

80% of Pensioner-Traders 'in Criminal Gangs,' Says Official

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Some 80 percent of pensioners trading outside Moscow metro stations are working for organized crime syndicates, a Russian official has claimed.

“Illegal traders
[at metro stations
] are frequently members of gangs
consisting of people
of different nationalities and the elderly,”
said Anton Tsvetkov, a member of Russia’s Civic
Chamber public monitoring commission for security and cooperation.

“We’re actively fighting illegal trade near stations and we’re uncovering criminal groups producing food to be sold near metro stations”, he said.

He's claiming that around 80 percent of the pensioners selling food near the metro worked for organized criminal groups.

"So an old woman selling dill outside Vyikino metro station receives on average 12,000 rubles (\$186) a day. As you can imagine, that's quite an income," Tsvetkov said.

"Surely not all that money is going to her."

Elderly ladies selling food products, flowers, or knitted clothes are a common sight close to the capital's metro stations, with many working to supplement their pension.

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