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# French police arrest Telegram founder Durov

The Russian tech entrepreneur has been detained at Paris-Le Bourget Airport, according to local broadcaster LCI



Telegram founder and CEO Pavel Durov speaks at a conference in Barcelona, Spain on February 23, 2016. © AOP.Press / Corbis / Getty Images

The Russian founder of the messaging app Telegram, Pavel Durov, has been detained after he arrived in Paris on a private jet, local broadcaster LCI has reported.

Durov, who obtained a French passport in 2021, was arrested at Paris-Le Bourget Airport at around 8pm local time, the outlet said on Saturday. He is also a citizen of the UAE, Saint Kitts and Nevis and his native Russia.

His jet had arrived in the French capital from Azerbaijan. The 39-year-old was accompanied by a woman and his bodyguard, it added.

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According to LCI, the French authorities issued an arrest warrant for the tech entrepreneur as part of a preliminary investigation. Paris believes that Telegram’s insufficient moderation, its encryption tools and alleged lack of cooperation with police could make Durov complicit in drug trafficking, pedophilia offenses and fraud, it said.

Broadcaster TF1 reported that Durov will appear before a judge on Sunday evening and could face up to 20 years in prison, it added.

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Due to being a French citizen, the Telegram founder may also face accusations of violating sanctions imposed on Moscow by the EU due to his contacts in Russia.

Durov’s arrest warrant was only legitimate on the territory of France. *“He made a mistake tonight. We don’t know why,”* a source close to the investigation told TF1-LCI. *“In any case, he’s locked up.”*

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