock held in the total value of corporate capital, or the total share value, or, where even though the proportion in capital contribution value or held stock is less than 50%, the capital contribution value or held stock is sufficient to engender major influence on corporate decision-making. News and propaganda departments include all levels’ propaganda departments, cybersecurity and informatization departments, radio and television departments, etc.”
- 126Hogan Lovells, “Are Foreigners Banned from Publishing on the Internet in China?,” May 2016, http://f.datasrvr.com/fr1/716/75489/Final_Publishing_on_Intranet.pdf
- 127Wen Yunchao, a blogger and activist in New York, says new rules for social media make it impossible for self-media to sustain themselves. “A few newspeople in China tried to use social media to report breaking news, but the CAC’s latest regulations constrain this possibility,” he told Freedom House. “That is to say, Chinese media professionals can’t earn enough from publishing on social media (like WeChat public accounts) to continue their work.” China Media Bulletin no. 125, <https://freedomhouse.org/china-media/china-media-bulletin-2017-year-in-...> See also: “Forbidden Feeds: Government Controls on Social Media,” PEN America, March 13, 2018, https://pen.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/PEN-America_Forbidden-Feeds-...
- 128Qin Chen, “China LGBT groups squeezed as China tightens rules on internet publishing,” inkstone, February 05, 2021, <https://www.inkstonenews.com/society/china-lgbt-groups->

[squeezed-china-t...;](#) Rebecca Davis, "China Imposes New Rules to Restrict Independent Online Content Creators," Variety, February 23, 2021, <https://variety.com/2021/digital/news/china-cac-self-media-new-regulati...>

- 129Josh Horowitz and Brenda Goh, "China updates official news sources list, excludes high-profile Caixin," Reuters, October 20, 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/china-updates-official-news-sources...>
- 130"关于《市场准入负面清单（2021 年版）》有关情况的说明," Ministry of Commerce, 2021, <https://www.ndrc.gov.cn/yjzxDownload/sczrfmqd2021.pdf>
- 131Johanna M. Costigan and Xu Xin, "China's Digital Cultural Revolution," Diplomat, April 29, 2020, <https://thediplomat.com/2020/04/chinas-digital-cultural-revolution/>
- 132Viola Zhou, "Mainland Chinese evade censors to support Hong Kong protests," Inkstone, June 13, 2019, <https://www.inkstonenews.com/politics/chinese-internet-users-evade-cens...>
- 133A recent example of a crackdown would be the closure of Beijing's Unirule Institute, which founded to promote economic liberalization and democracy. It was shut down after a quarter-century amid government pressure. Chun Han Wong, "China Finally Snuffs Out a Beacon of Liberal Thought and Democracy," Wall Street Journal, August 27, 2019, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/china-finally-snuffs-out-a-beacon-of-liber...>
- 134Darren Byler, "For China's Muslim minority, the internet was a safe haven—until it wasn't," Fast Company, September 23, 2019, <https://www.fastcompany.com/90405715/for-chinas-muslim-minority-the-int...>; China File, "Islamophobia in China," China File, May 14, 2019, <http://www.chinafile.com/conversation/islamophobia-china>; Frankie Huang, "China's Most Popular App Is Full of Hate," Foreign Policy, November 27, 2018, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/11/27/chinas-most-popular-app-is-full-of...>
- 135Tim Bradshaw, "Apple drops hundreds of VPN apps at Beijing's request," Financial Times, November 21, 2017, <https://www.ft.com/content/ad42e536-cf36-11e7-b781-794ce08b24dc>.
- 136Hassan Maishera, "China's Internet Censorship Effort Continues as Authorities Blacklist Hundreds of VPN Servers," Blokt, May 6, 2019, <https://blokt.com/news/chinas-internet-censorship-effort-continues-as-a...>; "How does your VPN speed measure against other

VPNs in China," Circumvention Central, accessed October 12, 2020, <https://cc.greatfire.org/en>.

