

Elite Home Sale Offers Surge as Economic Outlook Darkens

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The number of real estate listings in two of Moscow's elite neighborhoods has leaped as economic volatility and an upcoming tax hike rattle nerves among Russia's richest citizens.

The quantity of sale offers along Moscow's Rublyovskoye and Novorizhskoye highways rose this summer by 20 to 30 percent compared with the previous year, Anton Gololobov, marketing director at real estate firm Villagio, told the Vedomosti business daily.

The area, located west of Moscow, is famous for its large homes — unusual in a city where most people live in cramped apartments — and prominent inhabitants, including President Vladimir Putin.

Real estate firms polled by Vedomosti estimated there are currently between 500 and 1,000 homes for sale in the neighborhood. In particular, real estate listings for homes worth over \$3 million have increased 30 to 40 percent, Konstantin Kovalyov from Blackwood Real Estate

told the paper.

Behind the spike in offers are jitters over Russia's economic outlook, analysts said. Western sanctions and falling oil prices have sent Russia's growth rate to zero as the ruble currency has tumbled nearly 30 percent against the U.S. dollar and inflation has surged over 8 percent. Forecasts for next year are grim.

New property tax rules that raise rates for bigger homes also come into force in January.

Despite the number of homes on sale, analysts disagree as to whether discounts are possible: Kovalyov said discounts of up to 20 percent are possible, but others said discounts can only be found if sellers need to rid themselves of property quickly, for instance if they are moving abroad.

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