

Russian Railways Putting 25% of Staff on Part Time

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russian Railways has put a quarter of its 1.2 million staff on part-time work after a freeze on monopoly rates ordered by the government. **Denis Abramov**

State-owned Russian Railways, the country's biggest employer, is putting more than a quarter of its staff on part-time work schedules after the government refused to allow the company to increase its regulated rates for next year.

Russian Railways President Vladimir Yakunin announced the move on the corporate television network Wednesday, saying the company already asked 27 percent of its staff to work fewer than five days per week, RIA Novosti reported.

The railway operator had 1.2 million employees as of the end of last year, according to its website.

President Vladimir Putin has ordered a freeze on monopoly rates, including those of Russian

Railways, in a bid to spur an economic rebound and tame inflation. GDP growth is expected to be 1.5 percent this year, the lowest rate since 2009. The Economic Development Ministry forecasts that the economy will grow at the same pace next year, even as the key tariffs will be on hold.

Consumer prices, on the other hand, are growing slightly faster than the anticipated rate of 6 percent for this year.

Yakunin said Russian Railways dropped the option of laying off staff because it wanted to preserve its skilled workers. The company hasn't yet determined the total proportion of employees it will ask to work a shorter week, he said.

The move comes on the heels of a news report Tuesday that said the government has ordered state monopolies, including Russian Railways to trim expenditures by 10 percent annually for the next 4 years.

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