[Template:Redirect](/wiki/Template:Redirect" \o "Template:Redirect) [Template:Pp-semi-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-semi-indef) [Template:Pp-move-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-move-indef) [Template:Coord](/wiki/Template:Coord)[Template:Infobox country](/wiki/Template:Infobox_country)

**Russia** ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en); [Template:Lang-rus](/wiki/Template:Lang-rus)), also officially known as the **Russian Federation**[[1]](#cite_note-1) ([Template:Lang-rus](/wiki/Template:Lang-rus)), is a [sovereign state](/wiki/Sovereign_state) in northern [Eurasia](/wiki/Eurasia).<ref name=britannica>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> It is a [federal](/wiki/Federation) [semi-presidential](/wiki/Semi-presidential) republic. At [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert),[[2]](#cite_note-2) Russia is the [largest country in the world](/wiki/Largest_country_in_the_world), covering more than one-eighth of the Earth's inhabited land area,[[3]](#cite_note-3) Founded and ruled by a [Varangian](/wiki/Varangian) warrior elite and their descendants, the [medieval](/wiki/Medieval) state of [Rus](/wiki/Rus_(state)) arose in the 9th century. In 988 it adopted [Orthodox Christianity](/wiki/Eastern_Orthodox_Church) from the [Byzantine Empire](/wiki/Byzantine_Empire),<ref name=Curtis/> beginning the synthesis of Byzantine and Slavic cultures that defined [Russian culture](/wiki/Russian_culture) for the [next millennium](/wiki/Millennium_of_Russia).<ref name=Curtis>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> Rus' ultimately disintegrated into a number of smaller states; most of the Rus' lands were overrun by the [Mongol invasion](/wiki/Mongol_invasion_of_Rus') and became tributaries of the nomadic [Golden Horde](/wiki/Golden_Horde) in the 13th century.[[6]](#cite_note-6) The [Grand Duchy of Moscow](/wiki/Grand_Duchy_of_Moscow) gradually reunified the surrounding Russian principalities, achieved independence from the Golden Horde, and came to dominate the cultural and political legacy of [Kievan Rus'](/wiki/Kievan_Rus'). By the 18th century, the nation had greatly expanded through conquest, annexation, and [exploration](/wiki/Russian_explorers) to become the [Russian Empire](/wiki/Russian_Empire), which was the third [largest empire](/wiki/Largest_empire) in history, stretching from Poland in Europe to [Alaska](/wiki/Russian_Alaska) in North America.[[7]](#cite_note-7)[[8]](#cite_note-8) Following the [Russian Revolution](/wiki/Russian_Revolution), the [Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic](/wiki/Russian_Soviet_Federative_Socialist_Republic) became the largest and leading constituent of the [Soviet Union](/wiki/Soviet_Union) abbreviated to [USSR](/wiki/Soviet_Union), the world's first constitutionally [socialist state](/wiki/Socialist_state) and a recognized world [superpower](/wiki/Superpower), and a rival to the [United States](/wiki/United_States)[[9]](#cite_note-9) which played [a decisive role](/wiki/Eastern_Front_(World_War_II)) in the [Allied](/wiki/Allies_of_World_War_II) victory in [World War II](/wiki/World_War II).[[10]](#cite_note-10)[[11]](#cite_note-11) The Soviet era saw some of the [most significant technological achievements](/wiki/Timeline_of_Russian_inventions_and_technology_records) of the 20th century, including the world's [first human-made satellite](/wiki/Sputnik), and the [first man in space](/wiki/Yuri_Gagarin). By the end of 1990, the [Soviet Union](/wiki/Soviet_Union) had the world's second largest economy, largest standing military in the world and the largest stockpile of weapons of mass destruction (the state detonated in 1961 the [Tsar Bomba](/wiki/Tsar_Bomba), which was mankind's most powerful nuclear bomb ever built).[[12]](#cite_note-12)[[13]](#cite_note-13)[[14]](#cite_note-14) In [classical antiquity](/wiki/Classical_antiquity), the [Pontic Steppe](/wiki/Pontic_Steppe) was known as Scythia. Beginning in the 8th century BC, [Ancient Greek](/wiki/Ancient_Greek) traders brought their civilization to the trade emporiums in [Tanais](/wiki/Tanais) and [Phanagoria](/wiki/Phanagoria). The [Romans](/wiki/Ancient_Rome) settled on the western part of the [Caspian Sea](/wiki/Caspian_Sea), where their [empire](/wiki/Roman_empire) stretched towards the east.[Template:Dubious](/wiki/Template:Dubious)[[21]](#cite_note-21) In the 3rd to 4th centuries AD a semi-legendary Gothic kingdom of [Oium](/wiki/Oium) existed in Southern Russia until it was overrun by [Huns](/wiki/Huns). Between the 3rd and 6th centuries AD, the Bosporan Kingdom, a Hellenistic polity which succeeded the Greek colonies,[[22]](#cite_note-22) was also overwhelmed by nomadic invasions led by warlike tribes, such as the Huns and [Eurasian Avars](/wiki/Pannonian_Avars).[[23]](#cite_note-23) A [Turkic people](/wiki/Turkic_people), the Khazars, ruled the lower [Volga](/wiki/Volga) basin steppes between the [Caspian](/wiki/Caspian_Sea) and [Black Seas](/wiki/Black_Sea) until the 10th century.[[24]](#cite_note-24) The ancestors of modern [Russians](/wiki/Russians) are the [Slavic tribes](/wiki/Slavic_tribes), whose original home is thought by some scholars to have been the wooded areas of the [Pinsk Marshes](/wiki/Pinsk_Marshes).[[25]](#cite_note-25) The East Slavs gradually settled Western Russia in two waves: one moving from [Kiev](/wiki/Kiev) toward present-day [Suzdal](/wiki/Suzdal) and [Murom](/wiki/Murom) and another from [Polotsk](/wiki/Polotsk) toward [Novgorod](/wiki/Novgorod) and [Rostov](/wiki/Rostov). From the 7th century onwards, the East Slavs constituted the bulk of the population in Western Russia[[26]](#cite_note-26) and assimilated the native [Finno-Ugric peoples](/wiki/Finno-Ugric_peoples), including the [Merya](/wiki/Merya), the [Muromians](/wiki/Muromians), and the [Meshchera](/wiki/Meshchera).

## Contents

* 1 Kievan Rus'[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]
* 2 Grand Duchy of Moscow[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]
* 3 Tsardom of Russia[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]
* 4 Imperial Russia[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]
* 5 Revolution and Russian Republic[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]
* 6 Soviet Russia and civil war[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]
* 7 Soviet Union[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]
* 8 Russian Federation[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]
* 9 Politics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]
  + 9.1 Governance[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]
  + 9.2 Foreign relations[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]
  + 9.3 Military[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]
  + 9.4 Political divisions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]
* 10 Geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]
  + 10.1 Topography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]
  + 10.2 Climate[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]
  + 10.3 Biodiversity[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]
* 11 Economy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]
  + 11.1 Agriculture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]
  + 11.2 Energy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]
  + 11.3 Transport[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]
  + 11.4 Science and technology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]
  + 11.5 Space exploration[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]
  + 11.6 Water supply and sanitation[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]
* 12 Demographics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=28)]
  + 12.1 Largest cities[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=29)]
  + 12.2 Ethnic groups[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=30)]
  + 12.3 Language[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=31)]
  + 12.4 Religion[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=32)]
  + 12.5 Health[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=33)]
  + 12.6 Education[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=34)]
* 13 Culture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=35)]
  + 13.1 Folk culture and cuisine[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=36)]
  + 13.2 Architecture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=37)]
  + 13.3 Visual arts[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=38)]
  + 13.4 Music and dance[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=39)]
  + 13.5 Literature and philosophy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=40)]
  + 13.6 Cinema, animation and media[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=41)]
  + 13.7 Sports[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=42)]
  + 13.8 National holidays and symbols[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=43)]
  + 13.9 Tourism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=44)]
* 14 See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=45)]
* 15 Notes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=46)]
* 16 References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=47)]
* 17 External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=48)]

### Kievan Rus'[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|Kievan Rus' in the 11th century](/wiki/File:Kievan_Rus_en.jpg) The establishment of the first East Slavic states in the 9th century coincided with the arrival of [Varangians](/wiki/Varangians), the traders, warriors and settlers from the Baltic Sea region. Primarily they were [Vikings](/wiki/Vikings) of [Scandinavian](/wiki/Scandinavia) origin, who ventured along the waterways extending from the eastern Baltic [to the Black](/wiki/From_the_Varangians_to_the_Greeks) [and Caspian](/wiki/Volga_trade_route) Seas.[[27]](#cite_note-27) According to the [Primary Chronicle](/wiki/Primary_Chronicle), a Varangian from [Rus' people](/wiki/Rus'_people), named [Rurik](/wiki/Rurik), was elected ruler of [Novgorod](/wiki/Novgorod) in 862. In 882 his successor [Oleg](/wiki/Oleg_of_Novgorod) ventured south and conquered [Kiev](/wiki/Kiev),[[28]](#cite_note-28) which had been previously paying tribute to the [Khazars](/wiki/Khazars), founding Kievan Rus'. Oleg, Rurik's son [Igor](/wiki/Igor_of_Kiev) and Igor's son [Sviatoslav](/wiki/Sviatoslav_I_of_Kiev) subsequently subdued all local [East Slavic](/wiki/East_Slavs) tribes to Kievan rule, destroyed the [Khazar khaganate](/wiki/Khazar_khaganate) and launched several military expeditions to [Byzantium](/wiki/Paphlagonian_expedition_of_the_Rus') and [Persia](/wiki/Caspian_expeditions_of_the_Rus').

In the 10th to 11th centuries Kievan Rus' became one of the largest and most prosperous states in Europe.[[29]](#cite_note-29) The reigns of [Vladimir the Great](/wiki/Vladimir_the_Great) (980–1015) and his son [Yaroslav the Wise](/wiki/Yaroslav_the_Wise) (1019–1054) constitute the [Golden Age](/wiki/Golden_Age) of Kiev, which saw [the acceptance of](/wiki/Christianization_of_Kievan_Rus') [Orthodox Christianity](/wiki/Eastern_Orthodox_Church) from [Byzantium](/wiki/Byzantine_Empire) and the creation of the first East Slavic written [legal code](/wiki/Legal_code), the [*Russkaya Pravda*](/wiki/Russkaya_Pravda).

In the 11th and 12th centuries, constant incursions by nomadic Turkic tribes, such as the [Kipchaks](/wiki/Kipchaks) and the [Pechenegs](/wiki/Pechenegs), caused a massive migration of Slavic populations to the safer, heavily forested regions of the north, particularly to the area known as [Zalesye](/wiki/Zalesye).[[30]](#cite_note-30) [left|thumb|*The*](/wiki/File:Lebedev_baptism.jpg) [*Baptism of Kievans*](/wiki/Baptism_of_Kievans), by [Klavdy Lebedev](/wiki/Klavdy_Lebedev) The age of [feudalism](/wiki/Feudalism) and decentralization was marked by constant in-fighting between members of the [Rurik Dynasty](/wiki/Rurik_Dynasty) that ruled Kievan Rus' collectively. Kiev's dominance waned, to the benefit of [Vladimir-Suzdal](/wiki/Vladimir-Suzdal) in the north-east, [Novgorod Republic](/wiki/Novgorod_Republic) in the north-west and [Galicia-Volhynia](/wiki/Galicia-Volhynia) in the south-west.

Ultimately Kievan Rus' disintegrated, with the final blow being the [Mongol invasion](/wiki/Mongol_invasion_of_Rus') of 1237–40[[31]](#cite_note-31) that resulted in the destruction of Kiev[[32]](#cite_note-32) and the death of about half the population of Rus'.[[33]](#cite_note-33) The invading Mongol elite, together with their conquered Turkic subjects (Cumans, Kipchaks, Bulgars), became known as [Tatars](/wiki/Tatars), forming the state of the [Golden Horde](/wiki/Golden_Horde), which pillaged the Russian principalities; the Mongols ruled the [Cuman-Kipchak confederation](/wiki/Cumania) and [Volga Bulgaria](/wiki/Volga_Bulgaria) (modern-day southern and central expanses of Russia) for over two centuries.[[34]](#cite_note-34) Galicia-Volhynia was eventually assimilated by the [Kingdom of Poland](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Poland_(1025–1385)), while the Mongol-dominated Vladimir-Suzdal and Novgorod Republic, two regions on the periphery of Kiev, established the basis for the modern Russian nation.<ref name=Curtis/> The Novgorod together with [Pskov](/wiki/Pskov) retained some degree of autonomy during the time of the [Mongol yoke](/wiki/Mongol_yoke) and were largely spared the atrocities that affected the rest of the country. Led by Prince [Alexander Nevsky](/wiki/Alexander_Nevsky), Novgorodians repelled the invading Swedes in the [Battle of the Neva](/wiki/Battle_of_the_Neva) in 1240, as well as the [Germanic crusaders](/wiki/Northern_Crusades) in the [Battle of the Ice](/wiki/Battle_of_the_Ice) in 1242, breaking their attempts to colonize the Northern Rus'.

### Grand Duchy of Moscow[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Lissner_TroiceSergievaLavr.jpg)[Sergius of Radonezh](/wiki/Sergius_of_Radonezh) blessing [Dmitry Donskoy](/wiki/Dmitry_Donskoy) in [Trinity Sergius Lavra](/wiki/Trinity_Sergius_Lavra), before the [Battle of Kulikovo](/wiki/Battle_of_Kulikovo), depicted in a painting by [Ernst Lissner](/wiki/Ernst_Lissner)

The most powerful state to eventually arise after the destruction of Kievan Rus' was the [Grand Duchy of Moscow](/wiki/Grand_Duchy_of_Moscow) ("Muscovy" in the Western chronicles), initially a part of [Vladimir-Suzdal](/wiki/Vladimir-Suzdal). While still under the domain of the [Mongol](/wiki/Mongol)-[Tatars](/wiki/Tatars) and with their connivance, Moscow began to assert its influence in the Central Rus' in the early 14th century, gradually becoming the leading force in the process of the Rus' lands' reunification and expansion of Russia.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) Moscow's last rival, the [Novgorod Republic](/wiki/Novgorod_Republic), prospered as the chief [fur trade](/wiki/Fur_trade) center and the easternmost port of the [Hanseatic League](/wiki/Hanseatic_League).

Times remained difficult, with frequent [Mongol-Tatar raids](/wiki/Mongol-Tatar_raids). [Agriculture](/wiki/Agriculture) suffered from the beginning of the [Little Ice Age](/wiki/Little_Ice_Age). As in the rest of Europe, [plague](/wiki/Plague_(disease)) was a frequent occurrence between 1350 and 1490.[[35]](#cite_note-35) However, because of the lower population density and better hygiene—widespread practicing of [banya](/wiki/Banya_(sauna)), a wet steam bath—the death rate from plague was not as severe as in Western Europe,<ref name=banya>

[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)[Template:Dead link](/wiki/Template:Dead_link)[Template:Cbignore](/wiki/Template:Cbignore)</ref> and population numbers recovered by 1500.[[35]](#cite_note-35)

Led by Prince [Dmitry Donskoy](/wiki/Dmitry_Donskoy) of Moscow and helped by the [Russian Orthodox Church](/wiki/Russian_Orthodox_Church), the united army of Russian principalities inflicted a milestone defeat on the Mongol-Tatars in the [Battle of Kulikovo](/wiki/Battle_of_Kulikovo) in 1380. Moscow gradually absorbed the surrounding principalities, including formerly strong rivals such as [Tver](/wiki/Principality_of_Tver) and [Novgorod](/wiki/Novgorod_Republic).

[Ivan III](/wiki/Ivan III) ("the Great") finally threw off the control of the [Golden Horde](/wiki/Golden_Horde) and consolidated the whole of Central and Northern Rus' under Moscow's dominion, He was also the first to take the title "Grand Duke of all the Russias".[[36]](#cite_note-36) After the [fall of Constantinople](/wiki/Fall_of_Constantinople) in 1453, Moscow [claimed succession to the legacy](/wiki/Third_Rome) of the [Eastern Roman Empire](/wiki/Eastern_Roman_Empire). Ivan III married [Sophia Palaiologina](/wiki/Sophia_Palaiologina), the niece of the last [Byzantine emperor](/wiki/Byzantine_emperor) [Constantine XI](/wiki/Constantine XI), and made the Byzantine [double-headed eagle](/wiki/Double-headed_eagle) his own, and eventually Russia's, coat-of-arms.

### Tsardom of Russia[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|upright|right|Tsar](/wiki/File:Ivan_the_Terrible_(cropped).JPG) [Ivan the Terrible](/wiki/Ivan_the_Terrible) by [Victor Vasnetsov](/wiki/Victor_Vasnetsov) In development of the [Third Rome](/wiki/Third_Rome) ideas, the Grand Duke [Ivan IV](/wiki/Ivan IV) (the "Terrible")[[37]](#cite_note-37) was officially crowned the first [Tsar](/wiki/Tsar) ("[Caesar](/wiki/Caesar_(title))") of Russia in 1547. The [Tsar](/wiki/Tsardom_of_Russia) [promulgated](/wiki/Promulgation) a new code of laws ([Sudebnik of 1550](/wiki/Sudebnik_of_1550)), established the first Russian feudal representative body ([Zemsky Sobor](/wiki/Zemsky_Sobor)) and introduced local self-management into the rural regions.[[38]](#cite_note-38)[[39]](#cite_note-39) During his long reign, Ivan the Terrible nearly doubled the already large Russian territory by annexing the three Tatar khanates (parts of the disintegrated [Golden Horde](/wiki/Golden_Horde)): [Kazan](/wiki/Khanate_of_Kazan) and [Astrakhan](/wiki/Astrakhan_Khanate) along the [Volga River](/wiki/Volga_River), and the [Siberian Khanate](/wiki/Siberian_Khanate) in southwestern Siberia. Thus, by the end of the 16th century Russia was transformed into a [multiethnic](/wiki/Multiethnic), [multidenominational](/wiki/Religious_denomination) and [transcontinental state](/wiki/Transcontinental_state).

However, the Tsardom was weakened by the long and unsuccessful [Livonian War](/wiki/Livonian_War) against the coalition of Poland, Lithuania, and Sweden for access to the Baltic coast and sea trade.[[40]](#cite_note-40) At the same time, the Tatars of the [Crimean Khanate](/wiki/Crimean_Khanate), the only remaining successor to the Golden Horde, continued to raid Southern Russia.[[41]](#cite_note-41) In an effort to restore the Volga khanates, Crimeans and their [Ottoman](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire) allies [invaded central Russia](/wiki/Russo-Crimean_Wars) and were even able to [burn down parts of Moscow](/wiki/Fire_of_Moscow_(1571)) in 1571.[[42]](#cite_note-42) But in the next year the large invading army was thoroughly defeated by Russians in the [Battle of Molodi](/wiki/Battle_of_Molodi), forever eliminating the threat of an Ottoman–Crimean expansion into Russia. The [slave raids of Crimeans](/wiki/Crimean-Nogai_raids_into_East_Slavic_lands), however, did not cease until the late 17th century though the construction of new fortification lines across Southern Russia, such as the [Great Abatis Line](/wiki/Great_Abatis_Line), constantly narrowed the area accessible to incursions.[[43]](#cite_note-43) [upright|thumb|](/wiki/File:Minin&Pogjarsky_2.jpg)[Monument to Minin and Pozharsky](/wiki/Monument_to_Minin_and_Pozharsky) in Moscow The death of Ivan's sons marked the end of the ancient [Rurik Dynasty](/wiki/Rurik_Dynasty) in 1598, and in combination with the [famine of 1601–03](/wiki/Famine_of_1601–03)[[44]](#cite_note-44) led to civil war, the rule of pretenders, and foreign intervention during the [Time of Troubles](/wiki/Time_of_Troubles) in the early 17th century.[[45]](#cite_note-45) The [Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth](/wiki/Polish-Lithuanian_Commonwealth) occupied parts of Russia, including Moscow. In 1612, the Poles were forced to retreat by the Russian volunteer corps, led by two national heroes, merchant [Kuzma Minin](/wiki/Kuzma_Minin) and Prince [Dmitry Pozharsky](/wiki/Dmitry_Pozharsky). The [Romanov Dynasty](/wiki/Romanov_Dynasty) acceded to the throne in 1613 by the decision of Zemsky Sobor, and the country started its gradual recovery from the crisis.

