

Ruble Weakens Against U.S. Dollar as Traders Unconvinced by Putin Speech

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A Russian one ruble coin swimming in a jar of oil.

The ruble edged lower against the dollar on Thursday, with traders saying President Vladimir Putin had offered few concrete measures at his end-of-year news conference to pull Russia out of a crisis.

At 7:49 p.m. in Moscow, the ruble was about 3 percent weaker against the dollar at 62.13 after opening more than 1 percent higher. The ruble was 1.9 percent weaker versus the euro at 76.52.

Selling pressure on Thursday was less intense than earlier in the week, which saw the ruble fall around 20 percent against the dollar at one stage on Tuesday.

The currency has been hit this year by slumping oil prices and Western sanctions over Ukraine, and the Central Bank's inability to prop it up — despite two hefty interest rate hikes

in the past week — has raised fears Russia will have to resort to capital controls.

Putin, however, said Russia did not plan to order domestic exporters to sell their foreign-currency earnings — in what analysts say would be a form of capital controls — but urged his government and the Central Bank to work closely with them.

The ruble-denominated MICEX Index closed 4.5 percent up on the day at 1,477 points, while the dollar-denominated RTS rose 6.5 percent to 765 points.

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