- 137Yuan Yang, "China's 'MeToo' movement evades censors with #RiceBunny," August 8, 2018, <https://www.ft.com/content/61903744-9540-11e8-b67b-b8205561c3fe>.
- 138Yaqiu Wang, "People in China left wondering, 'what happened in Xinjiang?" Human Rights Watch, March 25, 2021, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/03/25/people-china-left-wondering-what-ha...>
- 139"Pho noodles and pandas: How China's social media users created a new language to beat government censorship on COVID-19," Amnesty International, March 6, 2020, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/03/china-social-media-langu...>
- 140Javier C. Hernandez, "China's investigative journalists warn they are 'almost extinct' under Xi Jinping's strict censorship regime," Independent, July 14, 2019, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/china-investigative-journ...>
- 141Siyuan Meng, "'A painful read': New report on the dangers facing China's delivery drivers going viral," Raddi, September 08, 2020, <https://radiichina.com/delivery-china-driver-safety/>,
- 142王廷瑜, "中國立法嚴格管控 部落客噤聲接受再教育 [Chinese legislation strictly controls bloggers clamor for reeducation]," Storm Media, July 14, 2015, <http://www.storm.mg/article/57176>
- 143Cao Yin, "Civil code defines, bans sexual harassment," China Daily, June 1, 2020, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202006/01/WS5ed45843a310a8b241159c5e_6.h...
- 144Guo Rui, "Two years on, woman who set off #MeToo in China still looking for 'breakthrough'," South China Morning Post, December 28, 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/3043702/two-years-woma...>
- 145Vincent Ni, "China #MeToo: Court to hear landmark case of intern versus TV star," BBC, December 02, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-55140026>.
- 146Shuai Zhang, "Court rejects ex-intern's sexual harassment suit against TV star as China's #MeToo movement is silenced," CBS News, September 15, 2021, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/zhao-xiaoxuan-case-china-court-rejects-ex-...>
- 147Jane Zhang, "'#MeToo or not: controversy lingers after Alibaba fires woman who accused boss of sexual assault," South China

Morning Post, December 18, 2021, <https://www.scmp.com/tech/big-tech/article/3159977/metoo-or-not-controv...>

- 148Emily Feng, "He tried to organize workers in China's gig economy. Now he faces 5 years in jail," NPR, April 13, 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2021/04/13/984994360/he-tried-to-organize-workers-i...>
- 149@chinalabour, "#即时 【外送江湖骑士联盟“盟主”露面：“我还好，你们好吗？”】 " Twitter, January 4, 2022, <https://twitter.com/chinalabour/status/1478284385258336256>
- 150According to the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate, the top prosecutorial body, which provided a formal definition in 2013. The definition was given in a judicial interpretation entitled "Regarding the Interpretation of Various Laws Concerning the Handling of Cases of Using the Internet to Carry Out Defamation and Other Crimes." Human Rights Watch, "China: Draconian Legal Interpretation Threatens Online Freedom," September 13, 2013, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2013/09/13/china-draconian-legal-interpretatio...>; Megha Rajagopalan and Adam Rose, "China Crackdown on Online Rumors Seen as Ploy to Nail Critics," Reuters, September 18, 2013, <https://www.reuters.com/article/net-us-china-internet/china-crackdown-o...>
- 151Freedom House, "The Politburo's Predicament," 2015, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/special-report/2015/politburos-predicam...>
- 152"China: Draconian Legal Interpretation Threatens Online Freedom," Human Rights Watch, September 13, 2013, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2013/09/13/china-draconian-legal-interpretatio...>
- 153For example, Ilham Tohti was found guilty of "separatism" and sentenced to life in prison in September 2014. He was known for his advocacy, both online and off, for China's Uighur minority. See Edward Wong, "China Sentences Uighur Scholar to Life," New York Times, September 23, 2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/24/world/asia/china-court-sentences-uig...>; Andrew Jacobs, "Uighur Intellectual Who Won't Back Down in China," New York Times, August 20, 2010, <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/21/world/asia/21china.html?module=inline>
- 154"The Battle for China's Spirit," Freedom House, February 2017, page 115, https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FH_ChinasSprit2016_FULL_FI...
- 155China Law Translate, "People's Republic of China Criminal Law Amendment (9)," September 1,

2015, <http://chinalawtranslate.com/%E4%B8%AD%E5%8D%8E%E4%B A%BA%E6%B0%91%E5%85...>