Russia continued its territorial growth through the 17th century, which was the age of [Cossacks](/wiki/Cossacks). Cossacks were warriors organized into military communities, resembling [pirates](/wiki/Pirates) and [pioneers of the New World](/wiki/Pioneers_of_the_New_World). In 1648, the peasants of Ukraine joined the [Zaporozhian Cossacks](/wiki/Zaporozhian_Cossacks) in rebellion against Poland-Lithuania during the [Khmelnytsky Uprising](/wiki/Khmelnytsky_Uprising) in reaction to the social and religious oppression they had been suffering under Polish rule. In 1654, the Ukrainian leader, [Bohdan Khmelnytsky](/wiki/Bohdan_Khmelnytsky), offered to place Ukraine under the protection of the Russian Tsar, [Aleksey I](/wiki/Aleksey I). Aleksey's acceptance of this offer led to another [Russo-Polish War](/wiki/Russo-Polish_War_(1654–1667)). Finally, Ukraine was split along the [Dnieper River](/wiki/Dnieper_River), leaving the western part, [right-bank Ukraine](/wiki/Right-bank_Ukraine), under Polish rule and the eastern part ([Left-bank Ukraine](/wiki/Left-bank_Ukraine) and [Kiev](/wiki/Kiev)) under Russian rule. Later, in 1670–71, the [Don Cossacks](/wiki/Don_Cossacks) led by [Stenka Razin](/wiki/Stenka_Razin) initiated a major uprising in the [Volga Region](/wiki/Volga_Region), but the Tsar's troops were successful in defeating the rebels.

In the east, the rapid Russian exploration and colonisation of the huge territories of Siberia was led mostly by Cossacks hunting for valuable furs and ivory. [Russian explorers](/wiki/Russian_explorers) pushed eastward primarily along the [Siberian River Routes](/wiki/Siberian_River_Routes), and by the mid-17th century there were Russian settlements in Eastern Siberia, on the [Chukchi Peninsula](/wiki/Chukchi_Peninsula), along the [Amur River](/wiki/Amur_River), and on the Pacific coast. In 1648, the [Bering Strait](/wiki/Bering_Strait) between Asia and North America was passed for the first time by [Fedot Popov](/wiki/Fedot_Popov) and [Semyon Dezhnyov](/wiki/Semyon_Dezhnyov).

### Imperial Russia[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Peter_der-Grosse_1838.jpg)[Peter the Great](/wiki/Peter_the_Great), the first [Emperor of Russia](/wiki/Emperor_of_Russia) Under [Peter the Great](/wiki/Peter_the_Great), Russia was proclaimed an Empire in 1721 and became recognized as a world power. Ruling from 1682 to 1725, Peter defeated Sweden in the [Great Northern War](/wiki/Great_Northern_War), forcing it to cede West [Karelia](/wiki/Karelia) and [Ingria](/wiki/Ingria) (two regions lost by Russia in the [Time of Troubles](/wiki/Time_of_Troubles)),[[46]](#cite_note-46) as well as [Estland](/wiki/Governorate_of_Estonia) and [Livland](/wiki/Livland), securing Russia's access to the sea and sea trade.[[47]](#cite_note-47) On the [Baltic Sea](/wiki/Baltic_Sea) Peter founded a new capital called [Saint Petersburg](/wiki/Saint_Petersburg), later known as Russia's "Window to Europe". [Peter the Great's reforms](/wiki/Peter_the_Great's_reforms) brought considerable Western European cultural influences to Russia.

The reign of Peter I's daughter [Elizabeth](/wiki/Elizabeth_of_Russia) in 1741–62 saw Russia's participation in the [Seven Years' War](/wiki/Seven_Years'_War) (1756–63). During this conflict Russia annexed [East Prussia](/wiki/East_Prussia) for a while and even took Berlin. However, upon Elisabeth's death, all these conquests were returned to the [Kingdom of Prussia](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Prussia) by pro-Prussian [Peter III of Russia](/wiki/Peter III_of_Russia).

[Catherine II](/wiki/Catherine_the_Great) ("the Great"), who ruled in 1762–96, presided over the Age of [Russian Enlightenment](/wiki/Russian_Enlightenment). She extended Russian political control over the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and incorporated most of its territories into Russia during the [Partitions of Poland](/wiki/Partitions_of_Poland), pushing the Russian frontier westward into Central Europe. In the south, after successful [Russo-Turkish Wars](/wiki/Russo-Turkish_Wars) against [Ottoman Turkey](/wiki/Ottoman_Turkey), Catherine advanced Russia's boundary to the Black Sea, defeating the [Crimean Khanate](/wiki/Crimean_Khanate). As a result of victories over [Qajar Iran](/wiki/Qajar_dynasty) through the [Russo-Persian Wars](/wiki/Russo-Persian_Wars), by the first half of the 19th century Russia also made significant territorial gains in [Transcaucasia](/wiki/Transcaucasia) and the [North Caucasus](/wiki/North_Caucasus), forcing the former to irrevocably cede what is nowadays [Georgia](/wiki/Georgia_(country)), [Dagestan](/wiki/Dagestan), [Azerbaijan](/wiki/Azerbaijan) and [Armenia](/wiki/Armenia) to Russia.[[48]](#cite_note-48)[[49]](#cite_note-49) This continued with [Alexander I's](/wiki/Alexander_I_of_Russia) (1801–25) wresting of Finland from the weakened kingdom of Sweden in 1809 and of [Bessarabia](/wiki/Bessarabia) from the Ottomans in 1812. At the same time, Russians [colonized Alaska](/wiki/Russian_America) and even founded settlements in California, such as [Fort Ross](/wiki/Fort_Ross).

In 1803–1806, the [first Russian circumnavigation](/wiki/First_Russian_circumnavigation) was made, later followed by other notable Russian sea exploration voyages. In 1820 [a Russian expedition](/wiki/Fabian_Gottlieb_von_Bellingshausen) discovered the continent of [Antarctica](/wiki/Antarctica).

In alliances with various European countries, Russia fought against [Napoleon's](/wiki/Napoleon) France. The [French invasion of Russia](/wiki/French_invasion_of_Russia) at the height of Napoleon's power in 1812 failed miserably as the obstinate resistance in combination with the bitterly cold [Russian winter](/wiki/Russian_winter) led to a disastrous defeat of invaders, in which more than 95% of the pan-European [Grande Armée](/wiki/Grande_Armée) perished.[[50]](#cite_note-50) Led by [Mikhail Kutuzov](/wiki/Mikhail_Kutuzov) and [Barclay de Tolly](/wiki/Barclay_de_Tolly), the Russian army ousted Napoleon from the country and drove through Europe in the [war of the Sixth Coalition](/wiki/War_of_the_Sixth_Coalition), finally entering Paris. Alexander I headed Russia's delegation at the [Congress of Vienna](/wiki/Congress_of_Vienna) that defined the map of post-Napoleonic Europe.

The officers of the [Napoleonic Wars](/wiki/Napoleonic_Wars) brought ideas of liberalism back to Russia with them and attempted to curtail the tsar's powers during the abortive [Decembrist revolt](/wiki/Decembrist_revolt) of 1825. At the end of the conservative reign of [Nicolas I](/wiki/Nicolas I) (1825–55), a zenith period of Russia's power and influence in Europe was disrupted by defeat in the [Crimean War](/wiki/Crimean_War). Between 1847 and 1851, about one million people died of Asiatic [cholera](/wiki/Cholera).[[51]](#cite_note-51) Nicholas's successor [Alexander II](/wiki/Alexander_II_of_Russia) (1855–81) enacted significant changes in the country, including the [emancipation reform of 1861](/wiki/Emancipation_reform_of_1861). These *Great Reforms* spurred industrialization and modernized the Russian army, which had successfully liberated Bulgaria from Ottoman rule in the [1877–78 Russo-Turkish War](/wiki/1877–78_Russo-Turkish_War).

[thumb|left|Tsar](/wiki/File:Tsar_nikolai.jpg) [Nicholas II of Russia](/wiki/Nicholas_II_of_Russia). The late 19th century saw the rise of various socialist movements in Russia. Alexander II was killed in 1881 by revolutionary terrorists, and the reign of his son [Alexander III](/wiki/Alexander_III_of_Russia) (1881–94) was less liberal but more peaceful. The last Russian Emperor, [Nicholas II](/wiki/Nicholas II) (1894–1917), was unable to prevent the events of the Russian [Revolution of 1905](/wiki/Revolution_of_1905), triggered by the unsuccessful [Russo-Japanese War](/wiki/Russo-Japanese_War) and the demonstration incident known as [Bloody Sunday](/wiki/Bloody_Sunday_(1905)). The uprising was put down, but the government was forced to concede major reforms, including granting the [freedoms of speech](/wiki/Freedom_of_speech) and [assembly](/wiki/Freedom_of_assembly), the legalization of political parties, and the creation of an elected legislative body, the [State Duma of the Russian Empire](/wiki/State_Duma_of_the_Russian_Empire). The [Stolypin agrarian reform](/wiki/Stolypin_reform) led to a massive peasant migration and settlement into [Siberia](/wiki/Siberia). More than four million settlers arrived in that region between 1906 and 1914.[[52]](#cite_note-52) In 1914, Russia entered [World War I](/wiki/World_War I) in response to Austria-Hungary's declaration of war on Russia's ally Serbia, and fought across multiple fronts while isolated from its [Triple Entente](/wiki/Triple_Entente) allies. In 1916, the [Brusilov Offensive](/wiki/Brusilov_Offensive) of the Russian Army almost completely destroyed the military of [Austria-Hungary](/wiki/Austria-Hungary). However, the already-existing public distrust of the regime was deepened by the rising costs of war, [high casualties](/wiki/World_War_I_casualties), and rumors of corruption and treason. All this formed the climate for the [Russian Revolution](/wiki/Russian_Revolution) of 1917, carried out in two major acts.

### Revolution and Russian Republic[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [right|thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Lenintribune.jpg)[Vladimir Lenin](/wiki/Vladimir_Lenin), the leader of the [October Revolution](/wiki/October_Revolution) The [February Revolution](/wiki/February_Revolution) forced [Nicholas II](/wiki/Nicholas_II_of_Russia) to abdicate; he and his family were imprisoned and [later executed in Yekaterinburg](/wiki/Shooting_of_the_Romanov_family) during the [Russian Civil War](/wiki/Russian_Civil_War). The monarchy was replaced by a shaky coalition of political parties that declared itself the [Provisional Government](/wiki/Russian_Provisional_Government). An alternative socialist establishment existed alongside, the [Petrograd Soviet](/wiki/Petrograd_Soviet), wielding power through the democratically elected councils of workers and peasants, called [*Soviets*](/wiki/Soviet_(council)). The rule of the new authorities only aggravated the crisis in the country, instead of resolving it. Eventually, the [October Revolution](/wiki/October_Revolution), led by [Bolshevik](/wiki/Bolshevik) leader [Vladimir Lenin](/wiki/Vladimir_Lenin), overthrew the Provisional Government and gave full governing power to the Soviets, leading to the creation of the world's first [socialist state](/wiki/Socialist_state).

### Soviet Russia and civil war[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|The symbols of the early Soviet era:](/wiki/File:Russia-2000-stamp-Tatlin_Tower_and_Worker_and_Kolkhoz_Woman_by_Vera_Mukhina.jpg) [Tatlin's Tower](/wiki/Tatlin's_Tower) project and the giant [*Worker and Kolkhoz Woman*](/wiki/Worker_and_Kolkhoz_Woman) sculpture group Following the October Revolution, a [civil war](/wiki/Russian_Civil_War) broke out between the [anti-Communist](/wiki/Anti-Communist) [White movement](/wiki/White_movement) and the new [Soviet](/wiki/Workers'_council) regime with its [Red Army](/wiki/Red_Army). Bolshevist Russia lost its Ukrainian, Polish, Baltic, and Finnish territories by signing the [Treaty of Brest-Litovsk](/wiki/Treaty_of_Brest-Litovsk) that concluded hostilities with the [Central Powers](/wiki/Central_Powers) of World War I. The [Allied powers](/wiki/Allies_of_World_War_I) launched an unsuccessful [military intervention](/wiki/Allied_intervention_in_the_Russian_Civil_War) in support of anti-Communist forces. In the meantime both the Bolsheviks and White movement carried out campaigns of deportations and executions against each other, known respectively as the [Red Terror](/wiki/Red_Terror) and [White Terror](/wiki/White_Terror_(Russia)). By the end of the civil war, Russia's economy and infrastructure were heavily damaged. Millions became [White émigrés](/wiki/White_émigré),[[53]](#cite_note-53) and the [Povolzhye famine](/wiki/Povolzhye_famine) of 1921 claimed up to 5 million victims.[[54]](#cite_note-54)

### Soviet Union[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|The Russian SFSR as a part of the USSR in 1922](/wiki/File:Soviet_Union_-_Russian_SFSR_(1922).svg) [thumb|The Russian SFSR as a part of the USSR in 1936, after intra-Soviet territorial changes](/wiki/File:Soviet_Union_-_Russian_SFSR_(1936).svg) The [Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic](/wiki/Russian_Soviet_Federative_Socialist_Republic) (called *Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic* at the time), together with the [Ukrainian](/wiki/Ukrainian_SSR), [Byelorussian](/wiki/Byelorussian_SSR), and [Transcaucasian Soviet Socialist Republics](/wiki/Transcaucasian_SSR), [formed](/wiki/Treaty_on_the_Creation_of_the_USSR) the [Union of Soviet Socialist Republics](/wiki/Union_of_Soviet_Socialist_Republics) (USSR), or Soviet Union, on 30 December 1922. Out of the 15 [republics that would make up the USSR](/wiki/Republics_of_the_USSR), the largest in size and over half of the total USSR population was the Russian SFSR, which came to dominate the union for its entire 69-year history.

Following [Lenin's](/wiki/Vladimir_Lenin) death in 1924, a [troika](/wiki/List_of_leaders_of_the_Soviet_Union#List_of_troikas) was designated to govern the Soviet Union. However, [Joseph Stalin](/wiki/Joseph_Stalin), an elected [General Secretary of the Communist Party](/wiki/General_Secretary_of_the_Communist_Party_of_the_Soviet_Union), managed to suppress all opposition groups within the party and consolidate power in his hands. [Leon Trotsky](/wiki/Leon_Trotsky), the main proponent of [world revolution](/wiki/World_revolution), was exiled from the Soviet Union in 1929, and Stalin's idea of [Socialism in One Country](/wiki/Socialism_in_One_Country) became the primary line. The continued internal struggle in the Bolshevik party culminated in the [Great Purge](/wiki/Great_Purge), a period of mass repressions in 1937–38, during which hundreds of thousands of people were executed, including [original party members](/wiki/Old_Bolshevik) and military leaders accused of [coup d'état](/wiki/Coup_d'état) plots.[[55]](#cite_note-55)[right|thumb|Millions of Gulag inmates were forced to work on massive government projects such as the construction of the](/wiki/File:Belomorkanal.png) [White Sea–Baltic Canal](/wiki/White_Sea–Baltic_Canal) in 1931–1933 Under Stalin's leadership, the government launched a [planned economy](/wiki/Planned_economy), industrialisation of the largely rural country, and [collectivization](/wiki/Collectivization_in_the_USSR) of its agriculture. During this period of rapid economic and social change, millions of people were sent to [penal labor camps](/wiki/Gulag),[[56]](#cite_note-56) including many political convicts for their opposition to Stalin's rule; millions were [deported and exiled](/wiki/Population_transfer_in_the_Soviet_Union) to remote areas of the Soviet Union.[[56]](#cite_note-56) The transitional disorganisation of the country's agriculture, combined with the harsh state policies and a drought, led to the [Soviet famine of 1932–1933](/wiki/Soviet_famine_of_1932–1933).[[57]](#cite_note-57) The Soviet Union, though with a heavy price, was transformed from a largely agrarian economy to a major industrial powerhouse in a short span of time.

The [Appeasement](/wiki/Appeasement) policy of Great Britain and France towards [Adolf Hitler's](/wiki/Adolf_Hitler) [annexation of Austria](/wiki/Anschluss) and [Czechoslovakia](/wiki/German_occupation_of_Czechoslovakia) did not stem an increase in the power of [Nazi Germany](/wiki/Nazi_Germany) and initiated a threat of war to the Soviet Union.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) Around the same time, the [Third Reich](/wiki/Nazi_Germany) allied with the [Empire of Japan](/wiki/Empire_of_Japan), a rival of the USSR in the Far East and an open enemy of the USSR in the [Soviet–Japanese Border Wars](/wiki/Soviet–Japanese_Border_Wars) in 1938–39. [thumb|The](/wiki/File:RIAN_archive_2153_After_bombing.jpg) [siege of Leningrad](/wiki/Siege_of_Leningrad) during the [World War II](/wiki/World_War_II) was the deadliest siege of a city in history In August 1939, after another failure of attempts to establish an anti-Nazi alliance with Britain and France,[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) the Soviet government decided to improve relations with Germany by concluding the [Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact](/wiki/Molotov-Ribbentrop_Pact), pledging [non-aggression](/wiki/Non-aggression_pact) between the two countries and dividing Eastern Europe into their respective spheres of influence. While Hitler conquered Poland and France and other countries acted on a single front at the start of [World War II](/wiki/World_War II), the USSR was able to build up its military and claim some of the former territories of the Russian Empire, Western Ukraine, [Hertza region](/wiki/Hertza_region) and Northern [Bukovina](/wiki/Bukovina) as a result of the [Soviet invasion of Poland](/wiki/Soviet_invasion_of_Poland), [Winter War](/wiki/Winter_War), [occupation of the Baltic states](/wiki/Soviet_occupation_of_the_Baltic_states_(1940)) and [Soviet occupation of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina](/wiki/Soviet_occupation_of_Bessarabia_and_Northern_Bukovina).

[thumb|left|Soviet](/wiki/File:Charkov-Belgorod.jpg) [T-34/76s](/wiki/T-34/76) and infantry advance past a destroyed [Panzer IV](/wiki/Panzer_IV). [Kharkov, August 1943](/wiki/Operation_Polkovodets_Rumyantsev) On 22 June 1941, Nazi Germany broke the non-aggression treaty and invaded the Soviet Union with the largest and most powerful invasion force in human history,[[58]](#cite_note-58) opening the [largest theater of World War II](/wiki/Eastern_Front_(World_War_II)). Although the [German army](/wiki/Wehrmacht) had considerable early success, their attack was halted in the [Battle of Moscow](/wiki/Battle_of_Moscow). Subsequently, the Germans were dealt major defeats first at the [Battle of Stalingrad](/wiki/Battle_of_Stalingrad) in the winter of 1942–43,[[59]](#cite_note-59) and then in the [Battle of Kursk](/wiki/Battle_of_Kursk) in the summer of 1943. Another German failure was the [Siege of Leningrad](/wiki/Siege_of_Leningrad), in which the city was fully blockaded on land between 1941 and 1944 by German and Finnish forces, and suffered starvation and more than a million deaths, but never surrendered.[[60]](#cite_note-60) Under Stalin's administration and the leadership of such commanders as [Georgy Zhukov](/wiki/Georgy_Zhukov) and [Konstantin Rokossovsky](/wiki/Konstantin_Rokossovsky), Soviet forces took Eastern Europe in 1944–45 and [captured Berlin](/wiki/Battle_of_Berlin) in May 1945. In August 1945 the [Soviet Army](/wiki/Soviet_Army) [ousted the Japanese](/wiki/Soviet-Japanese_War_(1945)) from China's [Manchukuo](/wiki/Manchukuo) and North Korea, contributing to the allied victory over Japan.

