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Foreign Automakers Scale Back New Model Launches in Russia

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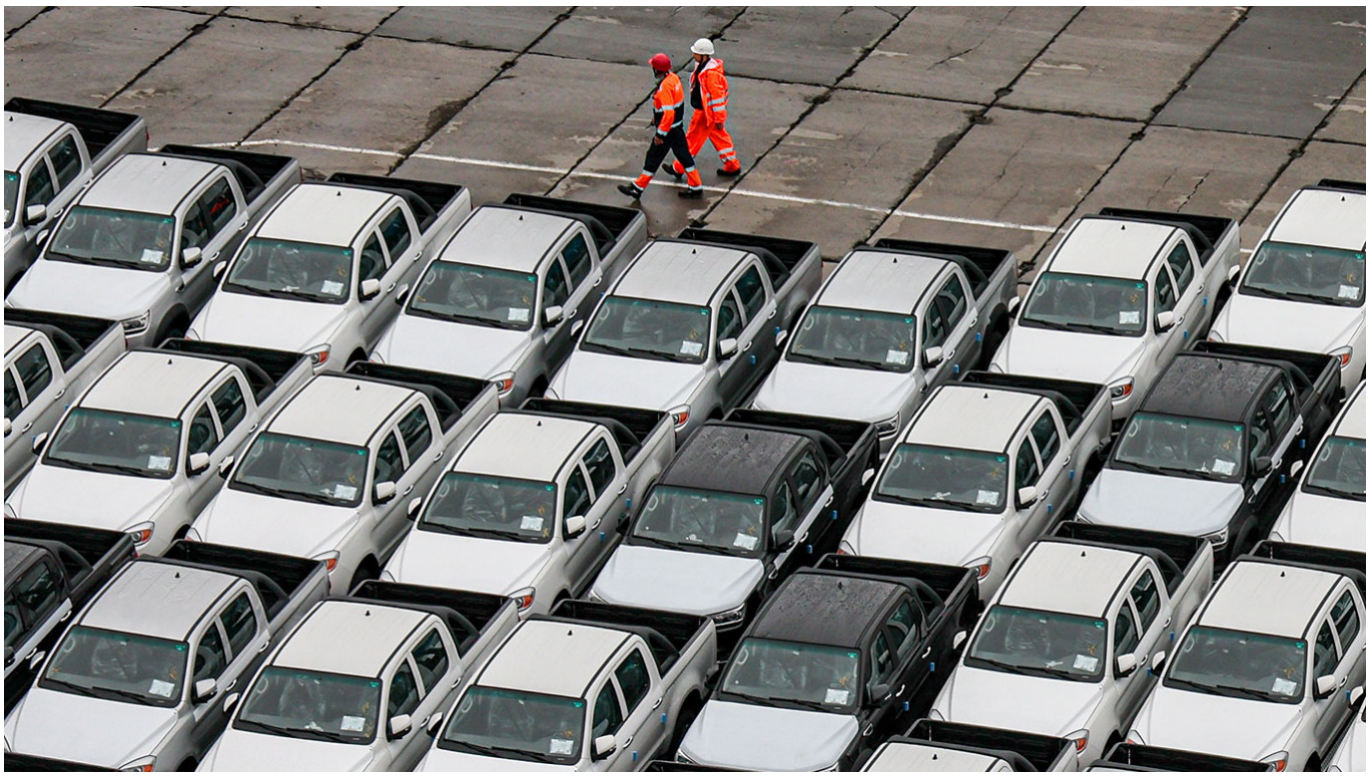

Yuri Smityuk / TASS

The number of new foreign car models introduced in Russia has plummeted in 2025, reflecting a sharp downturn in consumer demand and a broader slump in the country's auto market, according to the analytical agency Avtostat.

Only about 20 new foreign models were launched in the first half of the year compared to more than 100 during the same period in 2024, Avtostat head Sergei Tselikov told the pro-Kremlin daily Izvestia.

"The last two years saw a significant influx of new models into the market," Tselikov said. "Companies were encouraged to enter the market due to robust car sales. But as sales have declined, the number of new models being introduced has also fallen."

Several automakers have opted to delay or cancel launches altogether due to the decline in sales, he added.

“Some manufacturers have chosen to withdraw some model launches from the Russian market entirely, while others are postponing them.”

The few new models that have launched this year have met with mixed success. Chinese automaker Chery introduced its Tiggo 7L crossover in April, selling 2,691 units by the end of June, a figure Tselikov called “notable amid a shrinking market.” Haval’s mid-size H7 crossover, also from China, sold 1,216 units between March and June.

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Others fared worse. South Korea’s KGM, which entered Russia in March with four models, has sold just 137 units combined. Sales of the ROX 01 hybrid and Bestune T90 crossover, both introduced in early 2025, reached only 87 and 50 units, respectively.

Irina Frank, head of the dealership network Frank Auto, told Izvestia that the influx of Chinese brands which replaced exiting Western companies in 2022-2023 had largely run its course by the beginning of this year.

“For the past two to three years, the market was saturated with Chinese models,” she said. “But now manufacturers and importers are adjusting to the market’s real capacity, which is in decline. The focus is shifting to maintaining existing product lines rather than introducing new ones.”

Maxim Kadakov, editor-in-chief of the Za Rulem car magazine, told Izvestia that Russia may see no more than 40 to 50 new models by the end of 2025, including those from domestic producers.

According to Avtostat, vehicle sales in Russia fell by 26% year-on-year in the January-May period, dropping to 440,259 units.

While the market had experienced a period of recovery following the 2022 exit of Western automakers, growth stalled in late 2024 due to rising interest rates, high recycling fees and overall market saturation.

Avtostat predicted in December that Russia’s auto market could shrink by 10-20% this year. The Association of European Businesses echoed that assessment, projecting a 15% contraction in 2025.

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