- ¹⁵⁶Xinhua, “刑法修正案下月起正式实施 微信、微博造谣最高获刑七年 [Criminal law amendments formally implemented next month, up to seven years in prison for rumormongering on Weibo and WeChat],” Xinhua, October 28, 2015, http://news.xinhuanet.com/legal/2015-10/28/c_1116970714.htm
- ¹⁵⁷National People's Congress, “中华人民共和国刑法修正案（十一） [Amendments to the Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China (11)],” people.cn, December 27, 2020, <http://npc.people.com.cn/n1/2020/1227/c14576-31980014.html>.
- ¹⁵⁸Mimi Law, “China introduces new law to ban ‘slander’ of members of armed forces,” South China Morning Post, June 10, 2021, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3136826/china-introduc...>
- ¹⁵⁹China Law Translate, “Counter-Terrorism Law (2015),” China Law Translate, December 27, 2015, <https://www.chinalawtranslate.com/en/counter-terrorism-law-2015/>
- ¹⁶⁰Shi Jiangtao, “Chinese authorities say coronavirus control at heart of clampdown on 10 broad categories of crime,” South China Morning Post, February 12, 2020, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/3050294/chinese-authori....>
- ¹⁶¹Stanley Lubman, “Arrested, Detained: A Guide to Navigating China's Police Powers,” Wall Street Journal, August 12, 2014, <https://blogs.wsj.com/chinarealtime/2014/08/12/arrested-detained-a-guid...>
- ¹⁶²Economist, “China's strong-arm approach to drug addiction does not work,” Economist, March 21, 2020, <https://www.economist.com/china/2019/03/21/chinas-strong-arm-approach-t...>
- ¹⁶³Benedict Rogers, “China's ‘Residential Surveillance at a Designated Location’ – a licence to disappear, hold and torture dissenters,” Hong Kong Free Press, February 4, 2018, <https://hongkongfp.com/2018/02/04/chinas-residential-surveillance-desig...>
- ¹⁶⁴Per an amendment to the criminal procedure law enacted by the National People's Congress in 2012, which took effect on January 1, 2013. Observers praised other aspects of the measure, including tentative steps toward increasing police accountability for surveillance. Committee to Protect Journalists, “China's New Law Sanctions Covert Detentions,” March 14, 2012, <http://cpj.org/x/49d9>

- 165“China: Police ‘Big Data’ Systems Violate Privacy, Target Dissent,” Human Rights Watch, November 19, 2017, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/11/19/china-police-big-data-systems-viola...>
- 166Minsheng Observation Network, “The case of Chen Zhaozhi is a serious violation of the procedures of the Beijing Haidian District Court,” February 26, 2022, https://msguancha.blogspot.com/2022/02/blog-post_26.html.
- 167Xue Xiaoshan, “Veteran Chinese democracy activist stands trial for ‘subversion’ over articles,” Radio Free Asia, September 10, 2021, <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/trial-09102021103820.html>.
- 168Jessie Yeung and Yong Xiong, “Man detained for 9 days in China for sending meme deemed ‘insulting’ to the police,” CNN, November 2, 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/11/02/china/china-man-detained-meme-intl-hnk-s....>
- 169“因疫情期间发布一些国内疫情照片，法轮功学员许那女士今获刑8年,” Weiquanwan, January 16, 2022, <https://wqw2010.blogspot.com/2022/01/8.html?m=1>; “Chinese authorities detain, indict 11 people for contributing to The Epoch Times,” Committee to Protect Journalists, August 24, 2021, <https://cpj.org/2021/08/chinese-authorities-detain-indict-11-people-for....>
- 170Committee to Protect Journalists, “Number of journalists behind bars reaches global high,” Committee to Protect Journalists, December 9, 2021, <https://cpj.org/reports/2021/12/number-of-journalists-behind-bars-reach....>
- 171Frontline Defenders, “Police seek prosecution of Huang Xueqin,” April 4, 2022, <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/case/china-human-rights-defenders....>
- 172“China must protect the rights of Huang Xueqin and Wang Jianbing,” Index on Censorship, September 19, 2022, <https://www.indexoncensorship.org/2022/09/china-must-protect-the-rights....>
- 173“Chinese journalist Mao Huibin arrested after publishing articles about Tangshan assault,” Committee to Protect Journalists, August 15, 2022, <https://cpj.org/2022/08/chinese-journalist-mao-huibin-arrested-after-pu....>
- 174PEN America, “Reports: China to escalate charges against PEN America Honoree Xu Zhiyong,” January 2021, <https://pen.org/press-release/reports-china-to-escalate-charges-against...>; Mima Lau, “Chinese rights advocate Xu Zhiyong on trial for state subversion amid secrecy and tight security,” South China Morning Post, June 23, 2022, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/3182706/chi>

nese-rights...; Mimi Lau, "Chinese civil rights activist Xu Zhiyong accused of plotting 'colour revolution' to subvert state power," South China Morning Post, September 24, 2021, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/3150052/chinese-civil-...>; Guo Rui, "China arrests girlfriend of detained legal activist Xu Zhiyong on subversion charge," Yahoo News, March 15, 2021, <https://sg.news.yahoo.com/china-arrests-girlfriend-detained-legal-14574...>