The 1941–45 period of World War II is known in Russia as the "[Great Patriotic War](/wiki/Great_Patriotic_War_(term))". The Soviet Union together with the United States, the United Kingdom and China were considered as the [Big Four](/wiki/Big_Four_in_World_War_II) of Allied powers in World War II [[61]](#cite_note-61) and later became the [Four Policemen](/wiki/Four_Policemen) which was the foundation of the [United Nations Security Council](/wiki/United_Nations_Security_Council).[[62]](#cite_note-62) During this war, which included many of the [most lethal battle operations](/wiki/List_of_battles_by_casualties) in human history, Soviet military and civilian deaths were 10.6 million and 15.9 million respectively,[[63]](#cite_note-63) accounting for about a third of all [World War II casualties](/wiki/World_War II_casualties). The full demographic loss to the Soviet peoples was even greater.[[64]](#cite_note-64) The [Soviet economy](/wiki/Soviet_economy) and infrastructure suffered massive devastation which caused the [Soviet famine of 1946–47](/wiki/Soviet_famine_of_1946–47)[[65]](#cite_note-65) but the Soviet Union emerged as an acknowledged military superpower on the continent. [right|thumb|](/wiki/File:Sputnik_asm.jpg)[Sputnik 1](/wiki/Sputnik 1) was the world's first artificial satellite After the war, Eastern and Central Europe including [East Germany](/wiki/East_Germany) and part of [Austria](/wiki/Austria) was occupied by [Red Army](/wiki/Red_Army) according to the [Potsdam Conference](/wiki/Potsdam_Conference). Dependent socialist governments were installed in the [Eastern Bloc](/wiki/Eastern_Bloc) satellite states. Becoming the world's second [nuclear weapons power](/wiki/Russia_and_weapons_of_mass_destruction), the USSR established the [Warsaw Pact](/wiki/Warsaw_Pact) alliance and entered into a struggle for global dominance, known as the [Cold War](/wiki/Cold_War), with the United States and [NATO](/wiki/NATO). The Soviet Union supported revolutionary movements across the world, including the newly formed People's Republic of China, the [Democratic People's Republic of Korea](/wiki/Democratic_People's_Republic_of_Korea) and, later on, the [Republic of Cuba](/wiki/Republic_of_Cuba). Significant amounts of Soviet resources were [allocated in aid](/wiki/International_relations_within_the_Comecon) to the other socialist states.[[66]](#cite_note-66) After Stalin's death and a short period of [collective rule](/wiki/Collective_leadership), the new leader [Nikita Khrushchev](/wiki/Nikita_Khrushchev) denounced the [cult of personality](/wiki/Cult_of_personality) of Stalin and launched the policy of [de-Stalinization](/wiki/De-Stalinization). The penal labor system was reformed and many prisoners were released and rehabilitated (many of them posthumously).[[67]](#cite_note-67) The general easement of repressive policies became known later as the [Khrushchev Thaw](/wiki/Khrushchev_Thaw). At the same time, tensions with the United States heightened when the two rivals clashed over the deployment of the U.S. [Jupiter missiles](/wiki/PGM-19_Jupiter) in Turkey and Soviet [missiles in Cuba](/wiki/Cuban_Missile_Crisis).

In 1957, the [Soviet Union](/wiki/Soviet_Union) launched the world's first artificial [satellite](/wiki/Satellite), [*Sputnik 1*](/wiki/Sputnik 1), thus starting the [Space Age](/wiki/Space_Age). Russia's [cosmonaut](/wiki/Cosmonaut) [Yuri Gagarin](/wiki/Yuri_Gagarin) became the first human to orbit the Earth, aboard the [*Vostok 1*](/wiki/Vostok 1) manned spacecraft on [12 April 1961](/wiki/Cosmonautics_Day).

Following the ousting of Khrushchev in 1964, another period of [collective rule](/wiki/Collectivity_of_leadership) ensued, until [Leonid Brezhnev](/wiki/Leonid_Brezhnev) became the leader. The era of the 1970s and the early 1980s was designated later as the [Era of Stagnation](/wiki/Era_of_Stagnation), a period when economic growth slowed and social policies became static. The 1965 [Kosygin reform](/wiki/Kosygin_reform) aimed for partial [decentralization](/wiki/Decentralization) of the [Soviet economy](/wiki/Soviet_economy) and shifted the emphasis from [heavy industry](/wiki/Heavy_industry) and weapons to [light industry](/wiki/Light_industry) and [consumer goods](/wiki/Consumer_goods) but was stifled by the conservative Communist leadership. [thumb|left|upright|Soviet General Secretary](/wiki/File:Gorbachev_and_Reagan_1988-5.jpg) [Mikhail Gorbachev](/wiki/Mikhail_Gorbachev) and U.S. President [Ronald Reagan](/wiki/Ronald_Reagan) in Red Square during the [Moscow Summit](/wiki/Moscow_Summit_(1988)), 31 May 1988 In 1979, after a Communist-led revolution in Afghanistan, [Soviet forces entered](/wiki/Soviet_invasion_of_Afghanistan) that country at the request of the new regime. The occupation drained economic resources and dragged on without achieving meaningful political results. Ultimately, the Soviet Army was withdrawn from Afghanistan in 1989 due to international opposition, persistent anti-Soviet guerilla warfare, and a lack of support by Soviet citizens.

From 1985 onwards, the last Soviet leader [Mikhail Gorbachev](/wiki/Mikhail_Gorbachev), who sought to enact liberal reforms in the Soviet system, introduced the policies of [*glasnost*](/wiki/Glasnost) (openness) and [*perestroika*](/wiki/Perestroika) (restructuring) in an attempt to end the [period of economic stagnation](/wiki/Era_of_Stagnation) and to democratise the government. This, however, led to the rise of strong nationalist and separatist movements. Prior to 1991, the Soviet economy was the second largest in the world,[[68]](#cite_note-68) but during its last years it was afflicted by shortages of goods in grocery stores, huge budget deficits, and explosive growth in the money supply leading to inflation.[[69]](#cite_note-69)[thumb|Incumbent Russian President](/wiki/File:Boris_Yeltsin_19_August_1991-1.jpg) [Boris Yeltsin](/wiki/Boris_Yeltsin) stands on a tank during the [August Coup of 1991](/wiki/1991_Soviet_coup_d'état_attempt), two months after the [presidential election](/wiki/Russian_presidential_election,_1991) By 1991, economic and political turmoil began to boil over, as the Baltic republics chose to secede from the Soviet Union. On 17 March, a [referendum](/wiki/Soviet_Union_referendum,_1991) was held, in which the vast majority of participating citizens voted in favour of changing the Soviet Union into a [renewed federation](/wiki/Union_of_Sovereign_States). In August 1991, [a coup d'état attempt](/wiki/1991_Soviet_coup_d'état_attempt) by members of Gorbachev's government, directed against Gorbachev and aimed at preserving the Soviet Union, instead led to the end of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. On 25 December 1991, the USSR [was dissolved](/wiki/Dissolution_of_the_Soviet_Union) into 15 [post-Soviet states](/wiki/Post-Soviet_states).

### Russian Federation[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Московский_международный_деловой_центр_«Москва-Сити»_14.07.2014.jpg)[Moscow International Business Center](/wiki/Moscow_International_Business_Center) In June 1991, [Boris Yeltsin](/wiki/Boris_Yeltsin) became the first directly elected President in Russian history when he was elected President of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, which became the independent Russian Federation in December of that year. During and after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, wide-ranging reforms including [privatization](/wiki/Privatization_in_Russia) and [market and trade liberalization](/wiki/Free_trade) were undertaken,<ref name=OECD/> including radical changes along the lines of "[shock therapy](/wiki/Shock_therapy_(economics))" as recommended by the United States and the [International Monetary Fund](/wiki/International_Monetary_Fund).[[70]](#cite_note-70) All this resulted in a major [economic crisis](/wiki/Economic_crisis), characterized by a 50% decline in both GDP and industrial output between 1990 and 1995.<ref name=OECD/>[[71]](#cite_note-71) The privatization largely shifted control of enterprises from state agencies to individuals with inside connections in the government. Many of the newly rich moved billions in cash and assets outside of the country in an enormous [capital flight](/wiki/Capital_flight).[[72]](#cite_note-72) The depression of the economy led to the collapse of social services; the [birth rate](/wiki/Birth_rate) plummeted while the [death rate](/wiki/Death_rate) skyrocketed.[[73]](#cite_note-73) Millions plunged into poverty, from a level of 1.5% in the late Soviet era to 39–49% by mid-1993.<ref name=worldbank>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref> The 1990s saw extreme corruption and lawlessness, the rise of criminal gangs and violent crime.[[74]](#cite_note-74) The 1990s were plagued by armed conflicts in the [North Caucasus](/wiki/North_Caucasus), both local ethnic skirmishes and separatist [Islamist](/wiki/Islamist) insurrections. From the time [Chechen](/wiki/Chechnya) separatists declared independence in the early 1990s, an [intermittent guerrilla war](/wiki/First_Chechen_War) has been fought between the rebel groups and the Russian military. [Terrorist attacks against civilians](/wiki/Terrorism_in_Russia) carried out by separatists, most notably the [Moscow theater hostage crisis](/wiki/Moscow_theater_hostage_crisis) and [Beslan school siege](/wiki/Beslan_school_siege), caused hundreds of deaths and drew worldwide attention.

Russia took up the responsibility for settling the USSR's external debts, even though its population made up just half of the population of the USSR at the time of its dissolution.[[75]](#cite_note-75) High budget deficits caused the [1998 Russian financial crisis](/wiki/1998_Russian_financial_crisis)[[76]](#cite_note-76) and resulted in a further GDP decline.<ref name=OECD>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> [thumb|](/wiki/File:Vladimir_Putin_with_Boris_Yeltsin-5.jpg)[Boris Yeltsin](/wiki/Boris_Yeltsin) with [Vladimir Putin](/wiki/Vladimir_Putin) and [Patriarch Alexy II](/wiki/Patriarch_Alexy_II_of_Moscow) On 31 December 1999, President Yeltsin unexpectedly resigned, handing the post to the recently appointed Prime Minister, [Vladimir Putin](/wiki/Vladimir_Putin), who then won [the 2000 presidential election](/wiki/Russian_presidential_election,_2000). Putin [suppressed the Chechen insurgency](/wiki/Second_Chechen_War) although sporadic violence still occurs throughout the Northern Caucasus. [High oil prices](/wiki/World_oil_market_chronology_from_2003) and the initially weak currency followed by increasing domestic demand, consumption, and investments has helped the economy grow for nine straight years, improving the standard of living and increasing Russia's influence on the world stage.<ref name=cia/> While many reforms made during the Putin presidency have been generally criticized by Western nations as undemocratic,[[77]](#cite_note-77) Putin's leadership over the return of order, stability, and progress has won him widespread admiration in Russia.[[78]](#cite_note-78) On 2 March 2008, [Dmitry Medvedev](/wiki/Dmitry_Medvedev) was elected President of Russia while Putin became [Prime Minister](/wiki/Prime_Minister_of_Russia). Putin returned to the presidency following the [2012 presidential elections](/wiki/Russian_presidential_election,_2012), and Medvedev was appointed Prime Minister.

In 2014, after President [Viktor Yanukovych](/wiki/Viktor_Yanukovych) of [Ukraine](/wiki/Ukraine) fled as a result of a [revolution](/wiki/2014_Ukrainian_revolution), Putin requested and received authorization from the Russian Parliament to [deploy Russian troops to Ukraine](/wiki/2014_Russian_military_intervention_in_Ukraine).[[79]](#cite_note-79)[[80]](#cite_note-80)[[81]](#cite_note-81)[[82]](#cite_note-82)[[83]](#cite_note-83) Following a [Crimean referendum](/wiki/Crimean_status_referendum,_2014) in which separation was favored by a large majority of voters, but not accepted internationally,[[84]](#cite_note-84)[[85]](#cite_note-85)[[86]](#cite_note-86)[[87]](#cite_note-87)[[88]](#cite_note-88)[[89]](#cite_note-89) the Russian leadership announced the accession of Crimea into the Russian Federation. On 27 March the United Nations General Assembly voted in favor of a non-binding resolution opposing the [Russian annexation of Crimea](/wiki/Annexation_of_Crimea_by_the_Russian_Federation) by a vote of 100 in favour, 11 against and 58 abstentions.[[90]](#cite_note-90) In September 2015, Russia started [military intervention](/wiki/Russian_military_intervention_in_the_Syrian_Civil_War) in the Syrian Civil War, consisting of air strikes against militant groups of the [Islamic State](/wiki/Islamic_State_of_Iraq_and_the_Levant), [al-Nusra Front (al-Qaeda in the Levant)](/wiki/Al-Nusra_Front), and the [Army of Conquest](/wiki/Army_of_Conquest).

## Politics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)

### Governance[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

[thumb|right|](/wiki/File:Moscow_Kremlin_from_Kamenny_bridge.jpg)[Moscow Kremlin](/wiki/Moscow_Kremlin), the working residence of the [President of Russia](/wiki/President_of_Russia)

According to the [Constitution of Russia](/wiki/Constitution_of_Russia), the country is a federation and [semi-presidential](/wiki/Semi-presidential) republic, wherein the President is the [head of state](/wiki/Head_of_state)[[91]](#cite_note-91) and the [Prime Minister](/wiki/Prime_Minister_of_Russia) is the [head of government](/wiki/Head_of_government). The Russian Federation is fundamentally structured as a [multi-party](/wiki/Multi-party_system) [representative democracy](/wiki/Representative_democracy), with the federal government composed of three branches:

* Legislative: The [bicameral](/wiki/Bicameral) [Federal Assembly of Russia](/wiki/Federal_Assembly_of_Russia), made up of the 450-member [State Duma](/wiki/State_Duma) and the 166-member [Federation Council](/wiki/Federation_Council), adopts [federal law](/wiki/Federal_law), [declares war](/wiki/Declaration_of_war), approves treaties, has the [power of the purse](/wiki/Power_of_the_purse) and the power of [impeachment](/wiki/Impeachment) of the President.
* Executive: The [President](/wiki/President_of_Russia) is the [Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces](/wiki/Supreme_Commander-in-Chief_of_the_Armed_Forces_of_the_Russian_Federation), can veto [legislative bills](/wiki/Legislative_bill) before they become law, and appoints the [Government of Russia](/wiki/Government_of_Russia) (Cabinet) and other officers, who administer and enforce federal laws and policies.
* [Judiciary](/wiki/Judiciary_of_Russia): The [Constitutional Court](/wiki/Constitutional_Court_of_Russia), [Supreme Court](/wiki/Supreme_Court_of_Russia) and lower federal courts, whose judges are appointed by the Federation Council on the recommendation of the President, interpret laws and can overturn laws they deem [unconstitutional](/wiki/Unconstitutional).

The president is elected by popular vote for a six-year term (eligible for a second term, but not for a third consecutive term).[[92]](#cite_note-92) Ministries of the government are composed of the Premier and his deputies, ministers, and selected other individuals; all are appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Prime Minister (whereas the appointment of the latter requires the consent of the State Duma). Leading political parties in Russia include [United Russia](/wiki/United_Russia), the [Communist Party](/wiki/Communist_Party_of_the_Russian_Federation), the [Liberal Democratic Party](/wiki/Political_party_LDPR), and [A Just Russia](/wiki/A_Just_Russia). In 2013, Russia was ranked as 122nd of 167 countries in the [Democracy Index](/wiki/Democracy_Index), compiled by [The Economist](/wiki/The_Economist) Intelligence Unit,[[93]](#cite_note-93) while the [World Justice Project](/wiki/World_Justice_Project) currently ranks Russia 80th of 99 countries surveyed in terms of rule of law.[[94]](#cite_note-94)

### Foreign relations[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|As a](/wiki/File:Continental_Orgs_Map.png) [transcontinental country](/wiki/Transcontinental_country), Russia is a member of both the [Council of Europe](/wiki/Council_of_Europe) (COE) and the [Asia Cooperation Dialogue](/wiki/Asia_Cooperation_Dialogue). [thumb|The Russian Federation became the 39th member state of the](/wiki/File:Council_of_Europe_(blue).svg) [Council of Europe](/wiki/Council_of_Europe) on 28 February 1996 [thumb|Member states, observers and partners of the](/wiki/File:SCO_(orthographic_projection).svg) [Shanghai Cooperation Organisation](/wiki/Shanghai_Cooperation_Organisation) (SCO)

The Russian Federation is recognized in international law as a [successor state](/wiki/Successor_state) of the former [Soviet Union](/wiki/Soviet_Union).<ref name=uk>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> Russia continues to implement the international commitments of the USSR, and has assumed the USSR's permanent seat in the [UN Security Council](/wiki/United_Nations_Security_Council), membership in other international organisations, the rights and obligations under international treaties, and property and debts. Russia has a multifaceted foreign policy. [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), it maintains diplomatic relations with 191 countries and has [144 embassies](/wiki/Russian_embassies). The foreign policy is determined by the President and implemented by the [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia](/wiki/Ministry_of_Foreign_Affairs_of_Russia).[[95]](#cite_note-95) As the successor to a former superpower, Russia's geopolitical status has often been debated, particularly in relation to [unipolar and multipolar](/wiki/Polarity_in_international_relations) views on the global political system. While Russia is commonly accepted to be a [great power](/wiki/Great_power), in recent years it has been characterized by a number of world leaders,[[96]](#cite_note-96)[[97]](#cite_note-97) scholars,[[98]](#cite_note-98) commentators and politicians[[99]](#cite_note-99) as a currently reinstating or [potential superpower](/wiki/Potential_superpower).[[100]](#cite_note-100)[[101]](#cite_note-101)[[102]](#cite_note-102) As one of five permanent members of the UN Security Council, Russia plays a major role in maintaining international peace and security. The country participates in the [Quartet on the Middle East](/wiki/Quartet_on_the_Middle_East) and the [Six-party talks](/wiki/Six-party_talks) with North Korea. Russia is a member of the [G8](/wiki/G8) industrialized nations, the [Council of Europe](/wiki/Council_of_Europe), [OSCE](/wiki/Organization_for_Security_and_Co-operation_in_Europe), and [APEC](/wiki/Asia-Pacific_Economic_Cooperation). Russia usually takes a leading role in regional organisations such as the [CIS](/wiki/Commonwealth_of_Independent_States), [EurAsEC](/wiki/Eurasian_Economic_Community), [CSTO](/wiki/Collective_Security_Treaty_Organisation), and the [SCO](/wiki/Shanghai_Cooperation_Organisation).[[103]](#cite_note-103) Russia became the 39th member state of the Council of Europe in 1996.[[104]](#cite_note-104) In 1998, Russia ratified the [European Convention on Human Rights](/wiki/European_Convention_on_Human_Rights). The legal basis for EU relations with Russia is the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, which came into force in 1997. The Agreement recalls the parties' shared respect for democracy and human rights, political and economic freedom and commitment to international peace and security.[[105]](#cite_note-105) In May 2003, the EU and Russia agreed to reinforce their cooperation on the basis of common values and shared interests.[[106]](#cite_note-106) Former President Vladimir Putin had advocated a strategic partnership with close integration in various dimensions including establishment of [EU-Russia Common Spaces](/wiki/EU-Russia_Common_Spaces).[[107]](#cite_note-107) Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia has developed a friendlier relationship with the [United States](/wiki/Russia-United_States_relations) and [NATO](/wiki/NATO-Russia_relations). The [NATO-Russia Council](/wiki/NATO-Russia_Council) was established in 2002 to allow the United States, Russia and the 27 allies in NATO to work together as equal partners to pursue opportunities for joint collaboration.[[108]](#cite_note-108) [thumb|left|Leaders of the](/wiki/File:BRIC_leaders_in_2008.jpg) [BRIC](/wiki/BRIC) nations in 2008: (l-r) [Manmohan Singh](/wiki/Manmohan_Singh) of India, [Dmitry Medvedev](/wiki/Dmitry_Medvedev) of Russia, [Hu Jintao](/wiki/Hu_Jintao) of China and [Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva](/wiki/Luiz_Inácio_Lula_da_Silva) of Brazil Russia maintains strong and positive relations with other [BRIC countries](/wiki/BRIC). [India](/wiki/India) is the largest customer of Russian military equipment and the two countries share [extensive defense and strategic relations](/wiki/India–Russia_relations).[[109]](#cite_note-109) In recent years, the country has strengthened bilateral ties especially with the [People's Republic of China](/wiki/China) by signing the [Treaty of Friendship](/wiki/2001_Sino-Russian_Treaty_of_Friendship) as well as building the [Trans-Siberian oil pipeline](/wiki/Trans-Siberian_oil_pipeline) and [gas pipeline from Siberia to China](/wiki/Yakutia–Khabarovsk–Vladivostok_pipeline).[[110]](#cite_note-110)[[111]](#cite_note-111) An important aspect of Russia's relations with the West is the criticism of Russia's political system and [human rights](/wiki/Human_rights_in_Russia) management (including [LGBT rights](/wiki/LGBT_rights_in_Russia), [media freedom](/wiki/Media_freedom_in_Russia), and reports about [killed journalists](/wiki/List_of_journalists_killed_in_Russia)) by Western governments, the mass media and the leading democracy and human rights [watchdogs](/wiki/Wikt:watchdog). In particular, such organisations as the [Amnesty International](/wiki/Amnesty_International) and [Human Rights Watch](/wiki/Human_Rights_Watch) consider Russia to have not enough democratic attributes and to allow few political rights and civil liberties to its citizens.[[112]](#cite_note-112)[[113]](#cite_note-113) [Freedom House](/wiki/Freedom_House), an international organisation funded by the United States, ranks Russia as "not free", citing "carefully engineered elections" and "absence" of debate.[[114]](#cite_note-114) Russian authorities dismiss these claims and especially criticise Freedom House. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has called the 2006 [*Freedom in the World*](/wiki/Freedom_in_the_World) report "prefabricated", stating that the human rights issues have been turned into a political weapon in particular by the United States. The ministry also claims that such organisations as Freedom House and Human Rights Watch use the same scheme of voluntary extrapolation of *"isolated facts that of course can be found in any country"* into *dominant tendencies*.[[115]](#cite_note-115)

### Military[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Army-2015_2.png)[Military-patriotic recreation park of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation](/wiki/Patriot_Park) The Russian military is divided into the [Ground Forces](/wiki/Russian_Ground_Forces), [Navy](/wiki/Russian_Navy), and [Air Force](/wiki/Russian_Air_Force). There are also three independent arms of service: [Strategic Missile Troops](/wiki/Strategic_Missile_Troops), [Aerospace Defence Forces](/wiki/Russian_Aerospace_Defence_Forces), and the [Airborne Troops](/wiki/Russian_Airborne_Troops). In 2006, the military had 1.037 million personnel on active duty.<ref name=iiss>[Template:Cite journal](/wiki/Template:Cite_journal)</ref> It is mandatory for all male citizens aged 18–27 to be [drafted](/wiki/Conscription) for a year of service in Armed Forces.<ref name=cia/>

Russia has [the largest stockpile of nuclear weapons](/wiki/Russia_and_weapons_of_mass_destruction) in the world. It has the second largest fleet of [ballistic missile submarines](/wiki/Ballistic_missile_submarine) and is the only country apart from the United States with a modern [strategic bomber](/wiki/Strategic_bomber) force.<ref name=fas>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>[[116]](#cite_note-116) Russia's [tank](/wiki/Tank) force is the largest in the world, its surface navy and air force are among the largest ones.

