

Russian Unemployment Rises as Jobs Get Scarcer

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia's rising number of unemployed are facing stiffer competition for fewer jobs as companies slash their hiring plans amid an economic crisis, data from Russia's employment website Superjob and the Labor Ministry showed.

Registered unemployment is up 12 percent since the start of the year, while the number of job vacancies has fallen 13.6 percent, news agency RBC reported Tuesday citing statistics from the Labor Ministry.

Data from Superjob suggests the mismatch between vacancies and job seekers is more severe: The quantity of CVs posted on the website, one of Russia's most popular with 10 million visitors monthly, rose 19 percent since the start of the year as the number of vacancies fell by 13 percent, Pavel Lebedev, head Superjob's research department, said Tuesday.

Russia's economy is expected to shrink by up to 5 percent this year as cheap oil curbs the country's income and Western sanctions over the Ukraine crisis restrict investment.

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Labor Minister Maxim Topilin downplayed the rise in unemployment at a meeting with President Vladimir Putin last week, noting that joblessness had not yet reached the highs seen in 2009, when unemployment reached 8.2 percent.

Russia's relative stability compared to the lean years of 2008-09 may be because companies have already fired all nonessential personnel ahead of an expected downturn.

“In the period from 2008 to 2009 and in the following years there was actually a quite serious optimization in [employment] numbers,” Topilin said.

Superjob's Lebedev agreed: “Business appeared more prepared for a negative market trend [than in 2008]. Many companies carried out optimization of personnel back in the summer of 2014.”

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