

Nearly Half of Russian Companies Plan to Skip Year-End Bonuses, Survey Finds

October 09, 2026



Vitaly Gariev / pexels

Nearly half of Russian companies do not plan to pay employees annual bonuses for 2026, a survey showed, as businesses face financial pressure from rising taxes, high borrowing costs and weak demand.

The survey of 1,076 organizations across Russia, conducted by accounting service Aktion Bukhgalteriya and [reported by Forbes](#), found that 46.9% did not intend to pay year-end bonuses. Another 20.4% had postponed a decision indefinitely, while 10.4% planned to reward only some employees.

Just 22.3% said they would definitely pay bonuses to all staff.

The findings point to growing pressure on employee compensation as companies contend with higher operating costs and customers increasingly fall behind on payments, business experts said.

Annual financial results were the main factor determining bonus decisions for 56.9% of respondents. Another 23% said the decision rested with the owner or parent company, while 8.8% cited the tax burden and social insurance contributions payable on bonuses.

Rising taxes and costs are driving the trend, Yekaterina Avdeyeva, chair of the coordinating council at the Center for Business Protection NGO, told Forbes.

Related article: [Russian Businesses to Pay \\$5.7Bln in 'Voluntary' Budget Contributions – The Bell](#)

Russia raised its corporate income tax rate from 20% to 25% on Jan. 1, 2025, followed by an increase in value-added tax to 22% in 2026. The annual revenue threshold at which businesses using the simplified tax system must pay VAT was also cut from 60 million rubles (\$708,000) to 20 million rubles (\$236,000).

Borrowing costs are adding to the strain, with the Central Bank's key interest rate at 14%.

For many industries, typical profit margins make borrowing at rates of 10% to 15% economically unviable, Avdeyeva said. Bank deposits offering returns of 13% to 19% can generate comparable income without the risks of running a business, she added.

Companies also face weak demand and increasingly late payments from customers and business partners, she said.

The pressure is likely to widen the gap between bonus payments at large and small businesses, Alla Starchenko, a leading expert at Aktion Bukhgalteriya, told Forbes.

Large companies have financial reserves, established performance targets and formal incentive programs that will allow them to keep paying bonuses, she said.

Small businesses, where decisions often depend on a single owner and current revenue, will increasingly forgo bonuses or limit them to a few key employees, Starchenko added.

Further tax increases are now the main risk facing businesses, Avdeyeva said. Forgoing bonuses could become routine as companies try to stay afloat, though the practice could also hurt productivity, she added.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2026/10/09/nearly-half-of-russian-companies-plan-to-skip-year-end-bonuses-survey-finds-a93930>