The country has a large and fully indigenous [arms industry](/wiki/Defense_industry_of_Russia), producing most of its own military equipment with only few types of weapons imported. Russia is one of the world's top supplier of arms, a spot it has held since 2001, accounting for around 30% of worldwide weapons sales[[117]](#cite_note-117) and exporting weapons to about 80 countries.[[118]](#cite_note-118) The [Stockholm International Peace Research Institute](/wiki/Stockholm_International_Peace_Research_Institute), SIPRI, found that Russia was the second biggest exporter of arms in 2010-14, increasing their exports by 37 per cent from the period 2005-2009. In 2010-14, Russia delivered weapons to 56 states and to rebel forces in eastern Ukraine.[[17]](#cite_note-17) The Russian government's published 2014 military budget is about 2.49 trillion [rubles](/wiki/Rubles) (approximately US$69.3 billion), the [third largest](/wiki/List_of_countries_by_military_expenditures) in the world behind the US and China. The official budget is set to rise to 3.03 trillion rubles (approximately US$83.7 billion) in 2015, and 3.36 trillion rubles (approximately US$93.9 billion) in 2016.[[119]](#cite_note-119) However, unofficial estimates put the budget significantly higher, for example the [Stockholm International Peace Research Institute](/wiki/Stockholm_International_Peace_Research_Institute) (SIPRI) 2013 Military Expenditure Database estimated Russia's military expenditure in 2012 at US$90.749 billion.[[120]](#cite_note-120) This estimate is an increase of more than US$18 billion on SIPRI's estimate of the Russian military budget for 2011 (US$71.9 billion).[[121]](#cite_note-121) [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), Russia's military budget is higher than any other European nation.

According to 2012 [Global Peace Index](/wiki/Global_Peace_Index), Russia is the sixth least peaceful out of 162 countries in the world, principally because of its defense industry. Russia has historically ranked low on the index since its inception in 2007.[[122]](#cite_note-122)

### Political divisions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [center|600px|Map of the federal subjects of the Russian Federation](/wiki/File:Russian_Regions-EN.svg) [thumb|Russian President](/wiki/File:Vladimir_Putin_8_November_2000-1.jpg) [Vladimir Putin](/wiki/Vladimir_Putin) and [Akhmad Kadyrov](/wiki/Akhmad_Kadyrov), former rebel and [head of the Chechen Republic](/wiki/Head_of_the_Chechen_Republic), 2000 [thumb|Russian President](/wiki/File:RIAN_archive_172139_Dmitry_Medvedev_visits_Kazan.jpg) [Dmitry Medvedev](/wiki/Dmitry_Medvedev) and President of Tatarstan [Mintimer Shaimiyev](/wiki/Mintimer_Shaimiyev) in [Kazan](/wiki/Kazan), the capital of [Tatarstan](/wiki/Tatarstan), 2011

Federal subjects

According to the [Constitution](/wiki/Constitution_of_Russia), the country comprises eighty-five [federal subjects](/wiki/Federal_subjects_of_Russia),[[123]](#cite_note-123) including the [Republic of Crimea](/wiki/Republic_of_Crimea) and the [federal city](/wiki/Federal_cities_of_Russia) of [Sevastopol](/wiki/Sevastopol), whose recent establishment is internationally disputed and criticized as illegal [annexation](/wiki/Annexation_of_Crimea_by_the_Russian_Federation).[[124]](#cite_note-124) In 1993, when the Constitution was adopted, there were eighty-nine federal subjects listed, but later some of them were merged. These subjects have equal representation—two delegates each—in the [Federation Council](/wiki/Federation_Council_(Russia)).[[125]](#cite_note-125) However, they differ in the degree of autonomy they enjoy.

* 46 [oblasts](/wiki/Oblasts_of_Russia) (provinces): most common type of federal subjects, with locally elected governor and legislature.[[126]](#cite_note-126)\* 22 [republics](/wiki/Republics_of_Russia): nominally autonomous; each is tasked with drafting its own constitution, direct-elected[[126]](#cite_note-126) head of republic[[127]](#cite_note-127) or a similar post, and parliament. Republics are allowed to establish their own official language alongside Russian but are represented by the federal government in international affairs. Republics are meant to be home to specific ethnic minorities.
* 9 [krais](/wiki/Krais_of_Russia) (territories): essentially the same as oblasts. The "territory" designation is historic, originally given to frontier regions and later also to the administrative divisions that comprised autonomous okrugs or autonomous oblasts.
* 4 [autonomous okrugs](/wiki/Autonomous_okrugs_of_Russia) (autonomous districts): originally autonomous entities within oblasts and krais created for ethnic minorities, their status was elevated to that of federal subjects in the 1990s. With the exception of [Chukotka Autonomous Okrug](/wiki/Chukotka_Autonomous_Okrug), all autonomous okrugs are still administratively subordinated to a krai or an oblast of which they are a part.
* 1 [autonomous oblast](/wiki/Autonomous_oblasts_of_Russia) (the [Jewish Autonomous Oblast](/wiki/Jewish_Autonomous_Oblast)): historically, autonomous oblasts were administrative units subordinated to krais. In 1990, all of them except for the Jewish AO were elevated in status to that of a republic.
* 3 [federal cities](/wiki/Federal_cities) (Moscow, [Saint Petersburg](/wiki/Saint_Petersburg), and [Sevastopol](/wiki/Sevastopol)): major cities that function as separate regions.

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further)

Federal districts

Federal subjects are grouped into nine [federal districts](/wiki/Federal_districts_of_Russia), each administered by an envoy appointed by the President of Russia.[[128]](#cite_note-128) Unlike the federal subjects, the federal districts are not a subnational level of government, but are a level of administration of the federal government. Federal districts' envoys serve as liaisons between the federal subjects and the federal government and are primarily responsible for overseeing the compliance of the federal subjects with the federal laws.

## Geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|The topography of Russia](/wiki/File:Russland_Relief.png) [thumb|Russia map of Köppen climate classification.](/wiki/File:Russia_map_of_Köppen_climate_classification.svg) Russia is the [largest country in the world](/wiki/Largest_country_in_the_world); its total area is [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).[[2]](#cite_note-2)[[129]](#cite_note-129) There are 23 UNESCO [World Heritage Sites in Russia](/wiki/World_Heritage_Sites_in_Russia), 40 UNESCO [biosphere reserves](/wiki/Biosphere_reserve),[[130]](#cite_note-130) 41 [national parks](/wiki/National_parks_of_Russia) and 101 [nature reserves](/wiki/Zapovednik). It lies between latitudes [41°](/wiki/41st_parallel_north) and [82° N](/wiki/82nd_parallel_north), and longitudes [19° E](/wiki/19th_meridian_east) and [169° W](/wiki/169th_meridian_west).

Russia's territorial expansion was achieved largely in the late 16th century under the Cossack [Yermak Timofeyevich](/wiki/Yermak_Timofeyevich) during the reign of [Ivan the Terrible](/wiki/Ivan_the_Terrible), at a time when competing city-states in the western regions of Russia had banded together to form one country. Yermak mustered an army and pushed eastward where he conquered nearly all the lands once belonging to the [Mongols](/wiki/Mongol_Empire), defeating their ruler, [Khan Kuchum](/wiki/Kuchum).[[131]](#cite_note-131) Russia has a wide natural resource base, including major deposits of timber, petroleum, natural gas, coal, ores and other mineral resources.

### Topography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

The two most widely separated points in Russia are about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) apart along a [geodesic](/wiki/Geodesic) line. These points are: a [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) long [Vistula Spit](/wiki/Vistula_Spit) the boundary with Poland separating the [Gdańsk Bay](/wiki/Gdańsk_Bay) from the [Vistula Lagoon](/wiki/Vistula_Lagoon) and the most southeastern point of the [Kuril Islands](/wiki/Kuril_Islands). The points which are farthest separated in [longitude](/wiki/Longitude) are [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) apart along a geodesic line. These points are: in the west, the same spit on the boundary with Poland, and in the east, the [Big Diomede Island](/wiki/Big_Diomede_Island). The Russian Federation spans nine [time zones](/wiki/Time_zone).

[thumb|right|](/wiki/File:Эльбрус_с_перевала_Гумбаши.JPG)[Mount Elbrus](/wiki/Mount_Elbrus), the highest point of the [Caucasus](/wiki/Caucasus), Russia and Europe Most of Russia consists of vast stretches of plains that are predominantly [steppe](/wiki/Steppe) to the south and heavily forested to the north, with [tundra](/wiki/Tundra) along the northern coast. Russia possesses 10% of the world's [arable land](/wiki/Arable_land).[[132]](#cite_note-132) Mountain ranges are found along the southern borders, such as the [Caucasus](/wiki/Caucasus_Mountains) (containing [Mount Elbrus](/wiki/Mount_Elbrus), which at [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) is the highest point in both Russia and Europe) and the [Altai](/wiki/Altai_Mountains) (containing [Mount Belukha](/wiki/Mount_Belukha), which at the [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) is the highest point of Siberia outside of the [Russian Far East](/wiki/Russian_Far_East)); and in the eastern parts, such as the [Verkhoyansk Range](/wiki/Verkhoyansk_Range) or the volcanoes of [Kamchatka Peninsula](/wiki/Kamchatka_Peninsula) (containing [Klyuchevskaya Sopka](/wiki/Klyuchevskaya_Sopka), which at the [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) is the highest [active volcano](/wiki/Active_volcano) in Eurasia as well as the highest point of [Asian Russia](/wiki/Asian_Russia)). The [Ural Mountains](/wiki/Ural_Mountains), rich in mineral resources, form a north-south range that divides Europe and Asia.

Russia has an extensive coastline of over [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) along the Arctic and Pacific Oceans, as well as along the [Baltic Sea](/wiki/Baltic_Sea), [Sea of Azov](/wiki/Sea_of_Azov), [Black Sea](/wiki/Black_Sea) and [Caspian Sea](/wiki/Caspian_Sea).<ref name=cia>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> The [Barents Sea](/wiki/Barents_Sea), [White Sea](/wiki/White_Sea), [Kara Sea](/wiki/Kara_Sea), [Laptev Sea](/wiki/Laptev_Sea), [East Siberian Sea](/wiki/East_Siberian_Sea), [Chukchi Sea](/wiki/Chukchi_Sea), [Bering Sea](/wiki/Bering_Sea), [Sea of Okhotsk](/wiki/Sea_of_Okhotsk), and the [Sea of Japan](/wiki/Sea_of_Japan) are linked to Russia via the Arctic and Pacific. Russia's major islands and archipelagos include [Novaya Zemlya](/wiki/Novaya_Zemlya), the [Franz Josef Land](/wiki/Franz_Josef_Land), the [Severnaya Zemlya](/wiki/Severnaya_Zemlya), the [New Siberian Islands](/wiki/New_Siberian_Islands), [Wrangel Island](/wiki/Wrangel_Island), the [Kuril Islands](/wiki/Kuril_Islands), and [Sakhalin](/wiki/Sakhalin). The [Diomede Islands](/wiki/Diomede_Islands) (one controlled by Russia, the other by the U.S.) are just [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) apart, and [Kunashir Island](/wiki/Kunashir_Island) is about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) from [Hokkaido](/wiki/Hokkaido), Japan.

[thumb|right|](/wiki/File:Новодевичье_20050020.jpg)[Volga River](/wiki/Volga_River) in [Samara Oblast](/wiki/Samara_Oblast) Russia has thousands of [rivers](/wiki/Rivers_in_Russia) and inland bodies of water, providing it with one of the world's largest surface water resources. Its lakes contain approximately one-quarter of the world's liquid [fresh water](/wiki/Fresh_water).<ref name=loc>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> The largest and most prominent of Russia's bodies of fresh water is [Lake Baikal](/wiki/Lake_Baikal), the world's deepest, purest, oldest and most capacious fresh water lake.<ref name=baikal>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> Baikal alone contains over one-fifth of the world's fresh surface water.<ref name=loc/> Other major lakes include [Ladoga](/wiki/Lake_Ladoga) and [Onega](/wiki/Lake_Onega), two of the [largest lakes in Europe](/wiki/Largest_lakes_in_Europe). Russia is second only to Brazil in volume of the [total renewable water resources](/wiki/Total_renewable_water_resources). Of the country's 100,000 rivers,[[133]](#cite_note-133) the [Volga](/wiki/Volga) is the most famous, not only because it is the [longest river in Europe](/wiki/Longest_river_in_Europe), but also because of its major role in Russian history.<ref name=cia/> The Siberian rivers [Ob](/wiki/Ob_River), [Yenisey](/wiki/Yenisey), [Lena](/wiki/Lena_River) and [Amur](/wiki/Amur_River) are among the [longest rivers in the world](/wiki/Longest_rivers_in_the_world).

### Climate[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Саблинский_хребет.jpg)[Taiga](/wiki/Taiga) forest, [Yugyd Va National Park](/wiki/Yugyd_Va_National_Park) in the [Komi Republic](/wiki/Komi_Republic) [thumb|right|](/wiki/File:Адлер_(Сочи),_Черноморское_побережье,_РФ.JPG)[Sochi](/wiki/Sochi), [Black Sea](/wiki/Black_Sea) coast The enormous size of Russia and the remoteness of many areas from the sea result in the dominance of the [humid continental climate](/wiki/Humid_continental_climate), which is prevalent in all parts of the country except for the tundra and the extreme southeast. Mountains in the south obstruct the flow of warm air masses from the Indian Ocean, while the plain of the west and north makes the country open to Arctic and Atlantic influences.<ref name=congress>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

Most of Northern European Russia and Siberia has a [subarctic climate](/wiki/Subarctic_climate), with extremely severe winters in the inner regions of Northeast Siberia (mostly the [Sakha Republic](/wiki/Sakha_Republic), where the Northern [Pole of Cold](/wiki/Pole_of_Cold) is located with the record low temperature of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)), and more moderate winters elsewhere. Both the strip of land along the shore of the Arctic Ocean and the [Russian Arctic islands](/wiki/Russian_Arctic_islands) have a [polar climate](/wiki/Polar_climate).

The coastal part of [Krasnodar Krai](/wiki/Krasnodar_Krai) on the Black Sea, most notably in [Sochi](/wiki/Sochi), possesses a [humid subtropical climate](/wiki/Humid_subtropical_climate) with mild and wet winters. In many regions of East Siberia and the Far East, winter is dry compared to summer; other parts of the country experience more even precipitation across seasons. Winter precipitation in most parts of the country usually falls as snow. The region along the Lower Volga and Caspian Sea coast, as well as some areas of southernmost Siberia, possesses a [semi-arid climate](/wiki/Semi-arid_climate). [Template:Weather box](/wiki/Template:Weather_box)

Throughout much of the territory there are only two distinct seasons—winter and summer—as spring and autumn are usually brief periods of change between extremely low and extremely high temperatures.<ref name=congress/> The coldest month is January (February on the coastline); the warmest is usually July. Great ranges of temperature are typical. In winter, temperatures get colder both from south to north and from west to east. Summers can be quite hot, even in Siberia.[[134]](#cite_note-134) The continental interiors are the driest areas.

### Biodiversity[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|upright|left|The](/wiki/File:Medved_mzoo.jpg) [brown bear](/wiki/Brown_bear) is a [popular symbol of Russia](/wiki/Russian_Bear), particularly in the West.

From north to south the [East European Plain](/wiki/East_European_Plain), also known as Russian Plain, is clad sequentially in Arctic [tundra](/wiki/Tundra), coniferous forest ([taiga](/wiki/Taiga)), [mixed and broad-leaf forests](/wiki/Mixed_and_broad-leaf_forests), grassland ([steppe](/wiki/Steppe)), and semi-desert (fringing the Caspian Sea), as the changes in vegetation reflect the changes in climate. Siberia supports a similar sequence but is largely taiga. Russia has the world's largest [forest reserves](/wiki/Forest_reserves),[[135]](#cite_note-135) known as "the lungs of Europe",[[136]](#cite_note-136) second only to the [Amazon Rainforest](/wiki/Amazon_Rainforest) in the amount of [carbon dioxide](/wiki/Carbon_dioxide) it absorbs.

