

Ryanair Seeks Permission to Fly to Russia

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Transportation Ministry has received a request from Ireland's Foreign Ministry to allow Irish low-cost carrier Ryanair to operate flights between the two countries, a Transportation Ministry spokesman told Interfax.

The document does not list any possible routes or flight frequency.

"Details will be announced after the two countries' aviation authorities have held talks," he said.

Vedomosti reported last week that First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov welcomed foreign budget airlines' expansion in the Russian market.

"We are talking about allowing low-cost airlines to fly to some destinations where their technology, investment and experience of managing this business could increase competition

and, of course, lower costs," the paper said, citing a spokesman for Shuvalov.

Last week, Igor Artemyev, head of the Federal Anti-Monopoly Service, said the government was considering a plan to allow foreign low-cost airlines to fly domestic routes.

Currently, low-cost airlines that fly to Russia include Germany's Air Berlin and Germanwings, Spain's Vueling Airlines, Norway's Norwegian, Austria's Niki, Turkey's Pegasus Airlines and the United Arab Emirates-based companies Air Arabia and Flydubai.

The only domestic low-cost airlines were SkyExpress, founded in 2006, and Avianova, which began flying in 2009. Both ceased operations in 2011.

Ryanair is Europe's largest low-cost airline. It flies more than 1,100 routes between 160 airports and makes more than 1,400 flights per day. The company flew more than 75 million passengers in 2011, and it has over 294 airplanes.

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