

70% Drop in Russian Operators Offering Foreign Tours in 2015

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Russian Tour Operators Association predicts the number of tour operators will continue to fall next year.

The number of companies selling foreign tours to Russian tourists has fallen by 70 percent over the past year, the TASS news agency reported Wednesday, citing Dmitry Gorin, deputy head of the Russian Tour Operators Association.

"Before the crisis, we had 2,050 companies that were involved in the organization of overseas tours, now there are 650 of them," Interfax quoted Gorin as saying.

Russia's tourism industry has been suffering from the plummeting demand for international travel among Russians, caused by the sharp drop in the ruble's value.

The companies have also been hit by restrictions on travel to Russia's two most popular tourist destinations — Egypt and Turkey.

Russia banned all passenger flights to Egypt last month after a Russian plane crashed in the Sinai peninsula on Oct. 31.

Russia also imposed a ban on selling package tours to Turkey on Dec.1 as part of a package of sanctions against the country over the downing of a Russian warplane.

The Russian Tour Operators Association predicts the number of tour operators will continue to fall next year.

"In the best-case scenario, there will be 500 tour companies left in 2016, in the worst, 300," Gorin said.

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