There are 266 mammal species and 780 bird species in Russia. A total of 415 animal species have been included in the [Red Data Book of the Russian Federation](/wiki/Red_Data_Book_of_the_Russian_Federation) as of 1997 and are now protected.[[137]](#cite_note-137)

## Economy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|right|World Trade Center in Moscow](/wiki/File:WTC-Moscow.jpg) Russia has a [developed, high-income](/wiki/World_Bank_high-income_economy) [market economy](/wiki/Market_economy) with enormous natural resources, particularly [oil](/wiki/Russian_oil_industry) and natural gas. It has the [15th largest](/wiki/List_of_countries_by_GDP_(nominal)) economy in the world by nominal GDP and the [6th largest](/wiki/List_of_countries_by_GDP_(PPP)) by [purchasing power parity](/wiki/Purchasing_power_parity) (PPP). Since the turn of the 21st century, higher domestic consumption and greater political stability have bolstered economic growth in Russia. The country ended 2008 with its ninth straight year of growth, but growth has slowed with the decline in the price of oil and gas. Real GDP per capita, PPP (current international) was 19,840 in 2010.<ref name=wdi>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> Growth was primarily driven by non-traded services and goods for the domestic market, as opposed to oil or mineral extraction and exports.<ref name=cia/> The average nominal salary in Russia was $967 per month in early 2013, up from $80 in 2000.[[138]](#cite_note-138)[[139]](#cite_note-139) In March 2014 the average nominal monthly wages reached 30,000 RUR (or US$980),[[140]](#cite_note-140)[[141]](#cite_note-141) while tax on the income of individuals is payable at the rate of 13% on most incomes.[[142]](#cite_note-142) Approximately 12.8% of Russians lived [below the national poverty line](/wiki/Poverty_by_country) in 2011,[[143]](#cite_note-143) significantly down from 40% in 1998 at the worst point of the post-Soviet collapse.<ref name=worldbank/> Unemployment in Russia was 5.4% in 2014, down from about 12.4% in 1999.[[144]](#cite_note-144) The middle class has grown from just 8 million persons in 2000 to 104 million persons in 2013.[[145]](#cite_note-145)[[146]](#cite_note-146) However, after U.S.-led sanctions since 2014 and a collapse in oil prices, the proportion of middle-class could halve to 20%.[[147]](#cite_note-147) Sugar imports reportedly dropped 82% between 2012 and 2013 as a result of the increase in domestic output.[[148]](#cite_note-148) [thumb|right|Russian economy since the end of the Soviet Union](/wiki/File:Russian_economy_since_fall_of_Soviet_Union.PNG) Oil, natural gas, metals, and timber account for more than 80% of Russian exports abroad.<ref name=cia/> Since 2003, the exports of natural resources started decreasing in economic importance as the internal market strengthened considerably. Despite higher energy prices, oil and gas only contribute to 5.7% of Russia's GDP and the government predicts this will be 3.7% by 2011.[[149]](#cite_note-149) Oil export earnings allowed Russia to increase its foreign reserves from $12 billion in 1999 to $597.3 billion on 1 August 2008, the third [largest foreign exchange reserves](/wiki/Largest_foreign_exchange_reserves) in the world.[[150]](#cite_note-150) The macroeconomic policy under Finance Minister [Alexei Kudrin](/wiki/Alexei_Kudrin) was prudent and sound, with excess income being stored in the [Stabilization Fund of Russia](/wiki/Stabilization_Fund_of_Russia).[[151]](#cite_note-151) In 2006, Russia repaid most of its formerly massive debts,[[152]](#cite_note-152) leaving it with [one of the lowest foreign debts among major economies](/wiki/Foreign_debt_by_country).[[153]](#cite_note-153) The Stabilization Fund helped Russia to come out of the [global financial crisis](/wiki/Late-2000s_recession) in a much better state than many experts had expected.[[151]](#cite_note-151) A simpler, more streamlined tax code adopted in 2001 reduced the tax burden on people and dramatically increased state revenue.[[154]](#cite_note-154) Russia has a [flat tax](/wiki/Flat_tax) rate of 13%. This ranks it as the country with the second most attractive personal tax system for single managers in the world after the United Arab Emirates.[[155]](#cite_note-155) According to [Bloomberg](/wiki/Bloomberg_L.P.), Russia is considered well ahead of most other resource-rich countries in its economic development, with a long tradition of education, science, and industry.[[156]](#cite_note-156) The country has a higher proportion of higher education graduates than any other country in Eurasia.[[157]](#cite_note-157) [thumb|On 21 May 2014, Russia and](/wiki/File:Russia_and_China_sign_major_gas_deal.jpeg) [China](/wiki/China) signed a $400 billion gas deal. Starting 2019 Russia plans to provide [natural gas](/wiki/Natural_gas) to China for the next 30 years. The economic development of the country has been uneven geographically with the Moscow region contributing a [very large share](/wiki/List_of_Russian_federal_subjects_by_GRP) of the country's GDP.[[158]](#cite_note-158)Inequality of household income and wealth has also been noted, with Credit Suisse finding Russian wealth distribution so much more extreme than other countries studied it "deserves to be placed in a separate category."<ref name=pbs>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref><ref name=CSRIGWR>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> Another problem is modernisation of infrastructure, ageing and inadequate after years of being neglected in the 1990s; the government has said $1 trillion will be invested in development of infrastructure by 2020.[[159]](#cite_note-159) In December 2011, Russia finally[Template:Clarify](/wiki/Template:Clarify) joined the World Trade Organisation, allowing it a greater access to overseas markets. Some analysts estimate that WTO membership could bring the Russian economy a bounce of up to 3% annually.[[160]](#cite_note-160) Russia ranks as the second-most corrupt country in Europe (after Ukraine), according to the [Corruption Perceptions Index](/wiki/Corruption_Perceptions_Index). The Norwegian-Russian Chamber of Commerce also states that "[c]orruption is one of the biggest problems both Russian and international companies have to deal with".[[161]](#cite_note-161) The high rate of corruption acts as a hidden tax as businesses and individuals often have to pay money that is not part of the official tax rate. It is estimated that corruption is costing the Russian economy an estimated $2 billion (80 billion rubles) per year.[[162]](#cite_note-162) In 2014, a book-length study by Professor Karen Dawisha was published concerning corruption in Russian under Putin's government.[[163]](#cite_note-163) The Russian central bank announced plans in 2013 to free float the Russian ruble in 2015. According to a stress test conducted by the central bank Russian financial system would be able to handle a currency decline of 25%–30% without major central bank interference. However, Russian economy began stagnating in late 2013 and in combination with the [War in Donbass](/wiki/War_in_Donbass) is in danger of entering stagflation, slow growth and high inflation. The Russian ruble collapsed by 24% from October 2013 to October 2014 entering the level where the central bank may need to intervene to strengthen the currency. Moreover, after bringing inflation down to 3.6% in 2012, the lowest rate since gaining independence from the Soviet Union, inflation in Russia jumped to nearly 7.5% in 2014, causing the central bank to increase its lending rate to 8% from 5.5% in 2013.[[164]](#cite_note-164)[[165]](#cite_note-165)[[166]](#cite_note-166) In an October 2014 article in *Bloomberg Business Week*, it was reported that Russia had significantly started shifting its economy towards China in response to increasing financial tensions following its annexation of Crimea and subsequent Western economic sanctions.[[167]](#cite_note-167)

### Agriculture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|*Rye Fields*, by](/wiki/File:Ivan_Shishkin_-_Рожь_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg) [Ivan Shishkin](/wiki/Ivan_Shishkin). Russia is the world's top producer of [barley](/wiki/Barley), [buckwheat](/wiki/Buckwheat) and [oats](/wiki/Oats), and one of the largest producers and exporters of [rye](/wiki/Rye), [sunflower seed](/wiki/Sunflower_seed) and [wheat](/wiki/Wheat). Russia's [total area of cultivated land](/wiki/Total_area_of_cultivated_land) is estimated at [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), the fourth largest in the world.[[168]](#cite_note-168) From 1999 to 2009, Russia's agriculture grew steadily,[[169]](#cite_note-169) and the country turned from a grain importer to the third largest grain exporter after the EU and the United States.[[170]](#cite_note-170) The production of meat has grown from 6,813,000 tonnes in 1999 to 9,331,000 tonnes in 2008, and continues to grow.[[171]](#cite_note-171) This restoration of agriculture was supported by a credit policy of the government, helping both individual farmers and large privatized corporate farms that once were Soviet [kolkhozes](/wiki/Kolkhoz) and which still own the significant share of agricultural land.[[172]](#cite_note-172) While large farms concentrate mainly on grain production and [husbandry](/wiki/Husbandry) products, small private [household plots](/wiki/Household_plot) produce most of the country's potatoes, vegetables and fruits.[[173]](#cite_note-173) Since Russia borders three oceans (the Atlantic, Arctic, and Pacific), Russian fishing fleets are a major [world fish supplier](/wiki/Fishing_industry_by_country). Russia captured 3,191,068 tons of fish in 2005.[[174]](#cite_note-174) Both exports and imports of fish and sea products grew significantly in recent years, reaching $2,415 and $2,036 million, respectively, in 2008.[[175]](#cite_note-175) Sprawling from the Baltic Sea to the Pacific Ocean, Russia has more than a fifth of the world's forests, which makes it the largest forest country in the world.[[135]](#cite_note-135)[[176]](#cite_note-176) However, according to a 2012 study by the [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations](/wiki/Food_and_Agriculture_Organization_of_the_United_Nations) and the Government of the Russian Federation,[[177]](#cite_note-177) the considerable potential of Russian forests is underutilized and Russia's share of the global trade in forest products is less than four percent.[[178]](#cite_note-178)

### Energy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|left|Russia is a key](/wiki/File:RF_NG_pipestoEU.gif) [oil](/wiki/Petroleum) and [gas](/wiki/Natural_gas) supplier to much of Europe. In recent years, Russia has frequently been described in the media as an [energy superpower](/wiki/Energy_superpower).[[179]](#cite_note-179)[[180]](#cite_note-180) The country has the world's largest [natural gas reserves](/wiki/Natural_gas_reserves),[[181]](#cite_note-181) the 8th largest [oil reserves](/wiki/Oil_reserves),[[182]](#cite_note-182) and the second largest [coal reserves](/wiki/Coal_reserves).[[183]](#cite_note-183) Russia is the world's leading [natural gas exporter](/wiki/Natural_gas_exporter)[[184]](#cite_note-184) and second largest [natural gas producer](/wiki/Natural_gas_producer),<ref name=cia-gas>"[Country Comparison :: Natural gas – production](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2249rank.html)", CIA World Factbook. Retrieved 3 February 2014.</ref> while also the largest [oil exporter](/wiki/Oil_exporter) and the largest [oil producer](/wiki/Oil_producer).<ref name=IEA-Oil>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

Russia is the 3rd largest [electricity producer](/wiki/Electricity_producer) in the world[[185]](#cite_note-185) and the 5th largest [renewable energy producer](/wiki/Renewable_energy_producer), the latter because of the well-developed [hydroelectricity](/wiki/Hydroelectricity) production in the country.[[186]](#cite_note-186) Large cascades of [hydropower plants](/wiki/Hydropower_plant) are built in European Russia along big rivers like the Volga. The Asian part of Russia also features a number of major hydropower stations, however the gigantic hydroelectric potential of Siberia and the Russian Far East largely remains unexploited.

Russia was the first country to develop civilian nuclear power and to construct the world's [first nuclear power plant](/wiki/First_nuclear_power_plant). Currently the country is the 4th largest [nuclear energy producer](/wiki/Nuclear_energy_producer),[[187]](#cite_note-187) with all [nuclear power in Russia](/wiki/Nuclear_power_in_Russia) being managed by [Rosatom](/wiki/Rosatom) State Corporation. The sector is rapidly developing, with an aim of increasing the total share of nuclear energy from current 16.9% to 23% by 2020. The Russian government plans to allocate 127 billion rubles ($5.42 billion) to a federal program dedicated to the next generation of nuclear energy technology. About 1 trillion rubles ($42.7 billion) is to be allocated from the federal budget to nuclear power and industry development before 2015.[[188]](#cite_note-188) In May 2014 on a two-day trip to Shanghai, President Putin signed a deal on behalf of Gazprom for the Russian energy giant to [supply China](/wiki/Yakutia–Khabarovsk–Vladivostok_pipeline) with 38 billion cubic meters of natural gas per year. Construction of a pipeline to facilitate the deal was agreed whereby Russia would contribute $55bn to the cost, and China $22bn, in what Putin described as "the world's biggest construction project for the next four years." The natural gas would begin to flow sometime between 2018 and 2020 and would continue for 30 years at an ultimate cost to China of $400bn.[[189]](#cite_note-189)

### Transport[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|upright|The marker for kilometre 9288 at the end of the](/wiki/File:TransSiberianRailwayAtKm9288.jpg) [Trans-Siberian Railway](/wiki/Trans-Siberian_Railway) in [Vladivostok](/wiki/Vladivostok) Railway transport in Russia is mostly under the control of the state-run [Russian Railways](/wiki/Russian_Railways) monopoly. The company accounts for over 3.6% of Russia's GDP and handles 39% of the total freight traffic (including pipelines) and more than 42% of passenger traffic.<ref name=rzd>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> The total length of common-used railway tracks exceeds [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert),<ref name=rzd/> second only to the United States. Over [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of tracks are [electrified](/wiki/Railway_electrification_system),[[190]](#cite_note-190) which is the largest number in the world, and additionally there are more than [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of industrial non-common carrier lines. Railways in Russia, unlike in the most of the world, use [broad gauge](/wiki/Broad_gauge) of [Template:RailGauge](/wiki/Template:RailGauge), with the exception of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) on [Sakhalin](/wiki/Sakhalin) island using narrow gauge of [Template:RailGauge](/wiki/Template:RailGauge). The most renowned railway in Russia is [Trans-Siberian](/wiki/Trans-Siberian_Railway) (*Transsib*), spanning a record 7 time zones and serving the longest single continuous services in the world, Moscow-[Vladivostok](/wiki/Vladivostok) ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)), Moscow–[Pyongyang](/wiki/Pyongyang) ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert))[[191]](#cite_note-191) and [Kiev](/wiki/Kiev)–Vladivostok ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)).[[192]](#cite_note-192) [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of) Russia had [933,000 km of roads](/wiki/Roads_by_country), of which 755,000 were paved.[[193]](#cite_note-193) Some of these make up the [Russian federal motorway system](/wiki/Russian_federal_motorway_system). With a large land area the road density is the lowest of all the [G8](/wiki/G8) and [BRIC](/wiki/BRIC) countries.[[194]](#cite_note-194) Much of Russia's inland waterways, which [total](/wiki/List_of_countries_by_waterways_length) [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), are made up of natural rivers or lakes. In the European part of the country the network of channels connects the basins of major rivers. Russia's capital, Moscow, is sometimes called "the port of the five seas", because of its waterway connections to the Baltic, [White](/wiki/White_Sea), Caspian, [Azov](/wiki/Azov_Sea) and [Black Seas](/wiki/Black_Sea).

[thumb|left|](/wiki/File:NSF_picture_of_Yamal.gif)[*Yamal*](/wiki/Yamal_(icebreaker)), one of Russia's [nuclear-powered icebreakers](/wiki/Nuclear-powered_icebreaker)[[195]](#cite_note-195) Major sea ports of Russia include [Rostov-on-Don](/wiki/Rostov-on-Don) on the Azov Sea, [Novorossiysk](/wiki/Novorossiysk) on the Black Sea, [Astrakhan](/wiki/Astrakhan) and [Makhachkala](/wiki/Makhachkala) on the Caspian, [Kaliningrad](/wiki/Kaliningrad) and St Petersburg on the Baltic, [Arkhangelsk](/wiki/Arkhangelsk) on the White Sea, [Murmansk](/wiki/Murmansk) on the Barents Sea, [Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky](/wiki/Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky) and [Vladivostok](/wiki/Vladivostok) on the Pacific Ocean. In 2008 the country owned 1,448 [merchant marine](/wiki/Merchant_marine_by_country) ships. The world's only fleet of [nuclear-powered icebreakers](/wiki/Nuclear-powered_icebreaker) advances the economic exploitation of the Arctic [continental shelf of Russia](/wiki/Continental_shelf_of_Russia) and the development of sea trade through the [Northern Sea Route](/wiki/Northern_Sea_Route) between Europe and East Asia.

By [total length of pipelines](/wiki/Total_length_of_pipelines) Russia is second only to the United States. Currently many new pipeline projects are being realized, including [Nord Stream](/wiki/Nord_Stream) and [South Stream](/wiki/South_Stream) natural gas pipelines to Europe, and the [Eastern Siberia – Pacific Ocean oil pipeline](/wiki/Eastern_Siberia_–_Pacific_Ocean_oil_pipeline) (ESPO) to the Russian Far East and China.

Russia has 1,216 airports,[[196]](#cite_note-196) the busiest being [Sheremetyevo](/wiki/Sheremetyevo), [Domodedovo](/wiki/Domodedovo_International_Airport), and [Vnukovo](/wiki/Vnukovo) in Moscow, and [Pulkovo](/wiki/Pulkovo_Airport) in St. Petersburg.

Typically, major Russian cities have well-developed systems of public transport, with the most common varieties of exploited vehicles being bus, [trolleybus](/wiki/Trolleybus) and tram. Seven Russian cities, namely [Moscow](/wiki/Moscow_Metro), [Saint Petersburg](/wiki/Saint_Petersburg_Metro), [Nizhny Novgorod](/wiki/Nizhny_Novgorod_Metro), [Novosibirsk](/wiki/Novosibirsk_Metro), [Samara](/wiki/Samara_Metro), [Yekaterinburg](/wiki/Yekaterinburg_Metro), and [Kazan](/wiki/Kazan_Metro), have underground metros, while [Volgograd](/wiki/Volgograd) features a [metrotram](/wiki/Volgograd_Metrotram). The total length of metros in Russia is [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert). [Moscow Metro](/wiki/Moscow_Metro) and [Saint Petersburg Metro](/wiki/Saint_Petersburg_Metro) are the oldest in Russia, opened in 1935 and 1955 respectively. These two are among the fastest and [busiest metro systems](/wiki/Busiest_metro_systems) in the world, and are famous for rich decorations and unique designs of their stations, which is a common tradition in Russian metros and railways.

### Science and technology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|left|upright|](/wiki/File:M.V._Lomonosov_by_L.Miropolskiy_after_G.C.Prenner_(1787,_RAN).jpg)[Mikhail Lomonosov](/wiki/Mikhail_Lomonosov), [polymath](/wiki/Polymath) scientist, inventor, poet and artist [thumb|left|upright|](/wiki/File:Ivan_Pavlov_NLM2.jpg)[Ivan Pavlov](/wiki/Ivan_Pavlov) (1849–1936), physiologist, Nobel Prize laureate in 1904 Science and technology in Russia blossomed since the [Age of Enlightenment](/wiki/Age_of_Enlightenment), when [Peter the Great](/wiki/Peter_the_Great) founded the [Russian Academy of Sciences](/wiki/Russian_Academy_of_Sciences) and [Saint Petersburg State University](/wiki/Saint_Petersburg_State_University), and [polymath](/wiki/Polymath) [Mikhail Lomonosov](/wiki/Mikhail_Lomonosov) established the [Moscow State University](/wiki/Moscow_State_University), paving the way for a strong native tradition in learning and innovation. In the 19th and 20th centuries the country produced a large number of notable scientists and inventors.

The [Russian physics school](/wiki/Russian_physics_school) began with Lomonosov who proposed the law of conservation of matter preceding the [energy conservation law](/wiki/Energy_conservation_law). Russian discoveries and inventions in physics include the [electric arc](/wiki/Electric_arc), electrodynamical [Lenz's law](/wiki/Lenz's_law), [space groups](/wiki/Space_groups) of [crystals](/wiki/Crystal), [photoelectric cell](/wiki/Photoelectric_cell), [superfluidity](/wiki/Superfluidity), [Cherenkov radiation](/wiki/Cherenkov_radiation), [electron paramagnetic resonance](/wiki/Electron_paramagnetic_resonance), [heterotransistors](/wiki/Heterotransistor) and [3D holography](/wiki/3D_holography). [Lasers](/wiki/Laser) and [masers](/wiki/Maser) were co-invented by [Nikolai Basov](/wiki/Nikolai_Basov) and [Alexander Prokhorov](/wiki/Alexander_Prokhorov), while the idea of [tokamak](/wiki/Tokamak) for controlled [nuclear fusion](/wiki/Nuclear_fusion) was introduced by [Igor Tamm](/wiki/Igor_Tamm), [Andrei Sakharov](/wiki/Andrei_Sakharov) and [Lev Artsimovich](/wiki/Lev_Artsimovich), leading eventually the modern international [ITER](/wiki/ITER) project, where Russia is a party.

