

Russian Media Sector Set for Mass Layoffs as Economy Slumps

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Journalists and photographers, like those seen sitting at a press conference, are expected to face mass layoffs.

Russian journalists and other media employees are likely to be among the worst affected by the ongoing economic slump, with many set to lose their jobs as advertising revenues and state funding continue to shrink, according to government estimates.

Alexei Levchenko, an aide to Deputy Prime Minister Olga Golodets, told the *Izvestia* newspaper on Friday that a government panel on monitoring labor and unemployment had convened to discuss the "conditions in the media market, where the situation is one of the most alarming."

Between 15 percent and 20 percent of Russian media employees are expected to lose their jobs as a result of the economic downturn, *Izvestia* reported, citing Communication and Press Ministry estimates. That could affect tens of thousands of people, the report added.

"The layoffs have only just begun — for instance, at TASS," Levchenko was quoted as saying.

The TASS news agency, one of Russia's largest state-run news agencies, was planning to lay off 25 percent of its staff in February as funding dwindled, general director Sergei Mikhailov said last month in comments carried by Vedomosti.

Other state news organizations, including pro-Kremlin broadcaster RT and news agency Rossiya Segodnya are looking at slashing their spending by at least 50 percent as the ruble continues to shed value, news reports have said.

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