- 175 Xu Zhiyong, Translated and Annotated by Geremie R. Barmé, "Dear Chairman Xi, It's Time for You to Go," China File, February 26, 2020, <https://www.chinafile.com/reporting-opinion/viewpoint/dear-chairman-xi-...>
- 176 Mimi Lau, "Chinese human rights lawyer Chang Weiping in closed-door trial as family barred from county," South China Morning Post, July 26, 2022, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/3186681/chinese-human-....>
- 177 The Committee to Protect Journalists, "Human rights reporter Zhou Weilin sentenced to 3.5 years in Chinese prison," August 5, 2021, <https://cpj.org/2021/08/human-rights-reporter-zhou-weilin-sentenced-to-....>
- 178 Chinese Human Rights Defenders, "Shen Liangqing," May 18, 2020, <https://www.nchr.org/2020/05/shen-liangqing/>.
- 179 Chinese Human Rights Defenders, "Chen Jiahong," April 14, 2020, <https://www.nchr.org/2020/04/chen-jiahong/>.
- 180 Ben Westcott, "Outspoken Chinese billionaire Sun Dawu sentenced to 18 years in prison," CNN, July 29, 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/07/29/business/sun-dawu-prison-sentence-china-...>
- 181 "Chinese farmer who praised lawyer amid crackdown arrested," Associated Press, November 11, 2020, <https://apnews.com/article/beijing-media-social-media-arrests-xi-jinpin...>
- 182 Cindy Carter, "Former journalist Lao Changping detained for defaming 'heroes and martyrs,'" China Digital Times, October 14, 2021, <https://chinadigitaltimes.net/2021/10/former-journalist-luo-changping-d....>
- 183 Alexander Boy, "Luo Changping Sentenced As Party Warns of 'Historical Nihilism,'" China Digital Times, May 6, 2022, <https://chinadigitaltimes.net/2022/05/luo-changping-sentenced-as-party-....>
- 184 Adrian Zanz, "New Evidence for China's Political Re-Education Campaign in Xinjiang," The Jamestown Foundation, May 15,

2018, <https://jamestown.org/program/evidence-for-chinas-political-re-educatio...>

- 185“China has turned Xinjiang into a police state like no other,” Economist, May 31, 2018, <https://www.economist.com/briefing/2018/05/31/china-has-turned-xinjiang...>
- 186Uyghur Human Rights Project, “‘Ideological Transformation’: Records of Mass Detention from Qaraqash, Hotan,” February, 2020, https://docs.uhrp.org/pdf/UHRP_QaraqashDocument.pdf
- 187Gene A. Bunin, “Xinjiang’s Hui Muslims Were Swept Into Camps Alongside Uighurs,” FP, February 10, 2020, <http://archive.vn/GLu1h>; Emily Feng, “‘Afraid We Will Become The Next Xinjiang’: China’s Hui Muslims Face Crackdown,” NPR, September 26, 2019, <https://www.npr.org/2019/09/26/763356996/afraid-we-will-become-the-next...>
- 188Ng Yik-tung and Sing Man, “China Detains Hui Muslim Poet Who Spoke Out Against Xinjiang Camps,” RFA, January 27, 2020, <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/poet-01272020163336.html>; Pen America, “Pen America Concerned Over Detained Chinese Poet’s Safety,” Pen America, March 5, 2020, <https://pen.org/press-release/pen-concerned-poet-safety/>
- 189Josh Rogin, “China’s camps now have survivors, and their ordeals aren’t over,” Washington Post, January 23, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/chinas-camps-no...>
- 190“Tibetan intellectual and writer Sabuchey sentenced to four and a half years in prison,” THCRD, June 18, 2022, <https://tchrd.org/tibetan-intellectual-and-writer-sabuchey-sentenced-to....>
- 191“Tibetan arrested after making social media post about Lhasa Lockdown,” Tibet Watch, September 26, 2022, <https://www.tibetwatch.org/news/2022/9/26/43koqvw0ri3huqa267phca5q953kdp>.
- 192Sarah Cook, “The Battle for China’s Spirit: Religious Revival, Repression, and Resistance under Xi Jinping”, New York: Freedom House, 2017, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/china-religious-freedom>
- 193Catherine Shu, “China doubles down on real-name registration laws, forbidding anonymous online posts,” Tech Crunch, August 28, 2017, <https://techcrunch.com/2017/08/27/china-doubles-down-on-real-name-regis...> Samm Sacks and Paul Triolo, “Shrinking Anonymity in Chinese Cyberspace,” Lawfare (blog), September 25, 2017, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/shrinking-anonymity-chinese-cyberspace>