Since the time of [Nikolay Lobachevsky](/wiki/Nikolay_Lobachevsky) (the "[Copernicus](/wiki/Copernicus) of [Geometry](/wiki/Geometry)" who pioneered the [non-Euclidean geometry](/wiki/Non-Euclidean_geometry)) and a prominent tutor [Pafnuty Chebyshev](/wiki/Pafnuty_Chebyshev), the [Russian mathematical school](/wiki/Russian_mathematical_school) became one of the most influential in the world.[[197]](#cite_note-197) Chebyshev's students included [Aleksandr Lyapunov](/wiki/Aleksandr_Lyapunov), who founded the modern [stability theory](/wiki/Stability_theory), and [Andrey Markov](/wiki/Andrey_Markov) who invented the [Markov chains](/wiki/Markov_chain). In the 20th century Soviet mathematicians, such as [Andrey Kolmogorov](/wiki/Andrey_Kolmogorov), [Israel Gelfand](/wiki/Israel_Gelfand), and [Sergey Sobolev](/wiki/Sergey_Sobolev), made major contributions to various areas of mathematics. Nine Soviet/Russian mathematicians were awarded with [Fields Medal](/wiki/Fields_Medal), a most prestigious award in mathematics. Recently [Grigori Perelman](/wiki/Grigori_Perelman) was offered the first ever Clay [Millennium Prize Problems](/wiki/Millennium_Prize_Problems) Award for his final proof of the [Poincaré conjecture](/wiki/Poincaré_conjecture) in 2002.[[198]](#cite_note-198) [Russian chemist](/wiki/Russian_chemist) [Dmitry Mendeleev](/wiki/Dmitry_Mendeleev) invented the [Periodic table](/wiki/Periodic_table), the main framework of modern [chemistry](/wiki/Chemistry). [Aleksandr Butlerov](/wiki/Aleksandr_Butlerov) was one of the creators of the theory of [chemical structure](/wiki/Chemical_structure), playing a central role in [organic chemistry](/wiki/Organic_chemistry). [Russian biologists](/wiki/Russian_biologists) include [Dmitry Ivanovsky](/wiki/Dmitry_Ivanovsky) who discovered viruses, [Ivan Pavlov](/wiki/Ivan_Pavlov) who was the first to experiment with the [classical conditioning](/wiki/Classical_conditioning), and [Ilya Mechnikov](/wiki/Ilya_Mechnikov) who was a pioneer researcher of the [immune system](/wiki/Immune_system) and [probiotics](/wiki/Probiotics).

Many Russian scientists and inventors were [émigrés](/wiki/Émigrés), like [Igor Sikorsky](/wiki/Igor_Sikorsky), who built the first [airliners](/wiki/Airliner) and modern-type helicopters; [Vladimir Zworykin](/wiki/Vladimir_Zworykin), often called the father of TV; chemist [Ilya Prigogine](/wiki/Ilya_Prigogine), noted for his work on [dissipative structures](/wiki/Dissipative_structures) and [complex systems](/wiki/Complex_systems); Nobel Prize-winning economists [Simon Kuznets](/wiki/Simon_Kuznets) and [Wassily Leontief](/wiki/Wassily_Leontief); physicist [Georgiy Gamov](/wiki/Georgiy_Gamov) (an author of the [Big Bang](/wiki/Big_Bang) theory) and social scientist [Pitirim Sorokin](/wiki/Pitirim_Sorokin). Many foreigners worked in Russia for a long time, like [Leonard Euler](/wiki/Leonard_Euler) and [Alfred Nobel](/wiki/Alfred_Nobel).

[Russian inventions](/wiki/Russian_inventions) include [arc welding](/wiki/Arc_welding) by [Nikolay Benardos](/wiki/Nikolay_Benardos), further developed by [Nikolay Slavyanov](/wiki/Nikolay_Slavyanov), [Konstantin Khrenov](/wiki/Konstantin_Khrenov) and other Russian engineers. [Gleb Kotelnikov](/wiki/Gleb_Kotelnikov) invented the [knapsack parachute](/wiki/Knapsack_parachute), while [Evgeniy Chertovsky](/wiki/Evgeniy_Chertovsky) introduced the [pressure suit](/wiki/Pressure_suit). [Alexander Lodygin](/wiki/Alexander_Lodygin) and [Pavel Yablochkov](/wiki/Pavel_Yablochkov) were pioneers of [electric lighting](/wiki/Electric_lighting), and [Mikhail Dolivo-Dobrovolsky](/wiki/Mikhail_Dolivo-Dobrovolsky) introduced the first [three-phase electric power](/wiki/Three-phase_electric_power) systems, widely used today. [Sergei Lebedev](/wiki/Sergei_Vasiljevich_Lebedev) invented the first commercially viable and mass-produced type of [synthetic rubber](/wiki/Synthetic_rubber). The first [ternary computer](/wiki/Ternary_computer), [*Setun*](/wiki/Setun), was developed by [Nikolay Brusentsov](/wiki/Nikolay_Brusentsov).

[thumb|right|The](/wiki/File:Sukhoi_T-50_Beltyukov.jpg) [Sukhoi PAK FA](/wiki/Sukhoi_PAK_FA) is a [fifth-generation jet fighter](/wiki/Fifth-generation_jet_fighter) being developed for the [Russian Air Force](/wiki/Russian_Air_Force). In the 20th century a number of prominent [Soviet aerospace engineers](/wiki/Soviet_aerospace_engineers), inspired by the fundamental works of [Nikolai Zhukovsky](/wiki/Nikolay_Yegorovich_Zhukovsky), [Sergei Chaplygin](/wiki/Sergei_Chaplygin) and others, designed many hundreds of models of military and civilian aircraft and founded a number of *KBs* (*Construction Bureaus*) that now constitute the bulk of Russian [United Aircraft Corporation](/wiki/United_Aircraft_Corporation). Famous Russian aircraft include the civilian [Tu](/wiki/Tupolev)-series, [Su](/wiki/Sukhoi) and [MiG fighter aircraft](/wiki/MiG), [Ka](/wiki/Kamov) and [Mi](/wiki/Mil_Moscow_Helicopter_Plant)-series helicopters; many Russian aircraft models are on the [list of most produced aircraft](/wiki/List_of_most_produced_aircraft) in history.

Famous Russian battle tanks include [T34](/wiki/T-34), the most heavily produced tank design of World War II,[[199]](#cite_note-199) and further tanks of T-series, including the most produced tank in history, [T54/55](/wiki/T-54/55).[[200]](#cite_note-200) The [AK47](/wiki/AK47) and [AK74](/wiki/AK-74) by [Mikhail Kalashnikov](/wiki/Mikhail_Kalashnikov) constitute the most widely used type of [assault rifle](/wiki/Assault_rifle) throughout the world—so much so that more AK-type rifles have been manufactured than all other assault rifles combined.[[201]](#cite_note-201) With all these achievements, however, since the late Soviet era Russia was lagging behind the West in a number of technologies, mostly those related to [energy conservation](/wiki/Energy_conservation) and [consumer goods](/wiki/Consumer_goods) production. The crisis of the 1990s led to the drastic reduction of the state support for science and a [brain drain](/wiki/Brain_drain) migration from Russia.

In the 2000s, on the wave of a new economic boom, the situation in the Russian science and technology has improved, and the government [launched a campaign](/wiki/Medvedev_modernisation_programme) aimed into modernisation and [innovation](/wiki/Innovation). Russian President Dmitry Medvedev formulated top priorities for the country's technological development:

* [Efficient energy use](/wiki/Efficient_energy_use)
* Information technology, including both common products and the products combined with [space technology](/wiki/Space_technology)
* [Nuclear energy](/wiki/Nuclear_power)
* [Pharmaceuticals](/wiki/Pharmaceuticals)[[202]](#cite_note-202)

Currently Russia has completed the [GLONASS](/wiki/GLONASS) [satellite navigation system](/wiki/Satellite_navigation_system). The country is developing its own [fifth-generation jet fighter](/wiki/Sukhoi_PAK_FA) and constructing the first serial [mobile nuclear plant](/wiki/Mobile_nuclear_plant) in the world.

### Space exploration[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]

[thumb|Soviet and Russian](/wiki/File:Mir_on_12_June_1998edit1.jpg) [space station](/wiki/Space_station) [Mir](/wiki/Mir) [thumb|upright|Soyuz TMA-2 launch.jpg|](/wiki/File:Soyuz_TMA-2_launch.jpg)[Soyuz TMA-2](/wiki/Soyuz_TMA-2) is launched from [Baikonur](/wiki/Baikonur), [Kazakhstan](/wiki/Kazakhstan), carrying one of the first resident crews to the [International Space Station](/wiki/International_Space_Station) Russian achievements in the field of [space technology](/wiki/Space_technology) and [space exploration](/wiki/Space_exploration) are traced back to [Konstantin Tsiolkovsky](/wiki/Konstantin_Tsiolkovsky), the father of theoretical [astronautics](/wiki/Astronautics).[[203]](#cite_note-203) His works had inspired leading Soviet rocket engineers, such as [Sergey Korolyov](/wiki/Sergey_Korolyov), [Valentin Glushko](/wiki/Valentin_Glushko), and many others who contributed to the success of the [Soviet space program](/wiki/Soviet_space_program) on early stages of the [Space Race](/wiki/Space_Race) and beyond.

In 1957 the first Earth-orbiting artificial [satellite](/wiki/Satellite), [*Sputnik 1*](/wiki/Sputnik 1), was launched; in 1961 the first human trip into space was successfully made by [Yury Gagarin](/wiki/Yury_Gagarin). Many other Soviet and Russian [space exploration records](/wiki/Space_exploration_records) ensued, including the first [spacewalk](/wiki/Spacewalk) performed by [Alexey Leonov](/wiki/Alexey_Leonov), [Luna 9](/wiki/Luna 9) was the first spacecraft to land on the [Moon](/wiki/Moon), [Venera 7](/wiki/Venera 7) was the first to land on another planet ([Venus](/wiki/Venus)), [Mars 3](/wiki/Mars 3) then the first to land on [Mars](/wiki/Mars), the first [space exploration rover](/wiki/Space_exploration_rover) [*Lunokhod 1*](/wiki/Lunokhod-1) and the first [space station](/wiki/Space_station) [*Salyut 1*](/wiki/Salyut 1) and [*Mir*](/wiki/Mir).

After the [collapse of the Soviet Union](/wiki/Collapse_of_the_Soviet_Union), some government-funded space exploration programs, including the [Buran](/wiki/Buran_programme) space shuttle program, were cancelled or delayed, while participation of the Russian space industry in commercial activities and international cooperation intensified. Nowadays Russia is the largest satellite launcher.[[204]](#cite_note-204) After the U.S. [Space Shuttle](/wiki/Space_Shuttle) program ended in 2011, [Soyuz rockets](/wiki/Soyuz_(rocket_family)) became the only provider of transport for astronauts at the [International Space Station](/wiki/International_Space_Station).

### Water supply and sanitation[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) In Russia, approximately 70 per cent of drinking water comes from surface water and 30 per cent from groundwater. In 2004, water supply systems had a total capacity of 90 million cubic metres a day. The average residential water use was 248 litres per capita per day.[[205]](#cite_note-205) One fourth of the world's fresh surface and [groundwater](/wiki/Groundwater) is located in Russia. The water utilities sector is one of the largest industries in Russia serving the entire Russian population.

## Demographics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=28)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [Template:Multiple image](/wiki/Template:Multiple_image) Ethnic Russians comprise 81% of the country's population.[[206]](#cite_note-206) The Russian Federation is also home to several sizeable minorities. In all, 160 different other ethnic groups and indigenous peoples live within its borders.<ref name=ethnicgroups>[Ethnic groups in Russia](http://demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/rus_nac_02.php), 2002 census, *Demoscope Weekly*. Retrieved 5 February 2009.</ref> Though Russia's population is comparatively large, [its density is low](/wiki/List_of_countries_by_population_density) because of the country's enormous size. Population is densest in [European Russia](/wiki/European_Russia), near the [Ural Mountains](/wiki/Ural_Mountains), and in southwest Siberia. 73% of the population lives in urban areas while 27% in rural ones.[[207]](#cite_note-207) The results of the [2010 Census](/wiki/Russian_Census_(2010)) show a total population of 142,856,536.[[208]](#cite_note-208) Russia's population peaked at 148,689,000 in 1991, just before the [dissolution of the Soviet Union](/wiki/Dissolution_of_the_Soviet_Union). It began to experience a rapid decline starting in the mid-1990s.[[209]](#cite_note-209) The decline has slowed to near stagnation in recent years because of reduced [death rates](/wiki/Death_rates), increased [birth rates](/wiki/Birth_rates) and increased [immigration](/wiki/Immigration).<ref name=gks/>

In 2009, Russia recorded annual population growth for the first time in fifteen years, with total growth of 10,500.<ref name=gks>[Modern demographics of Russia](http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/2010/demo/dem-sit-09.doc) by [Rosstat](/wiki/Rosstat). Retrieved on 5 October 2010</ref> 279,906 migrants arrived to the Russian Federation the same year, of which 93% came from [CIS](/wiki/Commonwealth_of_Independent_States) countries.<ref name=gks/> The number of Russian emigrants steadily declined from 359,000 in 2000 to 32,000 in 2009.<ref name=gks/> There are also an estimated 10 million [illegal immigrants](/wiki/Illegal_immigration_in_Russia) from the ex-Soviet states in Russia.[[210]](#cite_note-210) Russia is home to approximately 116 million ethnic Russians[[211]](#cite_note-211) and about 20 million ethnic Russians live outside Russia in the former republics of the Soviet Union,[[212]](#cite_note-212) mostly in Ukraine and Kazakhstan.[[213]](#cite_note-213) The [2010 census](/wiki/Russian_Census_(2010)) recorded 81% of the population as [ethnically Russian](/wiki/Russians), and 19% as other ethnicities:[[206]](#cite_note-206) 3.7% [Tatars](/wiki/Tatars); 1.4% [Ukrainians](/wiki/Ukrainians_in_Russia); 1.1% [Bashkirs](/wiki/Bashkirs); 1% [Chuvashes](/wiki/Chuvash_people); 11.8% others and unspecified. According to the Census, 84.93% of the Russian population belongs to European ethnic groups (Slavic, Germanic, Finnic other than [Ugric](/wiki/Ugric_peoples), Greek, and others). This is a decline from the 2002, when they constituted for more than 86% of the population.[[206]](#cite_note-206) Russia's birth rate is higher than that of most European countries (13.3 births per 1000 people in 2014<ref name=gks/> compared to the [European Union](/wiki/European_Union) average of 10.1 per 1000),[[214]](#cite_note-214) but its death rate is also substantially higher (in 2014, Russia's death rate was 13.1 per 1000 people<ref name=gks/> compared to the EU average of 9.7 per 1000).[[214]](#cite_note-214) The Russian Ministry of Health and Social Affairs predicted that by 2011 the death rate would equal the birth rate because of increase in fertility and decline in mortality.[[215]](#cite_note-215) The government is implementing a number of programs designed to increase the birth rate and attract more migrants. Monthly government child-assistance payments were doubled to US$55, and a one-time payment of US$9,200 was offered to women who had a second child since 2007.[[216]](#cite_note-216) In 2006, in a bid to compensate for the country's demographic decline, the Russian government started simplifying immigration laws and launched a state program "for providing assistance to voluntary immigration of ethnic Russians from former Soviet republics".[[217]](#cite_note-217) In 2009 Russia experienced its highest birth rate since the dissolution of the Soviet Union.<ref name=gks/>[[218]](#cite_note-218) In 2012, the birth rate increased again. Russia recorded 1,896,263 births, the highest number since 1990, and even exceeding annual births during the period 1967–1969, with a TFR of about 1.7, the highest since 1991. (Source: Vital statistics table below)

In August 2012, as the country saw its first demographic growth since the 1990s, President Putin declared that Russia's population could reach 146 million by 2025, mainly as a result of immigration.[[219]](#cite_note-219)

### Largest cities[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=29)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [Template:Largest cities of Russia](/wiki/Template:Largest_cities_of_Russia)

### Ethnic groups[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=30)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)

### Language[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=31)]

[thumb|Area where](/wiki/File:Idioma_ruso.PNG) [Russian language](/wiki/Russian_language) is spoken as the majority or a minority language [Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)

Russia's 160 ethnic groups speak some 100 languages.[[220]](#cite_note-220) According to the 2002 Census, 142.6 million people speak Russian, followed by [Tatar](/wiki/Tatar_language) with 5.3 million and [Ukrainian](/wiki/Ukrainian_language) with 1.8 million speakers.[[221]](#cite_note-221) Russian is the only official state language, but the Constitution gives the individual [republics](/wiki/Republics_of_Russia) the right to establish their own state languages in addition to Russian.[[222]](#cite_note-222) Despite its wide distribution, the Russian language is homogeneous throughout the country. Russian is the most geographically widespread language of Eurasia, as well as the most widely spoken [Slavic language](/wiki/Slavic_language).[[223]](#cite_note-223) It belongs to the [Indo-European language](/wiki/Indo-European_language) family and is one of the living members of the [East Slavic languages](/wiki/East_Slavic_languages), the others being [Belarusian](/wiki/Belarusian_language) and [Ukrainian](/wiki/Ukrainian_language) (and possibly [Rusyn](/wiki/Rusyn_language)). Written examples of [Old East Slavic](/wiki/Old_East_Slavic) (*Old Russian*) are attested from the 10th century onwards.[[224]](#cite_note-224) Russian is the second-most used language on the [Internet](/wiki/Internet) after English,[[225]](#cite_note-225) one of two official languages aboard the [International Space Station](/wiki/International_Space_Station)[[226]](#cite_note-226) and is one of the six [official languages of the UN](/wiki/Official_languages_of_the_UN).[[227]](#cite_note-227) 35 languages are officially recognized in Russia in various regions by local governments.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Language** | **Language family** | **Federal subject(s)** | **Source** |
| [Abaza](/wiki/Abaza_language) | [Northwest Caucasian](/wiki/Northwest_Caucasian_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | <ref name=KarCherk>[Статья 11. Конституция Карачаево-Черкесской Республики](http://constitution.garant.ru/region/cons_karach/chapter/1/#block_11)</ref> |
| [Adyghe](/wiki/Adyghe_language) | [Northwest Caucasian](/wiki/Northwest_Caucasian_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | [[228]](#cite_note-228) |
| [Altai](/wiki/Altai_language) | [Turkic](/wiki/Turkic_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | <ref name=Altai>[Статья 13. Конституция Республики Алтай](http://constitution.garant.ru/region/cons_altai/chapter/1/#block_13)</ref><ref name=LawAltai>Закон Республики Алтай «О языках». [Глава I, статья 4](http://zakon.scli.ru/ru/legal_texts/legislation_RF/printable.php?do4=document&id4=d2599158-01ed-47a8-8227-3057d6dbed48)</ref> |
| [Bashkir](/wiki/Bashkir_language) | [Turkic](/wiki/Turkic_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | ;[[229]](#cite_note-229) see also [regional law](/wiki/Law_on_the_language_of_the_people_of_the_Republic_of_Bashkortostan) |
| [Buryat](/wiki/Buryat_language) | [Mongolic](/wiki/Mongolic_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | [[230]](#cite_note-230) |
| [Chechen](/wiki/Chechen_language) | [Northeast Caucasian](/wiki/Northeast_Caucasian_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | [[231]](#cite_note-231) |
| [Cherkess](/wiki/Cherkess_language) | [Northwest Caucasian](/wiki/Northwest_Caucasian_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | [[232]](#cite_note-232) |
| [Chuvash](/wiki/Chuvash_language) | [Turkic](/wiki/Turkic_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | [[233]](#cite_note-233) |
| [Crimean Tatar](/wiki/Crimean_Tatar_language) | [Turkic](/wiki/Turkic_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | <ref name=Crimea>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> |
| [Erzya](/wiki/Erzya_language) | [Uralic](/wiki/Uralic_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | <ref name=Mordovia>[Статья 13. Конституции Республики Мордовия](http://constitution.garant.ru/region/cons_mordov/chapter/1/#block_14)</ref> |
| [Ingush](/wiki/Ingush_language) | [Northeast Caucasian](/wiki/Northeast_Caucasian_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | [[234]](#cite_note-234) |
| [Kabardian](/wiki/Kabardian_language) | [Northwest Caucasian](/wiki/Northwest_Caucasian_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | <ref name=KabBalk>[Статья 76. Конституция Кабардино-Балкарской Республики](http://constitution.garant.ru/region/cons_kabardin/chapter/3/#block_76)</ref> |
| [Kalmyk](/wiki/Kalmyk_language) | [Mongolic](/wiki/Mongolic_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | [[235]](#cite_note-235) |
| [Karachay-Balkar](/wiki/Karachay-Balkar_language) | [Turkic](/wiki/Turkic_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | [[232]](#cite_note-232)[[236]](#cite_note-236) |
| [Khakas](/wiki/Khakas_language) | [Turkic](/wiki/Turkic_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | [[237]](#cite_note-237) |
| [Komi](/wiki/Komi_language) | [Uralic](/wiki/Uralic_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | [[238]](#cite_note-238) |
| [Hill Mari](/wiki/Hill_Mari) | [Uralic](/wiki/Uralic_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | <ref name=Mari-El>[Статья 15. Конституция республики Марий Эл](http://constitution.garant.ru/region/cons_mariy/chapter/1/#block_1150)</ref> |
| [Meadow Mari](/wiki/Meadow_Mari) | [Uralic](/wiki/Uralic_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | [[239]](#cite_note-239) |
| [Moksha](/wiki/Moksha_language) | [Uralic](/wiki/Uralic_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | [[240]](#cite_note-240) |
| [Nogai](/wiki/Nogai_language) | [Turkic](/wiki/Turkic_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | [[232]](#cite_note-232) |
| [Ossetic](/wiki/Ossetic_language) | [Indo-European](/wiki/Indo-European_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | [[241]](#cite_note-241) |
| [Tatar](/wiki/Tatar_language) | [Turkic](/wiki/Turkic_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | [[242]](#cite_note-242) |
| [Tuvаn](/wiki/Tuvan_language) | [Turkic](/wiki/Turkic_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | [[243]](#cite_note-243) |
| [Udmurt](/wiki/Udmurt_language) | [Uralic](/wiki/Uralic_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | [[244]](#cite_note-244) |
| [Ukrainian](/wiki/Ukrainian_language) | [Indo-European](/wiki/Indo-European_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | [[245]](#cite_note-245) |
| [Yakut](/wiki/Yakut_language) | [Turkic](/wiki/Turkic_languages) | [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | [[246]](#cite_note-246) |

