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Bad Weather Blamed for Moscow's Summer Sadness

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Marina Lystseva / TASS

An unusually cold summer is partially responsible for a spike in Muscovites calling in for psychological help, RT reported, citing the director of the Moscow Psychological Aid Service Nina Petrochenko.

The service received a total of 3,870 queries in June 2017, a 14 percent increase compared to the same month in 2016.

The number of those with suicidal thoughts has also almost doubled, Petrochenko said, with 23 such appeals made this June.

Psychology experts said that the cold, rainy summer is fueling negative feelings, which they equate with a winter depression typically seen in January and February.

Bad weather alone cannot set off depression, Petrochenko said, but it can worsen existing depressive feelings.

“During consultations, a person complaining about his problems can say, ‘And also, the weather is bad’ or ‘Also, the summer has not turned out well,’” Petrochenko explained.

She added that in the previous, warmer summer Muscovites went to their dachas and worked outdoors, but are forced to stay home this summer.

“Depression is a condition that sets in when the body’s defences are exhausted and the body is unable to compensate for external pressure,” psychotherapist Andrei Zhilyaev said.

“There is very little sunlight this summer and it is cold, so on top of everything, there is this stress from unrealized expectations.”

About 25 percent of the queries that the Moscow Psychological Aid Service receives concern physical and mental health, including depression.

The second most common issue is a lack of communication, which makes up about 20 percent of the queries. Marital and family problems are in third place with 11 to 12 percent.

Moscow has experienced unusually cold and rainy weather since April. It was the coldest May on record in 17 years, with the May holidays bringing record low temperatures and even snow.

June was the coldest over the past 14 years and one of the rainiest in history.

The weather is expected to worsen during the upcoming weekend as temperatures drop to September standards, the Kommersant newspaper reported.

Temperatures will drop as low as 6 degrees at night and rise to a maximum of 18 degrees during the day.

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