- 194 Tim Stratford et al., "China Enacts New Data Privacy Legislation," Covington & Burling LLP, January 11, 2013, <https://www.cov.com/en/news-and-insights/insights/2013/01/china-enacts-...>
- 195 Tracy Qu, "China updates rules on real-name registration online in crackdown on schemes to revive banned user accounts," South China Morning Post, October 27, 2021, <https://www.scmp.com/tech/policy/article/3153887/china-updates-rules-re-...>
- 196 Jane Li, "China's internet platforms are revealing user IP locations," Quartz, May 12, 2022, <https://qz.com/2163704/chinas-internet-platforms-are-revealing-user-ip-...>; Manya Koetse, "Uh Oh, IP: Chinese Social Media Platforms Now Display Users' Geolocation," What's on Weibo, April 30, 2022, <https://www.whatsonweibo.com/uh-oh-ip-chinese-social-media-platforms-no-...>
- 197 C. Custer, "China to start seriously enforcing real-name mobile registration, government claims," Tech In Asia, May 31, 2016, <https://www.techinasia.com/china-start-enforcing-realname-mobile-regist-...>
- 198 BBC, "China due to introduce face scans for mobile users," BBC, December 1, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-50587098>
- 199 Huo Jingnan, "China Introduces Restrictions On Video Games For Minors," NPR, November 6, 2019, <https://www.npr.org/2019/11/06/776840260/china-introduces-restrictions-...>
- 200 Gao Feng, "中国网络文学作者受实名制规管 恐打击创作自由 [Authors of Chinese online literature will now be regulated by a real-name system, threatening to attack creative freedom]," Radio Free Asia, June 17, 2020, <https://www.rfa.org/mandarin/yataibaodao/meiti/gf2-06172020075842.html>.
- 201 Josh Ye, "China targets deepfakes in proposed regulation governing deep learning AI technologies," South China Morning Post, January 29, 2022, <https://www.scmp.com/tech/policy/article/3165244/china-targets-deepfake-...>
- 202 Radio Free Asia, "Chinese Police Order Businesses to Monitor Use of Public Wi-fi," Radio Free Asia, April 6, 2017, <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/monitor-04062017121748.html>
- 203 Bai Tiantian, "Xinjiang asks real-name registration for cellphones, PCs," Global Times, January 29, 2015, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/904898.shtml>

- 204 Chris Buckley, "China Passes Antiterrorism Law That Critics Fear May Overreach," The New York Times, December 28, 2015, <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/28/world/asia/china-passes-antiterrorism...>
- 205 Adam Segal, "The Cyber Trade War," Foreign Policy, October 25, 2014, <http://atfp.co/1Qq5LzN>
- 206 Yan Luo, Eric Carlson and Zhijing Yu, "China Enacts Encryption Law," Inside Privacy, October 31, 2019, <https://www.insideprivacy.com/data-security/china-enacts-encryption-law/>.
- 207 Jack Nicas, Raymond Zhong & Daisuke Wakabayashi, "Censorship, Surveillance and Profits: A Hard Bargain for Apple in China," The New York Times, May 17, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/17/technology/apple-china-censorship-da...>
- 208 Jessica Batke and Mareike Ohlberg, "State of Surveillance," ChinaFile, October 30, 2020, <https://www.chinafile.com/state-surveillance-china>.
- 209 Isabelle Qian, Muiy Xiao, Paul Mozur and Alexander Cardia, "Four Takeaways From a Times Investigation Into China's Expanding Surveillance State," New York Times, June 21, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/21/world/asia/china-surveillance-invest...>
- 210 Human Rights Watch, "China: Big data program targets Xinjiang's Muslims," December 9, 2020, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/12/09/china-big-data-program-targets-xinj...>
- 211 Josh Chin and Clément Bürge, "Twelve Days in Xinjiang: How China's Surveillance State Overwhelms Daily Life," Wall Street Journal, December 19, 2017, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/twelve-days-in-xinjiang-how-chinas-surveil...>
- 212 Hilary Osborne and Sam Cutler, "Chinese border guards put secret surveillance app on tourists' phones," Guardian, July 2, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jul/02/chinese-border-guards-sur...>
- 213 Raymond Zhong, "Going From Hong Kong to Mainland China? Your Phone Is Subject to Search," New York Times, August 15, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/15/world/asia/hong-kong-protest-phone-c...>
- 214 Samuel Wade, "China's social credit system: Black Mirror or red herring?," China Digital Times, February 16, 2017, <http://chinadigitaltimes.net/2017/02/qa-shazeda-ahmed-on-chinas-social-...>

