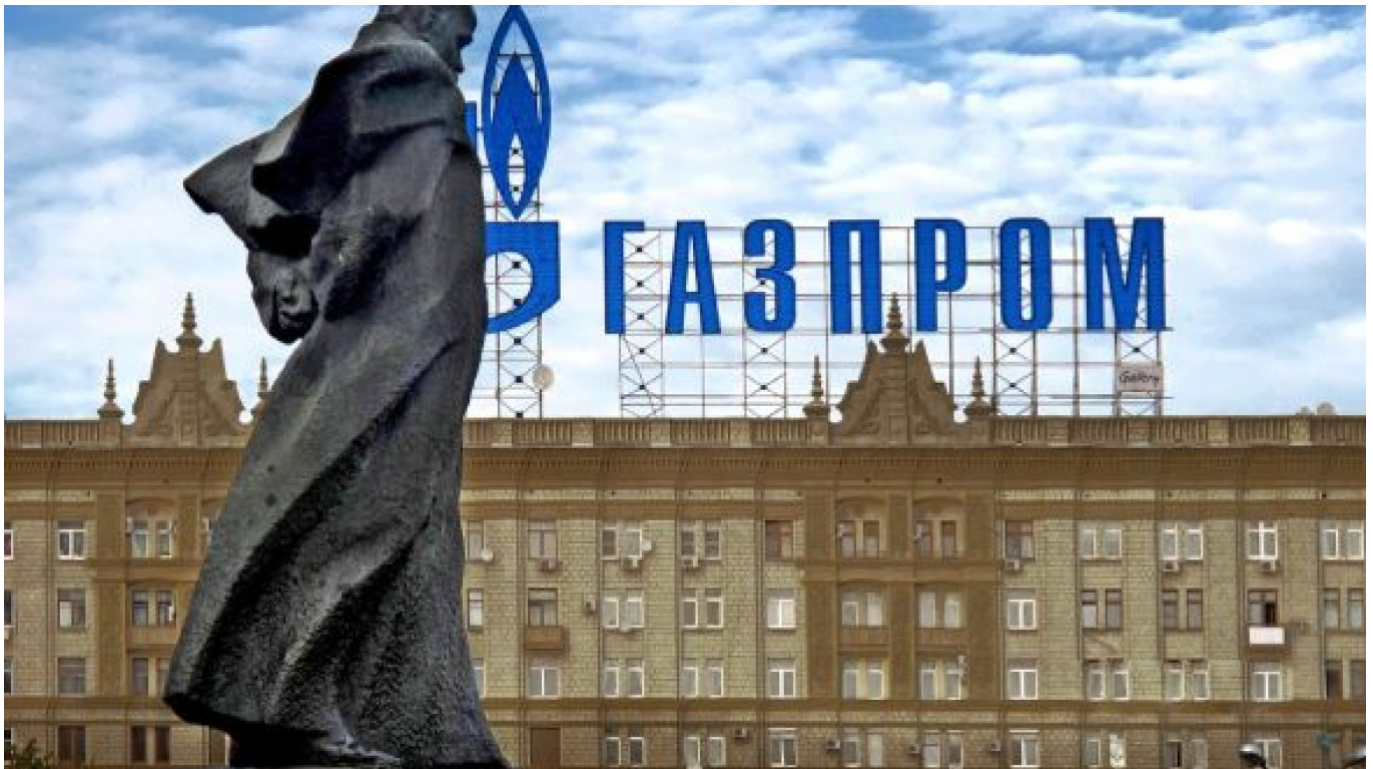


Oil Production Drops Slightly

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Oil production fell slightly after Gazprom decreased output. **Vladimir Filonov**

Russian oil production edged down 0.3 percent to 10.33 million barrels per day in April, to its lowest this year, after Gazprom trimmed output due to a refinery maintenance closure, Energy Ministry data showed on Wednesday.

So far this year output had stood at a post-Soviet monthly high of 10.36 million bpd.

In tons, the ministry said crude output in Russia, currently the world's top producer, stood at 42.29 million bpd last month and was still ahead of 10 million bpd pumped last month by Saudi Arabia, which has spare capacity to produce an extra 2.5 million bpd.

"This is all down to Gazprom, which cut its condensate production in April by 6 percent from March," Nomos Bank analyst Denis Borisov said.

Gazprom cut back on production of condensate — very light crude, which is close to gas — as its Astrakhan refinery on the Caspian Sea stood idle in April due to regular maintenance.

Russia's second-largest crude producer LUKoil showed a decline of 0.56 percent in production due to continuous problems at its new northern oilfield of South Khyrchuyu.

The company expects its crude output to be stable this year after it fell by about 5 percent to 90.7 million tons last year.

The Vankor oilfield in the Arctic, owned by top crude producer Rosneft, continued to ramp up its production, which increased 0.5 percent in April, month on month. Rosneft's total output remained flat.

Daily gas production decreased to 1.87 billion cubic meters in April from 2 bcm in March due to declining seasonal demand.

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