

☐☐ Russia's Tracking App: A Digital Dragnet for Foreigners in Moscow

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☐☐ Would you visit a city that tracks your every move?

Imagine arriving in a capital city only to be told:
"Install this app or risk deportation."

That's exactly what foreign residents in Moscow now face.

A newly approved Russian law forces **non-citizens living in the capital** to install a **government-issued tracking app**. On paper, it's a tool to improve migration control. In practice? It's a bold move toward **state-run digital surveillance**.

☐☐ What the law mandates

Unveiled by Vyacheslav Volodin, Speaker of the State Duma, the law claims to combat "**migrant crime**" through modern technology.

Here's what the app collects:

- ☐☐ Live GPS location
- ☐☐ Biometric fingerprints
- ☐☐ Facial recognition
- ☐☐ Home address registration

Foreigners must **notify authorities within 3 business days** if they change addresses. Failure to comply? **They face tracking and deportation.**

☐☐ Exceptions apply only to **diplomats and Belarusian citizens**.

☐☐ Is it legal under the Russian Constitution?

Not according to civil rights experts.

Lawyer **Anna Minushkina** says the law **violates Articles 23 and 24** of the [Russian Constitution](#), which protect:

- Individual privacy
- Personal data security

By embedding real-time surveillance in legal code, Russia may be **legitimizing overreach** under the guise of order.

☐☐ **Confusion among migrant communities**

For those directly affected, clarity is in short supply.

Viktor Teplyankov, head of Moscow's Uzbek community, called the law:

“Ill-conceived and impractical.”

He and others raise basic questions:

- ☐ What if your phone is lost or stolen?
- ☐ What if your phone can't run the app?
- ☐ What about those without internet?

The Ministry of Internal Affairs has yet to publish clear guidelines.

☐☐ **Labor market warning: Who will do the work?**

Andrey Yakimov, from the PSP Foundation, warns of economic fallout:

“Essential migrant workers may leave — especially in construction, agriculture, and domestic services.”

At a time when Russia's workforce is shrinking, such measures risk **repelling the labor it most needs**.

☐☐ **A pilot project until 2029**

The rollout isn't immediate.

This tracking system will undergo **testing until September 2029**.

What happens then? That's unclear.

Officials say they'll assess its "success", but **no clear metrics exist**.

☐☐ **Surveillance or migration control?**

Supporters argue it's just a **modern migration tool**.

Critics say it's a step closer to **total surveillance**.

Let's not sugarcoat it:

Gathering biometric and GPS data in real time — without a court order — undermines basic freedoms.

☐☐ **Legal blind spots**

Many basic scenarios remain unanswered:

- ☐☐ No smartphone?
- ☐☐ Technical failure?
- ☐☐ Short-term tourist visit?

The law leaves these "edge cases" unresolved — a troubling sign in any legal framework.

☐☐ How does this compare globally?

Country	App Required?	Biometric Data?	GPS Live Tracking?
☐☐☐☐ Russia (Moscow)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Face + Fingerprints	<input type="checkbox"/> 24/7 Live
☐☐☐☐ USA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/> In some cases	<input type="checkbox"/> No
☐☐☐☐ EU	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Moscow's policy could become a **model for digital control elsewhere** — under the pretext of "order" and "efficiency".

☐☐ A dangerous precedent?

This isn't just a local issue.
It's a test case for a **global shift** in how states handle mobility and foreign presence.

Turning people into **trackable data points**, simply for crossing borders, **redefines modern freedom**.

What starts in Moscow might spread far beyond. And if we don't question it now, we may not be able to stop it later.

☐☐ Want to stay ahead of digital surveillance trends?

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