### Religion[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=32)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|240px|right|Ivan Eggink's painting represents Vladimir listening to the Orthodox priests, while the](/wiki/File:Eggink_VelKnVladimir.jpg) [papal](/wiki/Papal) envoy stands aside in discontent [thumb|*The Baptism of Vladimir*, a fresco by](/wiki/File:Vasnetsov_Bapt_Vladimir.jpg) [Viktor Vasnetsov](/wiki/Viktor_Vasnetsov) The ancestors of many of today's Russians practised Orthodox Christianity since the 10th century. According to the Orthodox Church Tradition, [Christianity](/wiki/Christianity) was first brought to the territory of modern [Belarus](/wiki/Belarus), Russia and [Ukraine](/wiki/Ukraine) by [Saint Andrew](/wiki/Saint_Andrew), the first [Apostle](/wiki/Apostle_(Christian)) of [Jesus Christ](/wiki/Jesus_Christ).<ref name=encarta>[Template:Cite encyclopedia](/wiki/Template:Cite_encyclopedia)</ref> Following the Primary Chronicle, the definitive [Christianization](/wiki/Christianization) of [Kievan Rus'](/wiki/Kievan_Rus') dates from the year 988 (the year is disputed[[247]](#cite_note-247)), when [Vladimir the Great](/wiki/Vladimir_the_Great) was baptized in [Chersonesus](/wiki/Chersonesus) and proceeded to baptize his family and people in [Kiev](/wiki/Kiev). The latter events are traditionally referred to as **baptism of Rus'** ([Template:Lang-ru](/wiki/Template:Lang-ru), [Template:Lang-ua](/wiki/Template:Lang-ua)) in Russian and Ukrainian literature.

At the time of the [1917 Revolution](/wiki/Russian_revolution), the [Russian Orthodox Church](/wiki/Russian_Orthodox_Church) was deeply integrated into the [autocratic state](/wiki/Autocracy), enjoying official status. This was a significant factor that contributed to the Bolshevik attitude to religion and the steps they took to control it. Bolsheviks consisted of many people with non-Russian, Communist Russians and influential Jewish backgrounds such as [Vladimir Lenin](/wiki/Vladimir_Lenin), [Leon Trotsky](/wiki/Leon_Trotsky), [Grigory Zinoviev](/wiki/Grigory_Zinoviev), [Lev Kamenev](/wiki/Lev_Kamenev), [Grigori Sokolnikov](/wiki/Grigori_Sokolnikov) who were indifferent towards Christianity and based on the writings of Jewish philosopher [Karl Marx](/wiki/Karl_Marx) with [Marxism–Leninism](/wiki/Marxism–Leninism) as an ideology went on to form the [Communist party](/wiki/Communist_party).<ref name =PoU>[Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation)</ref> Thus the USSR became the first[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) state to have, as an ideological objective, the [elimination of religion](/wiki/State_atheism)<ref name=Kowalewski>[Template:Cite journal](/wiki/Template:Cite_journal)</ref> and its replacement with universal [atheism](/wiki/Atheism).[[248]](#cite_note-248)[[249]](#cite_note-249) The [communist](/wiki/Communist) regime confiscated religious property, ridiculed religion, harassed believers, and propagated atheism in schools.[[250]](#cite_note-250) The confiscation of religious assets was often based on accusations of illegal accumulation of wealth.

The vast majority of people in the Russian empire were, at the time of the revolution, religious believers, whereas the communists aimed to break the power of all religious institutions and eventually replace religious belief with atheism. "Science" was counterposed to "religious superstition" in the media and in academic writing. The main religions of pre-revolutionary Russia persisted throughout the entire Soviet period, but they were only tolerated within certain limits. Generally, this meant that believers were free to worship in private and in their respective religious buildings (churches, mosques, etc.), but public displays of religion outside of such designated areas were prohibited. In addition, religious institutions were not allowed to express their views in any type of mass media, and many religious buildings were demolished or used for other purposes.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

State Atheism in the Soviet Union was known as *gosateizm*,<ref name=Kowalewski/> and was based on the ideology of [Marxism–Leninism](/wiki/Marxism–Leninism). [Marxist–Leninist Atheism](/wiki/Marxist–Leninist_atheism) has consistently advocated the control, suppression, and elimination of religion. Within about a year of the revolution, the state [expropriated](/wiki/Expropriated) all church property, including the churches themselves, and in the period from 1922 to 1926, 28 Russian Orthodox [bishops](/wiki/Bishop) and more than 1,200 [priests](/wiki/Priest) were killed. Many more were persecuted.<ref name=autogenerated1>[Country Studies: Russia-The Russian Orthodox Church](http://countrystudies.us/russia/38.htm) U.S. Library of Congress, Accessed 2008-04-03</ref>

Currently, there is no official census of religion in Russia, and estimates are based on surveys only. In August 2012, ARENA[[251]](#cite_note-251) estimated that about 46.8% of Russians are Christians (including Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, and non-denominational), while 25% believed in God but without any religion. However, later that year, the [Levada Center](/wiki/Levada_Center) estimated that 76% of Russians are Christians,[[252]](#cite_note-252) and in June 2013, the Public Opinion Foundation[[253]](#cite_note-253) estimated that 65% of Russians are Christians. These findings are in line with [Pew Research Center's](/wiki/Pew_Research_Center) 2011 survey,[[254]](#cite_note-254) which estimated that 73.6% of Russians are Christians, with [Russian Public Opinion Research Center](/wiki/Russian_Public_Opinion_Research_Center) (VCIOM)'s 2010 survey (~77% Christian),[[255]](#cite_note-255) and with [Ipsos MORI's](/wiki/Ipsos_MORI) 2011 survey (69%).[[256]](#cite_note-256) [Orthodox Christianity](/wiki/Orthodox_Christianity_in_Russia), [Islam](/wiki/Islam_in_Russia), [Judaism](/wiki/Judaism_in_Russia) and [Buddhism](/wiki/Buddhism_in_Russia) are Russia's traditional religions, and are all legally a part of Russia's "historical heritage".[[257]](#cite_note-257) Traced back to the [Christianization of Kievan Rus'](/wiki/Christianization_of_Kievan_Rus') in the 10th century, Russian Orthodoxy is the dominant religion in the country; smaller Christian denominations such as Catholics, [Armenian Gregorians](/wiki/Armenian_Gregorians) and various Protestant churches also exist. The [Russian Orthodox Church](/wiki/Russian_Orthodox_Church) was the country's state religion prior to the Revolution and remains the largest religious body in the country. An estimated 95% of the registered Orthodox parishes belong to the Russian Orthodox Church while there are a number of [smaller Orthodox Churches](/wiki/Religion_in_Russia).[[258]](#cite_note-258) However, the vast majority of Orthodox believers do not attend church on a regular basis. Easter is the most popular religious holiday in Russia, celebrated by a large segment of the Russian population, including large numbers of those who are non-religious. More than three-quarters of the Russian population celebrate Easter by making traditional Easter cakes, coloured eggs and [paskha](/wiki/Paskha_(dish)).[[259]](#cite_note-259) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Kazan_church_edit.jpg)[Temple of All Religions](/wiki/Temple_of_All_Religions), [Kazan](/wiki/Kazan), Tatarstan [Islam](/wiki/Islam) is the second largest religion in Russia after [Russian Orthodoxy](/wiki/Russian_Orthodox_Church).[[260]](#cite_note-260) It is the traditional or predominant religion amongst some [Caucasian ethnicities](/wiki/Peoples_of_the_Caucasus) (notably the [Chechens](/wiki/Chechens), the [Ingush](/wiki/Ingush_people) and the [Circassians](/wiki/Circassians)), and amongst some [Turkic peoples](/wiki/Turkic_peoples) (notably the [Tatars](/wiki/Tatars) and the [Bashkirs](/wiki/Bashkirs)). Altogether, there are 9,400,000 Muslims in Russia or 6.5% of the total population [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of) (the share of Muslims is probably much higher because the survey doesn't include detailed data for the traditionally Islamic states of [Chechnya](/wiki/Chechnya) and [Ingushetia](/wiki/Ingushetia)). Notwithstanding, various differences split the Muslim population in different groups. According to the survey, most of the Muslims (approximately 6,700,000 or 4.6% of the total population) are "unaffiliated" to any [Islamic schools and branches](/wiki/Islamic_schools_and_branches) or Islamic organisation, this is mainly because it is not essential for Muslims to be affiliated with any specific sect or organization. Those who are affiliated are mostly [Sunni](/wiki/Sunni) Muslims, with [Shia](/wiki/Shia) and [Ahmadiyya](/wiki/Ahmadiyya) minorities.[[261]](#cite_note-261) Unaffiliated Muslims constitute significant numbers of over 10% in [Kabardino-Balkaria](/wiki/Kabardino-Balkaria) (49%), [Bashkortostan](/wiki/Bashkortostan) (38%), [Karachay-Cherkessia](/wiki/Karachay-Cherkessia) (34%), [Tatarstan](/wiki/Tatarstan) (31%), [Yamalia](/wiki/Yamalia) (13%), [Orenburg Oblast](/wiki/Orenburg_Oblast) (11%), [Adygea](/wiki/Adygea) (11%) and [Astrakhan Oblast](/wiki/Astrakhan_Oblast) (11%). Most of the regions of [Siberia](/wiki/Siberia) have an unaffiliated Muslim population of 1% to 2%.[[251]](#cite_note-251)[[262]](#cite_note-262) Buddhism is traditional in three regions of the Russian Federation: [Buryatia](/wiki/Republic_of_Buryatia), [Tuva](/wiki/Tuva), and [Kalmykia](/wiki/Kalmykia). Some residents of the Siberian and Far Eastern regions, such as [Yakutia](/wiki/Yakutia) and [Chukotka](/wiki/Chukotka_Autonomous_Okrug), practice [shamanist](/wiki/Shamanist), [pantheistic](/wiki/Pantheistic), and [pagan](/wiki/Pagan) rites, along with the major religions. Induction into religion takes place primarily along ethnic lines. [Slavs](/wiki/Slavic_peoples) are significantly Orthodox Christian, [Turkic](/wiki/Turkic_peoples) speakers are predominantly Muslim, and [Mongolic peoples](/wiki/Mongols) are generally Buddhists.[[263]](#cite_note-263) According to various western purposive reports, the number of [non-religious](/wiki/Irreligion) in Russia is between 16% and 48% of the population.[[264]](#cite_note-264) The number of atheists has decreased significantly; according to the recent statistic, only seven percent declared themselves atheists, a decrease of 5% in three years.[[265]](#cite_note-265) In a 2012 poll by [Gallup International](/wiki/WIN/GIA), 6% of Russian people reported that they were "convinced atheists which is lowest among European countries"[[266]](#cite_note-266)

### Health[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=33)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|A mobile clinic used to provide health care at remote railway stations](/wiki/File:Terapevt_Mudrov_train.JPG)

The Russian Constitution guarantees free, [universal health care](/wiki/Universal_health_care) for all its citizens.[[267]](#cite_note-267) In practice, however, free health care is partially restricted because of [mandatory registration](/wiki/Registration_in_Russia).[[268]](#cite_note-268) While Russia has more physicians, hospitals, and health care workers than almost any other country in the world on a per capita basis,[[269]](#cite_note-269) since the dissolution of the Soviet Union the health of the Russian population has declined considerably as a result of social, economic, and lifestyle changes;[[270]](#cite_note-270) the trend has been reversed only in the recent years, with average life expectancy having increased 5.2 years for males and 3.1 years for females between 2006 and 2014.<ref name=demo26data/>

[Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), the average life expectancy in Russia was 65.29 years for males and 76.49 years for females.[[271]](#cite_note-271) The biggest factor contributing to the relatively low life expectancy for males is a high mortality rate among working-age males. Deaths mostly occur because of preventable causes (e.g., alcohol poisoning, smoking, traffic accidents, violent crime).<ref name=gks/> As a result of the large gender difference in life expectancy, and also because of the lasting effect of high casualties in World War II, the [gender imbalance](/wiki/Gender_imbalance) remains to this day; there are 0.859 males to every female.<ref name=cia/>

### Education[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=34)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Moscow_State_University.jpg)[Moscow State University](/wiki/Moscow_State_University) Russia has the most college-level or higher graduates in terms of percentage of population in the world, at 54%.[[272]](#cite_note-272) Russia has a [free education](/wiki/Free_education) system, which is guaranteed for all citizens by the [Constitution](/wiki/Constitution_of_Russia),[[273]](#cite_note-273) however entry to subsidized higher education is highly competitive.[[274]](#cite_note-274) As a result of great emphasis on science and technology in education, Russian medical, mathematical, scientific, and aerospace research is generally of a high order.[[275]](#cite_note-275) Since 1990, the 11-year school education has been introduced. Education in state-owned secondary schools is free. University level education is free, with exceptions. A substantial share of students is enrolled for full pay (many state institutions started to open commercial positions in the last years).[[276]](#cite_note-276) In 2004, state spending for education amounted to 3.6% of the GDP, or 13% of the consolidated state budget.[[277]](#cite_note-277) The Government allocates funding to pay the tuition fees within an established quota or number of students for each state institution. In higher education institutions, students are paid a small [stipend](/wiki/Stipend) and provided with free housing if they are from out of town.[[278]](#cite_note-278) The oldest and largest [Russian universities](/wiki/Russian_universities) are [Moscow State University](/wiki/Moscow_State_University) and [Saint Petersburg State University](/wiki/Saint_Petersburg_State_University). In the 2000s, in order to create higher education and research institutions of comparable scale in Russian regions, the government launched a program of establishing "federal universities", mostly by merging existing large regional universities and research institutes and providing them with a special funding. These new institutions include the [Southern Federal University](/wiki/Southern_Federal_University), [Siberian Federal University](/wiki/Siberian_Federal_University), [Kazan Volga Federal University](/wiki/Kazan_Volga_Federal_University), [North-Eastern Federal University](/wiki/North-Eastern_Federal_University), and [Far Eastern Federal University](/wiki/Far_Eastern_Federal_University). [Template:Clear](/wiki/Template:Clear)

## Culture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=35)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)

### Folk culture and cuisine[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=36)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|right|*The Merchant's Wife* by](/wiki/File:Kustodiev_Merchants_Wife.jpg) [Boris Kustodiev](/wiki/Boris_Kustodiev), showcasing the [Russian tea culture](/wiki/Russian_tea_culture)

There are over 160 different ethnic groups and indigenous peoples in Russia.<ref name=ethnicgroups/> The country's vast cultural diversity spans ethnic [Russians](/wiki/Russians) with their [Slavic](/wiki/Slavs) [Orthodox](/wiki/Eastern_Orthodox_Church) traditions, [Tatars](/wiki/Tatars) and [Bashkirs](/wiki/Bashkirs) with their Turkic Muslim culture, [Buddhist](/wiki/Buddhist) [nomadic](/wiki/Nomadic) [Buryats](/wiki/Buryats) and [Kalmyks](/wiki/Kalmyks), [Shamanistic](/wiki/Shamanistic) peoples of the [Extreme North](/wiki/Extreme_North) and Siberia, highlanders of the [Northern Caucasus](/wiki/Northern_Caucasus), and [Finno-Ugric peoples](/wiki/Finno-Ugric_peoples) of the [Russian North West](/wiki/Russian_North_West) and [Volga Region](/wiki/Volga_Region).

[Handicraft](/wiki/Handicraft), like [Dymkovo toy](/wiki/Dymkovo_toy), [khokhloma](/wiki/Khokhloma), [gzhel](/wiki/Gzhel) and [palekh miniature](/wiki/Palekh_miniature) represent an important aspect of Russian [folk culture](/wiki/Folk_culture). Ethnic Russian clothes include [kaftan](/wiki/Kaftan), [kosovorotka](/wiki/Kosovorotka) and [ushanka](/wiki/Ushanka) for men, [sarafan](/wiki/Sarafan) and [kokoshnik](/wiki/Kokoshnik) for women, with [lapti](/wiki/Lapti) and [valenki](/wiki/Valenki) as common shoes. The clothes of [Cossacks](/wiki/Cossack) from Southern Russia include [burka](/wiki/Burka_(Caucasus)) and [papaha](/wiki/Papaha), which they share with the peoples of the Northern Caucasus.

[Russian cuisine](/wiki/Russian_cuisine) widely uses fish, poultry, mushrooms, berries, and honey. Crops of [rye](/wiki/Rye), wheat, [barley](/wiki/Barley), and [millet](/wiki/Millet) provide the ingredients for various breads, [pancakes](/wiki/Pancakes) and cereals, as well as for [kvass](/wiki/Kvass), beer and vodka drinks. [Black bread](/wiki/Black_bread) is rather popular in Russia, compared to the rest of the world. Flavourful soups and stews include [shchi](/wiki/Shchi), [borsch](/wiki/Borsch), [ukha](/wiki/Ukha), [solyanka](/wiki/Solyanka) and [okroshka](/wiki/Okroshka). [Smetana](/wiki/Smetana_(dairy_product)) (a heavy [sour cream](/wiki/Sour_cream)) is often added to soups and salads. [Pirozhki](/wiki/Pirozhki), [blini](/wiki/Blini) and [syrniki](/wiki/Syrniki) are native types of pancakes. [Chicken Kiev](/wiki/Chicken_Kiev), [pelmeni](/wiki/Pelmeni) and [shashlyk](/wiki/Shashlyk) are popular meat dishes, the last two being of Tatar and Caucasus origin respectively. Other meat dishes include stuffed cabbage rolls *(*[*golubtsy*](/wiki/Golubtsy)*)* usually filled with meat.[[279]](#cite_note-279) Salads include [Olivier salad](/wiki/Olivier_salad), [vinegret](/wiki/Vinegret) and [dressed herring](/wiki/Dressed_herring).

Russia's large number of ethnic groups have distinctive traditions regarding [folk music](/wiki/Music_of_Russia#Ethnic_roots_music). Typical ethnic Russian musical instruments are [gusli](/wiki/Gusli), [balalaika](/wiki/Balalaika), [zhaleika](/wiki/Zhaleika), and [garmoshka](/wiki/Garmoshka). Folk music had a significant influence on Russian classical composers, and in modern times it is a source of inspiration for a number of popular [folk bands](/wiki/Folk_band), like [Melnitsa](/wiki/Melnitsa). [Russian folk songs](/wiki/Russian_folk_songs), as well as patriotic [Soviet songs](/wiki/Soviet_songs), constitute the bulk of the repertoire of the world-renowned [Red Army choir](/wiki/Red_Army_choir) and other popular ensembles.

