The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russians Chose Shopping Over Travel for May Holidays

By The Moscow Times

May 13, 2015



In spite of growing foot traffic in stores, retailers haven't seen a dramatic increase in sales.

Foot traffic at non-food retailers increased during the May holidays in Russia compared to the same period last year despite the ruble crisis, according to a report released Wednesday by Russian retail analytics firm Watcom.

Store traffic at shoe shops and sports clothing retailers increased by 78 and 53 percent respectively, according to Watcom. Store traffic at electronics retailers rose 11 percent while clothing retailers saw traffic rise 6 percent.

Watcom CEO Roman Skorokhodov explained the rise to news agency RBC as a side effect of the ruble's tumble — as travel becomes more expensive, more Russians are heading to the shops instead of flying abroad.

The ruble has fallen over 30 percent to the U.S. dollar and over 15 percent to the euro since the

start of last year as Russia's economy struggles against plunging oil prices and Western sanctions.

However, not all retail destinations profited equally. Foot traffic at large shopping malls during the May holidays dropped by 20 percent, according to Watcom, which the company attributed to lower spending on entertainment overall.

But in spite of growing foot traffic in stores, retailers haven't seen a dramatic increase in sales.

As real wages fell by 1.4 percent in the first three months of this year compared to the same period last year, consumer spending on goods and services in Russia dropped by 4.2 percent, according to the Rosstat state statistics service.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/05/13/russians-chose-shopping-over-travel-for-may-holidays-a46516