

Car Imports to Russia Down 50 Percent

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Imports of new cars to Russia dropped 45.4 percent in the first quarter of this year as car sales in the weakening economy collapsed, the RBC news agency reported, citing data from car analytics agency Autostat.

The Russian car market has been hit hard by the steep devaluation of the ruble, which is down 30 percent against the U.S. dollar since last April. The ruble's fall has raised the cost of foreign automobiles and components and sent overall inflation soaring, striking a harsh blow to Russians' purchasing power.

A total of about 140,000 cars and light commercial vehicles were sold in March, down 42.5 percent from the same period in 2014, according to the lobby group the Association of European Businesses.

Companies imported a total of 87,300 cars in the first quarter, according to Autostat. Japanese carmaker Toyota led the pack with 24,000 units — a slight increase from the same period last

year — followed by South Korea's Hyundai with 11,000 cars, 31 percent less year-on-year.

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