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Russian Demand for Online Mysticism Courses Jumps 20-Fold

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Tarot card reading is one of the divinatory practices gaining popularity. **petr sidorov / unsplash**

Online mysticism courses have experienced a nearly 20-fold surge in popularity among the Russian public, the Vedemosti business daily reported Tuesday, citing data provided by telecommunications companies.

Analysts attribute Russians' growing interest in mysticism to the stress and uncertainty being caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Online schools offering lessons in fortune telling, astrology, and other esoteric practices saw traffic increase from 312 visits between January and March 2022 to 5,962 over the same period in 2023, according to Vedomosti's analysis of cell phone operator Tele2's data.

Another major Russian cell phone operator, Megafon, registered an 11-fold increase in traffic on similar websites offering courses in mysticism over the same period, Vedomosti reported.

"People saw that there was demand for these services last year and came to learn," said

sociologist Denis Volkov.

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Mikhail Burmistrov, head of market research firm Infoline-Analytics, noted that mysticism was gradually overtaking personal development training in popularity among the Russian public.

"The same mechanisms for attracting an audience are beginning to be used in related sectors where you can also make a lot of money on certain human weaknesses," Burmistrov told Vedomosti.

The reported surge in demand for courses in mysticism coincides with a slump in traffic to fortune-telling websites and online occult stores, suggesting that people are moving away from paid services to learning how to perform esoteric practices for themselves, Vedomosti said.

Buyers are apparently migrating to e-commerce platforms, with Ozon seeing a 95% increase in demand for amulets and charm bracelets, while Wildberries has sold 105% more tarot cards between January and March 2023, the newspaper reported.

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