- 215 Louise Matsakis, "How the West Got China's Social Credit System Wrong," Wired, July 29, 2019, <https://www.wired.com/story/china-social-credit-score-system/>; Bloomberg, "China's trial program to rate citizens on public behavior is a bureaucratic mess," LA Times, June 21, 2019, <https://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-china-big-brother-social-credit-...>
- 216 Dev Lewis, "All Carrots and No Sticks: A Case Study on Social Credit Scores in Xiamen and Fuzhou," Digital Asia Hub, October 11, 2019, <https://www.digitaliasiahub.org/2019/10/11/all-carrots-and-no-sticks-a-c...>
- 217 Samuel Wade, "China's social credit system: Black Mirror or red herring?," China Digital Times, February 16, 2017, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/2167240/chinese-police...>
- 218 Laney Zhang, "Global Legal Monitor," Library of Congress, November 13, 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/law/foreign-news/article/china-new-regulation-on-po...>; 中共中央网络安全和信息化委员会办公室 (CAC), "具有舆论属性或社会动员能力的互联网信息服务安全评估规定 [Regulation on Internet Information Service Security Assessment with Paradoxical Attributes or Social Mobilization Capabilities]," November 15, 2018, http://www.cac.gov.cn/2018-11/15/c_1123716072.htm
- 219 Luo Jieqi, "Cleaning Up China's Secret Police Sleuthing," Caixin, January 24, 2013, <https://www.caixinglobal.com/2013-01-24/cleaning-up-chinas-secret-polic...>
- 220 Per 2015 amendments. See Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, "Presidential order of the People's Republic of China, No. 29" [中华人民共和国主席令], July 1, 2015, http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/2015-07/01/content_2893902.htm.
- 221 National People's Congress, "中华人民共和国国家情报法[National Intelligence Law of the People's Republic of China]," NPC, June 27, 2017, http://www.npc.gov.cn/zgrdw/npc/xinwen/2017-06/27/content_2024529.htm
- 222 Economist, "China's new cyber-security law is worryingly vague," Economist, June 1, 2017, <https://www.economist.com/news/business/21722873-its-rules-are-broad-am...>
- 223 He Huifeng and Nectar Gan, "All mainland app providers ordered to keep user logs for months to curb spread of 'illegal information,'" SCMP, June 28, 2016, <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/policies-politics/article/1982756/all-ma...>
- 224 OpenNet Initiative, "China," August 9, 2012, <http://opennet.net/research/profiles/china-including-hong-kong>

- 225 Jeffrey Knockel, Christopher Parsons, Lotus Ruan, Ruohan Xiong, Jedidiah Crandall, and Ron Deibert, "How International Users Unwittingly Build up WeChat's Chinese Censorship Apparatus," The Citizen, May 7, 2020, <https://citizenlab.ca/2020/05/we-chat-they-watch/>
- 226 Shen Lu, "WeChat promises to stop accessing users' photo albums amid public outcry," Protocol, October 15, 2021, <https://www.protocol.com/china/china-apps-surveillance-wechat>.
- 227 Open Technology Fund, "Studying 'Study the Great Nation,'" Open Technology Fund, October 12, 2019, <https://www.opentech.fund/news/studying-study-the-great-nation/>
- 228 Jim Salter, "Security audit raises severe warnings on Chinese smartphone models," ars Technica, September 22, 2021, <https://arstechnica.com/information-technology/2021/09/security-audit-r....>
- 229 Paul Mozur, Daisuke Wakabayashi and Nick Wingfield, "Apple Opening Data Center in China to Comply With Cybersecurity Law," New York Times, July 12m 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/12/business/apple-china-data-center-cyb...>; Shannon Liao, "Apple officially moves its Chinese iCloud operations and encryption keys to China," The Verge, February 28, 2018, <https://www.theverge.com/2018/2/28/17055088/apple-chinese-icloud-accoun...>
- 230 Reuters, "Apple to build a second data center in China: Xinhua," February 6, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-apple-datacenter/apple-to-build-a-se...>
- 231 Norton Rose Fulbright, "Contact tracing apps in China," Norton Rose Fulbright, May 11, 2020, <https://www.nortonrosefulbright.com/-/media/files/nrf/nrfweb/contact-tr...>
- 232 Paul Mozur, Raymond Zhong and Aaron Krolik, "In Coronavirus Fight, China Gives Citizens a Color Code, With Red Flags," New York Times, August 7, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/01/business/china-coronavirus-surveilla...>
- 233 Engen Tham, "China bank protest stopped by health codes turning red, depositors say," Reuters, June 16, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/china-bank-protest-stopped-by-healt...>
- 234 Bloomberg News, "China deems people almost a kilometer apart as 'close contacts'," November 7,

