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Russians Are Cutting Spending on Basic Goods, Survey Says

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Sergei Vedyashkin / Moskva News Agency

Russians said they spent less on food, travel, clothes and other goods and services in 2019 than last year, a survey by Russia's Romir researcher said Tuesday.

Among those who said they had to cut spending, 24 percent said they saved on food, 29 percent on travel and 23 percent on clothes. Another 13 percent said they saved on alcohol and cigarettes, while 7 percent said they saved on sports and medicine each. The cost-cutting was seen across all 14 categories, including entertainment and phone service, between 2018 and 2019.

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Russian consumers had to "tighten their belts" this year due to rising prices and stagnant wages, according to Andrei Milekhin, the head of Romir.

“If the crisis... contributes to the fact that Russians will drink and smoke less, I guess that’s not bad,” he said.

“But it’s much worse that a noticeable share of Russians cut spending on medicine and sports," Milekhin warned.

The study comes as the national statistics agency estimated that almost half of Russian households (48.2 percent) couldn’t afford goods apart from food and clothes in 2018.

Romir conducted the survey among 1,800 respondents in all eight Russian federal districts in April.

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