Turkish Low-Coster Sees 70 Percent Drop in Demand On Russia Flights

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Turkish low-cost airline Pegasus has seen its passenger traffic between Russian and Turkish cities plummet by 70 percent amid the ongoing breakdown in ties between Moscow and Ankara in the wake of the downing of a Russian Su-24 fighter jet on the Turkish-Syrian border by the Turkish military two weeks ago.

The incident has seen Moscow enact punitive economic sanctions against Ankara for what President Vladimir Putin has described as "a stab in the back" by accomplices of terrorists — and has accused Turkey of facilitating sales of illicit oil produced by the Islamic State, a terrorist organization banned in Russia.

Pegasus spokesman Yury Mkrtchyan told travel site TourDom.ru on Thursday that the measures have led to a sharp decline in passenger traffic, news website Lenta.ru reported. Whereas Pegasus planes were typically packed with more than 150 passengers, recent traffic

has seen on average just 50 people on board, he said.

The airline currently runs just two routes between Istanbul and Russia, flying to Moscow and Krasnodar. The airline earlier this year ended flights to Sochi, Omsk and Mineralnye Vody. If demand doesn't pick up, it will cease flights between Istanbul and Krasnodar, according to Lenta.ru.

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