2021, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-11-08/people-you-don-t-kno...>

- ²³⁵Jeffrey Knockel, "Cross-Country Exposure: Analysis of the MY2022 Olympics App," TheCitizenLab, January 18, 2022, <https://citizenlab.ca/2022/01/cross-country-exposure-analysis-my2022-ol...>
- ²³⁶Office of the Central Cyberspace Affairs Commission, "国家互联网信息办公室、公安部加强对语音社交软件和涉深度伪造技术的 [The State Internet Information Office and the Ministry of Public Security have strengthened their investigations on voice software and in-depth counterfeiting technologies]," March 18, 2021, http://www.cac.gov.cn/2021-03/18/c_1617648089558637.htm; Qiao Long, Chingman, and Gigi Lee, "China clamps down on software used to disguise voiceprints," Radio Free Asia, March 18, 2021, <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/software-03182021114431.html>.
- ²³⁷Rogier Creemers, Mingli Shi, Lauren Dudley, and Graham Webster, "China's Draft 'Personal Information Protection Law' (Full Translation)," New America, October 21, 2020, <https://www.newamerica.org/cybersecurity-initiative/digichina/blog/chin...>; Arjun Kharpal, "China passes major data protection law as regulatory scrutiny on tech sector intensifies," CNBC, August 20, 2021, <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/08/20/china-passes-key-data-protection-law-as...>
- ²³⁸Arjun Kharpal, "China passes major data protection law as regulatory scrutiny on tech sector intensifies," CNBC, August 20, 2021, <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/08/20/china-passes-key-data-protection-law-as...>
- ²³⁹Dentons, "China finally Defines the Necessity Scope of Personal Information Collected by APPs," March 26, 2021, <https://www.dentons.com/en/insights/articles/2021/march/26/china-finall...>
- ²⁴⁰Eileen Yu, "China calls out 33 apps for collecting more user data than deemed necessary," ZDNet, May 1, 2021, <https://www.zdnet.com/article/china-calls-out-33-apps-for-collecting-mo...>
- ²⁴¹Manish Singh and Rita Liao, "Did app pulled from app stores in China after suspension order," TechCrunch, July 4, 2021, <https://techcrunch.com/2021/07/04/didi-app-pulled-from-app-stores-after...>
- ²⁴²Josh Ye and Coco Feng, "China internet crackdown: Beijing orders app stores to remove Douban and 105 other apps," South China Morning Post, December 9,

2021, <https://www.scmp.com/tech/policy/article/3159091/china-internet-crackdo...>

