

Russians Rushing Back to Work as Pre-Virus Life Returns

Most workers are back in the office, while traffic data shows Moscow is one of the busiest cities in the world again.

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More than two-third of Russians who were working from home have returned to their offices. **Sergei Bobylev / TASS**

The majority of Russians have stopped working from home and almost immediately returned to offices and workplaces across the country following the relaxation of quarantine measures.

Three in four workers who had switched to working from home have now returned, a survey by Work.Ru, cited by business daily RBC, [reported](#) Thursday. Some 68% are back in the office full-time, 7% are splitting their time and a quarter are still working from home.

Russia started easing quarantine restrictions in the middle of May, following a six-week “non-working period,” where non-essential workers were either given time off, or told to work from home. Just 28% switched to a home office routine, the poll found, 42% continued

going into work, while 30% stopped working altogether.

Since the cancellation of the non-working period, Russia has begun lifting restrictions region-by-region, based on the virus situation in each part of the country.

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Moscow — the epicenter of Russia’s coronavirus outbreak — completely cancelled movement restrictions on June 9. Shops have been open since June 1, and bars, restaurants, cafes and gyms were allowed to fully reopen from Tuesday.

Despite the relaxations, Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin has called on businesses and employees in the capital to [continue](#) working from home, where possible, for “the coming weeks, if not a month or two,” warning of the continued risk of infection.

The number of new cases reported in Russia has come down from a peak of over 10,000 in early May, but the country is still reporting more than 7,000 new infections a day, and remains the third-most affected country in the world after the U.S. and Brazil.

Observance of Russia’s strict mobility restrictions had already [started](#) to wane early in the quarantine period. Now that many have been officially withdrawn, mobility trackers show Russians racing to return to their pre-virus lifestyle.

Footfall in Moscow’s shopping centres is running at three-quarters of its usual level, the Watcom Shopping Index shows. Yandex’s self-isolation index dipped to 0.9 on Tuesday — printing just 0.6 in Moscow. The index runs from zero to five, with higher scores indicating better observance of stay-at-home recommendations. At the peak of the pandemic, it hit a workday high of 3.5.

Other data shows how Moscow has gone from one of the quietest cities in Russia to one of the most active in the world. According to Citymapper, which [tracks](#) movement around 40 of the world’s largest cities, movement in both Moscow and St. Petersebug was running at around two-thirds of usual levels, while a majority of the other cities had readings below 30%.

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