The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia to Cut 45K State-Funded University Slots in 2026-27 Academic Year

December 22, 2025



University applicants at the admissions office of Moscow State University. **Vyacheslav Prokofyev / TASS**

Russia's government plans to eliminate 45,000 state-funded university slots in the 2026–27 academic year, Education and Science Minister Valery Falkov said Monday, citing concerns about teaching quality and a mismatch between graduates' skills and labor market needs.

The fully subsidized slots, known in Russia as "budget places," would be cut by roughly 13% nationwide, Falkov told the state television channel Rossia 24. He said private universities would be disproportionately affected.

"Some universities, particularly private institutions, may not survive without their low-quality paid programs," he said.

The move is aimed at curbing what officials describe as an oversupply of graduates in around

40 fields with low demand, including economics, law, management and public administration.

Earlier this year, the government granted itself the authority to regulate the number of tuition-free slots at both public and private universities, expanding oversight beyond state-funded enrollments.

The new powers followed directives from President Vladimir Putin to bring higher education into closer alignment with Russia's economic and technological priorities, with greater emphasis on engineering and technical disciplines. His calls to channel more students into industrial fields amid labor shortages have coincided with sharp increases in tuition fees.

Falkov said that mechanical engineering was the most popular state-funded major nationwide in 2025.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2025/12/22/russia-to-cut-45k-state-funded-university-slots-in-2026-27-academic-year-a91503