

Regulator Plans Restrictions on SIM Card Sales

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russians' love affair with SIM cards may be curbed if Roskomnadzor goes ahead with plans to put restrictions on which retail points can sell them.

The Communications and Press Ministry's regulator is proposing to prohibit signing up for cell-phone contracts at stores whose area is less than 10 square meters in rural areas or 20 square meters in cities. Selling SIM cards in non-stationary lots, such as makeshift booths on streets or in railroad stations, would also be made illegal.

The retail points would have to be supplied with copiers, cash registers and be rented out for a period of no less than one year.

These restrictions are meant to lower the number of non-registered SIM cards, which are frequently used to commit crimes, such as mobile fraud. Roskomnadzor gets an average of 20 complaints per day about such offenses, Vedomosti reported.

The government regulator is asking mobile operators to provide their comments on the proposal by Dec. 25. Talks with operators will continue after the winter holidays, and the finalized proposals will be eventually sent to the Communications and Press Ministry, said Oleg Ivanov, deputy head of Roskomnadzor, according to Vedomosti.

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