- ²⁴³Changhao Wei, "2020 NPC Session: A Guide to China's Civil Code," NPC Observer, updated July 5, 2020, <https://npcobserver.com/2020/05/21/2020-npc-session-a-guide-to-chinas-c...>; Huizhong Wu, "In land of big data, China sets individual privacy rights," Reuters, May 26, 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-parliament-lawmaking-privacy/i...>
- ²⁴⁴Colin Zick, "China Adopts New Data Security Law," JD Supra, August 4, 2021, <https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/china-adopts-new-data-security-law-77...>
- ²⁴⁵Colin Zick, "China Adopts New Data Security Law," JD Supra, August 4, 2021, <https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/china-adopts-new-data-security-law-77...>
- ²⁴⁶"Defending Human Rights in the Era of Dystopia: The Situation of Defenders in China (2019)," Chinese Human Rights Defenders, February 12, 2020, <https://www.nchrd.org/2020/02/defending-human-rights-in-the-era-of-dyst...>; "Tiger Chairs and Cell Bosses: Political Torture of Criminal Suspects in China," Human Rights Watch, May 13, 2015, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2015/05/13/tiger-chairs-and-cell-bosses/poli...>
- ²⁴⁷China Blog Staff, "'Sorry, no comment - we might get invited to tea,'" China Blog, BBC, December 9, 2013, <http://bbc.in/1LKxQ0k>
- ²⁴⁸"Chinese Police Target Activists Who Supported Hong Kong Protests," Radio Free Asia, June 1, 2020, <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/target-06012020144022.html>.
- ²⁴⁹Kris Cheng, "Liu Xia, widow of Nobel laureate Liu Xiaobo, 'forced to travel' ahead of China's key Congress meeting, says NGO," Hong Kong Free Press, October 16, 2017, <https://www.hongkongfp.com/2017/10/16/liu-xia-widow-nobel-laureate-liu-...>
- ²⁵⁰Human Rights Watch, "China: No justice 33 years after Tiananmen Massacre," June 2, 2022, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/06/02/china-no-justice-33-years-after-tia...>
- ²⁵¹Isobel Cockerell, "Inside China's Massive Surveillance Operation," Weird, May 9, 2019, <https://www.wired.com/story/inside-chinas-massive-surveillance-operatio...>
- ²⁵²Willem Marx and Olivia Sumrie, "Uighurs accuse China of mass detention, torture in landmark complaint," NBS NEWS, September 9,

2020, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/uighurs-accuse-china-mass-detention-...>

- 253 Bloomberg News, "How China's ultra-loyal web army silences Beijing's critics," August 25, 2021, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-08-25/how-china-s-ultra-lo...>
 - 254 Radio Free Asia, "Zhang Wenhong is caught in a storm of public opinion, the 'political commander' behind Shanghai's epidemic prevention policy," April 1, 2022, <https://www.rfa.org/mandarin/yataibaodao/huanjing/kw-04012022111120.html>.
 - 255 Human Rights Watch, "'Prosecute Them with Awesome Power', China's Crackdown on Tengdrol Monastery and Restrictions on Communications in Tibet," July 6, 2021, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/07/06/prosecute-them-awesome-power/chin...>
 - 256 Akamai, "State of the internet/security Q4 2017 report," <https://www.akamai.com/us/en/multimedia/documents/state-of-the-internet...>
 - 257 Mara Hvistendahl, "The Decline in Chinese Cyberattacks: The Story Behind the Numbers," MIT Technology Review, October 25, 2016, <https://www.technologyreview.com/s/602705/the-decline-in-chinese-cybera...>
 - 258 Yiwen Lu, "Hackers claim they breached data on 1 billion Chinese citizens," Washington Post, July 6, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2022/07/06/china-hack-police/>.
 - 259 Patrick Howell O'Neill, "Chinese hackers posing as the UN Human Rights Council are attacking Uyghurs," MIT Technology Review, May 27, 2021, <https://www.technologyreview.com/2021/05/27/1025443/chinese-hackers-uyg...>
 - 260 Isobel Cockerell, "Hacks, threats, and propaganda: How China tried to discredit the Uyghur Tribunal," .coda, September 18, 2021, <https://www.codastory.com/disinformation/uyghur-tribunal-london-china-k...>; Sarah Teich and Mehmet Tohti, "Hacking the activists fighting for human rights: Sarah Teich and Mehmet Tohti for iPolitics," Macdonald-Laurier Institute, January 12, 2022, <https://macdonaldlaurier.ca/hacking-activists-fighting-human-rights-sar...>
-

ecoi.net description:

Report on digital media and internet freedom (reporting period June 2021 - May 2022)

Country:

China

Source:

[Freedom House](#) (Author)

Published:

18 October 2022

Original link:

<https://freedomhouse.org/country/china/freedom-net/2022>

Document type:

Periodical Report

Language:

English

Document ID:

2081782

Austrian Red Cross
Austrian Centre for
Country of Origin and
Asylum Research and
Documentation
(ACCORD)

Wiedner Hauptstraße
32, 1041 Wien
T +43 1 589 00 583
F +43 1 589 00 589
info@ecoi.net

Contact
Imprint & Disclaimer
F.A.Q.
Data Protection Notice

ecoi.net is run by the Austrian Red Cross (department ACCORD) in cooperation with Informationsverbund Asyl & Migration. ecoi.net is funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Austrian Ministry of the Interior and Caritas Austria. ecoi.net is supported by ECRE & UNHCR.

