

Russians Cut Spending on Nightlife as Recession Bites

By [The Moscow Times](#)

October 23, 2015



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Russians are cutting back on visits to bars, restaurants and nightclubs as the price of food and alcohol rises amid a recession.

A survey by consumer research firm Nielsen published Friday found that almost half of respondents were spending less money on going out. Russians have seen the value of their wages fall sharply thanks to double-digit inflation over the past year.

The survey, which polled 1,000 people across Russia last month, said 49 percent of respondents had not been to a bar once this year, up from 28 percent last year, and 46 percent had not been to a pub, compared to 32 percent percent in 2014.

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Restaurant and cafe visits also fell, the survey found, and diners have begun ordering less wine and fewer desserts.

Respondents said they were cutting back due to a lack of money and the increasing cost of food and drink. Prices began rising last year, thanks to embargoes on a range of foods from the United States, the European Union and some other countries, and a sharp weakening of the ruble, which has made imports more expensive. Food prices were, on average, 17.4 percent higher in September 2015 than the year before, according to official statistics.

Wages, meanwhile, have risen more slowly, and the economy is in recession.

“Visiting restaurants and bars has become a highly expensive activity,” Nielsen's head of consumer surveys, Yekaterina Petrova, was quoted as saying in a press release. “Many people are saying that they have stopped going out unless there is a reason to.”

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