Russians have [many traditions](/wiki/Russian_traditions), including the washing in [banya](/wiki/Banya_(sauna)), a hot steam bath somewhat similar to [sauna](/wiki/Sauna).[[280]](#cite_note-280) Old [Russian folklore](/wiki/Russian_folklore) takes its roots in the pagan [Slavic religion](/wiki/Slavic_mythology). Many [Russian fairy tales](/wiki/Russian_fairy_tales) and epic [bylinas](/wiki/Bylina) were adapted for animation films, or for feature movies by the prominent directors like [Aleksandr Ptushko](/wiki/Aleksandr_Ptushko) ([*Ilya Muromets*](/wiki/Ilya_Muromets_(film)), [*Sadko*](/wiki/Sadko_(film))) and [Aleksandr Rou](/wiki/Aleksandr_Rou) ([*Morozko*](/wiki/Morozko), [*Vasilisa the Beautiful*](/wiki/Vasilisa_the_Beautiful_(1939_film))). Russian poets, including [Pyotr Yershov](/wiki/Pyotr_Pavlovich_Yershov) and [Leonid Filatov](/wiki/Leonid_Filatov), made a number of well-known poetical interpretations of the classical fairy tales, and in some cases, like that of [Alexander Pushkin](/wiki/Alexander_Pushkin), also created fully original fairy tale poems of great popularity.

### Architecture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=37)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|left|upright|](/wiki/File:Sant_Vasily_cathedral_in_Moscow.JPG)[Saint Basil's Cathedral](/wiki/Saint_Basil's_Cathedral) in Moscow, a well known piece of [Russian architecture](/wiki/Russian_architecture)

Since the [Christianization of Kievan Rus'](/wiki/Christianization_of_Kievan_Rus') for several ages Russian architecture was influenced predominantly by the [Byzantine architecture](/wiki/Byzantine_architecture). Apart from fortifications ([kremlins](/wiki/Kremlin)), the main stone buildings of ancient Rus' were [Orthodox churches](/wiki/Orthodox_church_(building)) with their many [domes](/wiki/Dome), often gilded or brightly painted.

[Aristotle Fioravanti](/wiki/Aristotle_Fioravanti) and other Italian architects brought [Renaissance](/wiki/Renaissance) trends into Russia since the late 15th century, while the 16th century saw the development of unique [tent-like churches](/wiki/Tent-like_church) culminating in [Saint Basil's Cathedral](/wiki/Saint_Basil's_Cathedral).[[281]](#cite_note-281) By that time the [onion dome](/wiki/Onion_dome) design was also fully developed.[[282]](#cite_note-282) In the 17th century, the "fiery style" of ornamentation flourished in Moscow and [Yaroslavl](/wiki/Yaroslavl), gradually paving the way for the [Naryshkin baroque](/wiki/Naryshkin_baroque) of the 1690s. After the [reforms of Peter the Great](/wiki/Reforms_of_Peter_the_Great) the change of architectural styles in Russia generally followed that in the Western Europe.

The 18th-century taste for [rococo](/wiki/Rococo) architecture led to the ornate works of [Bartolomeo Rastrelli](/wiki/Bartolomeo_Rastrelli) and his followers. The reigns of [Catherine the Great](/wiki/Catherine_the_Great) and her grandson [Alexander I](/wiki/Alexander_I_of_Russia) saw the flourishing of [Neoclassical architecture](/wiki/Neoclassical_architecture), most notably in the capital city of [Saint Petersburg](/wiki/Saint_Petersburg). The second half of the 19th century was dominated by the [Neo-Byzantine](/wiki/Neo-Byzantine_architecture_in_the_Russian_Empire) and [Russian Revival](/wiki/Russian_Revival) styles. Prevalent styles of the 20th century were the [Art Nouveau](/wiki/Art_Nouveau), [Constructivism](/wiki/Constructivist_architecture), and the [Stalin Empire style](/wiki/Stalin_Empire_style).

In 1955, a new Soviet leader, [Nikita Khrushchev](/wiki/Nikita_Khrushchev), condemned the "excesses" of the former academic architecture,[[283]](#cite_note-283) and the late Soviet era was dominated by plain [functionalism in architecture](/wiki/Functionalism_in_architecture). This helped somewhat to resolve the housing problem, but created a large quantity of buildings of low architectural quality, much in contrast with the previous bright styles. The situation improved in the recent two decades. Many temples demolished in Soviet times were rebuilt, and this process continues along with the restoration of various historical buildings destroyed in World War II. A total of 23,000 Orthodox churches have been rebuilt between 1991 and 2010, which effectively quadrapled the number of operating churches in Russia.[[284]](#cite_note-284)

### Visual arts[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=38)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|left|upright|A piece of Russian icon art known as](/wiki/File:Angelsatmamre-trinity-rublev-1410.jpg) [Rublev's](/wiki/Rublev) [*Trinity*](/wiki/Trinity_(Andrei_Rublev)) [thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Brjullov.jpg)[Karl Bryullov](/wiki/Karl_Bryullov) (1799–1852), a key figure in transition from the Russian neoclassicism to romanticism.

Early Russian painting is represented in [icons](/wiki/Russian_icons) and vibrant [frescos](/wiki/Fresco), the two genres inherited from [Byzantium](/wiki/Byzantium). As Moscow rose to power, [Theophanes the Greek](/wiki/Theophanes_the_Greek), [Dionisius](/wiki/Dionisius) and [Andrei Rublev](/wiki/Andrei_Rublev) became vital names associated with a distinctly Russian art.

The [Russian Academy of Arts](/wiki/Russian_Academy_of_Arts) was created in 1757[[285]](#cite_note-285) and gave Russian artists an international role and status. [Ivan Argunov](/wiki/Ivan_Argunov), [Dmitry Levitzky](/wiki/Dmitry_Levitzky), [Vladimir Borovikovsky](/wiki/Vladimir_Borovikovsky) and other 18th century academicians mostly focused on [portrait painting](/wiki/Portrait_painting). In the early 19th century, when [neoclassicism](/wiki/Neoclassicism) and [romantism](/wiki/Romantism) flourished, mythological and Biblical themes inspired many prominent paintings, notably by [Karl Briullov](/wiki/Karl_Briullov) and [Alexander Ivanov](/wiki/Alexander_Andreyevich_Ivanov).

In the mid-19th century the [*Peredvizhniki*](/wiki/Peredvizhniki) (*Wanderers*) group of artists broke with the Academy and initiated a school of art liberated from academic restrictions.[[286]](#cite_note-286) These were mostly [realist](/wiki/Realism_(visual_arts)) painters who captured Russian identity in landscapes of wide rivers, forests, and birch clearings, as well as vigorous genre scenes and robust portraits of their contemporaries. Some artists focused on depicting dramatic moments in Russian history, while others turned to [social criticism](/wiki/Social_criticism), showing the conditions of the poor and caricaturing authority; [critical realism](/wiki/Critical_realism_(philosophy_of_the_social_sciences)) flourished under the reign of [Alexander II](/wiki/Alexander_II_of_Russia). Leading realists include [Ivan Shishkin](/wiki/Ivan_Shishkin), [Arkhip Kuindzhi](/wiki/Arkhip_Kuindzhi), [Ivan Kramskoi](/wiki/Ivan_Kramskoi), [Vasily Polenov](/wiki/Vasily_Polenov), [Isaac Levitan](/wiki/Isaac_Levitan), [Vasily Surikov](/wiki/Vasily_Surikov), [Viktor Vasnetsov](/wiki/Viktor_Vasnetsov), [Ilya Repin](/wiki/Ilya_Repin), and [Boris Kustodiev](/wiki/Boris_Kustodiev).

The turn of the 20th century saw the rise of [symbolist](/wiki/Symbolism_(art)) painting, represented by [Mikhail Vrubel](/wiki/Mikhail_Vrubel), [Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin](/wiki/Kuzma_Petrov-Vodkin), and [Nicholas Roerich](/wiki/Nicholas_Roerich).

The [Russian avant-garde](/wiki/Russian_avant-garde) was a large, influential wave of [modernist art](/wiki/Modernist_art) that flourished in Russia from approximately 1890 to 1930. The term covers many separate, but inextricably related art movements that occurred at the time, namely [neo-primitivism](/wiki/Neo-primitivism), [suprematism](/wiki/Suprematism), [constructivism](/wiki/Constructivism_(art)), [rayonism](/wiki/Rayonism), and [Russian Futurism](/wiki/Russian_Futurism). Notable artists from this era include [El Lissitzky](/wiki/El_Lissitzky), [Kazimir Malevich](/wiki/Kazimir_Malevich), [Wassily Kandinsky](/wiki/Wassily_Kandinsky), and [Marc Chagall](/wiki/Marc_Chagall). Since the 1930s the revolutionary ideas of the [avant-garde](/wiki/Avant-garde) clashed with the newly emerged conservative direction of [socialist realism](/wiki/Socialist_realism).

Soviet art produced works that were furiously patriotic and [anti-fascist](/wiki/Anti-fascist) during and after the [Great Patriotic War](/wiki/Great_Patriotic_War). Multiple war memorials, marked by a great restrained solemnity, were built throughout the country. Soviet artists often combined innovation with socialist realism, notably the sculptors [Vera Mukhina](/wiki/Vera_Mukhina), [Yevgeny Vuchetich](/wiki/Yevgeny_Vuchetich) and [Ernst Neizvestny](/wiki/Ernst_Neizvestny).

### Music and dance[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=39)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|left|upright|The *Snowdance* scene from](/wiki/File:Snowdance.jpg) [*The Nutcracker*](/wiki/The_Nutcracker) ballet, composed by [Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky](/wiki/Pyotr_Ilyich_Tchaikovsky)

Music in 19th century Russia was defined by the tension between classical composer [Mikhail Glinka](/wiki/Mikhail_Glinka) along with other members of [The Mighty Handful](/wiki/The_Mighty_Handful), who embraced Russian national identity and added religious and folk elements to their compositions, and the [Russian Musical Society](/wiki/Russian_Musical_Society) led by composers [Anton](/wiki/Anton_Rubinstein) and [Nikolay Rubinsteins](/wiki/Nikolay_Rubinstein), which was musically conservative. The later tradition of [Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky](/wiki/Pyotr_Ilyich_Tchaikovsky), one of the greatest composers of the [Romantic era](/wiki/Romantic_music), was continued into the 20th century by [Sergei Rachmaninoff](/wiki/Sergei_Rachmaninoff).[[287]](#cite_note-287) World-renowned composers of the 20th century include [Alexander Scriabin](/wiki/Alexander_Scriabin), [Igor Stravinsky](/wiki/Igor_Stravinsky), [Sergei Prokofiev](/wiki/Sergei_Prokofiev), [Dmitri Shostakovich](/wiki/Dmitri_Shostakovich) and [Alfred Schnittke](/wiki/Alfred_Schnittke).

Russian conservatories have turned out generations of famous soloists. Among the best known are violinists [Jascha Heifetz](/wiki/Jascha_Heifetz), [David Oistrakh](/wiki/David_Oistrakh), [Leonid Kogan](/wiki/Leonid_Kogan), [Gidon Kremer](/wiki/Gidon_Kremer), and [Maxim Vengerov](/wiki/Maxim_Vengerov); cellists [Mstislav Rostropovich](/wiki/Mstislav_Rostropovich), [Natalia Gutman](/wiki/Natalia_Gutman); pianists [Vladimir Horowitz](/wiki/Vladimir_Horowitz), [Sviatoslav Richter](/wiki/Sviatoslav_Richter), [Emil Gilels](/wiki/Emil_Gilels), [Vladimir Sofronitsky](/wiki/Vladimir_Sofronitsky) and [Evgeny Kissin](/wiki/Evgeny_Kissin); and vocalists [Fyodor Shalyapin](/wiki/Fyodor_Shalyapin), [Mark Reizen](/wiki/Mark_Reizen), [Elena Obraztsova](/wiki/Elena_Obraztsova), [Tamara Sinyavskaya](/wiki/Tamara_Sinyavskaya), [Nina Dorliak](/wiki/Nina_Dorliak), [Galina Vishnevskaya](/wiki/Galina_Vishnevskaya), [Anna Netrebko](/wiki/Anna_Netrebko) and [Dmitry Hvorostovsky](/wiki/Dmitry_Hvorostovsky).[[288]](#cite_note-288) During the early 20th century, Russian ballet dancers [Anna Pavlova](/wiki/Anna_Pavlova) and [Vaslav Nijinsky](/wiki/Vaslav_Nijinsky) rose to fame, and impresario [Sergei Diaghilev](/wiki/Sergei_Diaghilev) and his [Ballets Russes'](/wiki/Ballets_Russes) travels abroad profoundly influenced the development of dance worldwide.[[289]](#cite_note-289) Soviet ballet preserved the perfected 19th century traditions,[[290]](#cite_note-290) and the Soviet Union's choreography schools produced many internationally famous stars, including [Galina Ulanova](/wiki/Galina_Ulanova), [Maya Plisetskaya](/wiki/Maya_Plisetskaya), [Rudolf Nureyev](/wiki/Rudolf_Nureyev), and [Mikhail Baryshnikov](/wiki/Mikhail_Baryshnikov). The [Bolshoi Ballet](/wiki/Bolshoi_Ballet) in Moscow and the [Mariinsky Ballet](/wiki/Mariinsky_Ballet) in St Petersburg remain famous throughout the world.[[291]](#cite_note-291) Modern [Russian rock](/wiki/Russian_rock) music takes its roots both in the Western [rock and roll](/wiki/Rock_and_roll) and [heavy metal](/wiki/Heavy_metal_music), and in traditions of the [Russian bards](/wiki/Russian_bards) of the Soviet era, such as [Vladimir Vysotsky](/wiki/Vladimir_Vysotsky) and [Bulat Okudzhava](/wiki/Bulat_Okudzhava).[[292]](#cite_note-292) Popular Russian rock groups include [Mashina Vremeni](/wiki/Mashina_Vremeni), [DDT](/wiki/DDT_(band)), [Aquarium](/wiki/Aquarium_(group)), [Alisa](/wiki/Alisa), [Kino](/wiki/Kino_(band)), [Kipelov](/wiki/Kipelov), [Nautilus Pompilius](/wiki/Nautilus_Pompilius_(band)), [Aria](/wiki/Aria_(band)), [Grazhdanskaya Oborona](/wiki/Grazhdanskaya_Oborona), [Splean](/wiki/Splean) and [Korol i Shut](/wiki/Korol_i_Shut). [Russian pop](/wiki/Russian_pop) music developed from what was known in the Soviet times as *estrada* into full-fledged industry, with some performers gaining wide international recognition, such as [t.A.T.u.](/wiki/T.A.T.u.), [Nu Virgos](/wiki/Nu_Virgos) and [Vitas](/wiki/Vitas).

### Literature and philosophy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=40)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [upright|thumb|](/wiki/File:L.N.Tolstoy_Prokudin-Gorsky.jpg)[Leo Tolstoy](/wiki/Leo_Tolstoy), novelist and philosopher In the 18th century, during the era of [Russian Enlightenment](/wiki/Russian_Enlightenment), the development of [Russian literature](/wiki/Russian_literature) was boosted by the works of [Mikhail Lomonosov](/wiki/Mikhail_Lomonosov) and [Denis Fonvizin](/wiki/Denis_Fonvizin). By the early 19th century a modern native tradition had emerged, producing some of the greatest writers in Russian history. This period, known also as the [Golden Age of Russian Poetry](/wiki/Golden_Age_of_Russian_Poetry), began with [Alexander Pushkin](/wiki/Alexander_Pushkin), who is considered the founder of the modern Russian literary language and often described as the "Russian Shakespeare".[[293]](#cite_note-293) It continued into the 19th century with the poetry of [Mikhail Lermontov](/wiki/Mikhail_Lermontov) and [Nikolay Nekrasov](/wiki/Nikolay_Nekrasov), dramas of [Alexander Ostrovsky](/wiki/Alexander_Ostrovsky) and [Anton Chekhov](/wiki/Anton_Chekhov), and the prose of [Nikolai Gogol](/wiki/Nikolai_Gogol) and [Ivan Turgenev](/wiki/Ivan_Turgenev). [Leo Tolstoy](/wiki/Leo_Tolstoy) and [Fyodor Dostoyevsky](/wiki/Fyodor_Dostoyevsky) have been described by literary critics as the greatest novelists of all time.[[294]](#cite_note-294)[[295]](#cite_note-295) By the 1880s, the age of the great novelists was over, and short fiction and poetry became the dominant genres. The next several decades became known as the [Silver Age of Russian Poetry](/wiki/Silver_Age_of_Russian_Poetry), when the previously dominant [literary realism](/wiki/Literary_realism) was replaced by [symbolism](/wiki/Symbolism_(arts)). Leading authors of this era include such poets as [Valery Bryusov](/wiki/Valery_Bryusov), [Vyacheslav Ivanov](/wiki/Vyacheslav_Ivanov_(poet)), [Alexander Blok](/wiki/Alexander_Blok), [Nikolay Gumilev](/wiki/Nikolay_Gumilev) and [Anna Akhmatova](/wiki/Anna_Akhmatova), and novelists [Leonid Andreyev](/wiki/Leonid_Andreyev), [Ivan Bunin](/wiki/Ivan_Bunin), and [Maxim Gorky](/wiki/Maxim_Gorky).

[Russian philosophy](/wiki/Russian_philosophy) blossomed in the 19th century, when it was defined initially by the opposition of [Westernizers](/wiki/Westernizers), advocating Western political and economical models, and [Slavophiles](/wiki/Slavophiles), insisting on developing Russia as a unique civilization. The latter group includes [Nikolai Danilevsky](/wiki/Nikolai_Danilevsky) and [Konstantin Leontiev](/wiki/Konstantin_Leontiev), the founders of [eurasianism](/wiki/Eurasianism). In its further development Russian philosophy was always marked by a deep connection to literature and interest in creativity, society, politics and nationalism; [Russian cosmism](/wiki/Russian_cosmism) and religious philosophy were other major areas. Notable philosophers of the late 19th and the early 20th centuries include [Vladimir Solovyev](/wiki/Vladimir_Solovyov_(philosopher)), [Sergei Bulgakov](/wiki/Sergei_Bulgakov), and [Vladimir Vernadsky](/wiki/Vladimir_Vernadsky).

[thumb|](/wiki/File:Alexander_Pushkin_2013-10-06_17-38.jpg)[Alexander Pushkin](/wiki/Alexander_Pushkin) Following the [Russian Revolution](/wiki/Russian_Revolution) of 1917 many prominent writers and philosophers left the country, including Bunin, [Vladimir Nabokov](/wiki/Vladimir_Nabokov) and [Nikolay Berdyayev](/wiki/Nikolay_Berdyayev), while a new generation of talented authors joined together in an effort to create a distinctive [working-class culture](/wiki/Working-class_culture) appropriate for the new Soviet state. In the 1930s censorship over literature was tightened in line with the policy of [socialist realism](/wiki/Socialist_realism). In the late 1950s restrictions on literature were eased, and by the 1970s and 1980s, writers were increasingly ignoring official guidelines. Leading authors of the Soviet era include novelists [Yevgeny Zamyatin](/wiki/Yevgeny_Zamyatin), [Ilf and Petrov](/wiki/Ilf_and_Petrov), [Mikhail Bulgakov](/wiki/Mikhail_Bulgakov) and [Mikhail Sholokhov](/wiki/Mikhail_Sholokhov), and poets [Vladimir Mayakovsky](/wiki/Vladimir_Mayakovsky), [Yevgeny Yevtushenko](/wiki/Yevgeny_Yevtushenko), and [Andrey Voznesensky](/wiki/Andrey_Voznesensky).

The Soviet Union was also a major producer of science fiction, written by authors like [Arkady and Boris Strugatsky](/wiki/Arkady_and_Boris_Strugatsky), [Kir Bulychov](/wiki/Kir_Bulychov), [Alexander Belayev](/wiki/Alexander_Belayev) and [Ivan Yefremov](/wiki/Ivan_Yefremov).[[296]](#cite_note-296) Traditions of [Russian science fiction and fantasy](/wiki/Russian_science_fiction_and_fantasy) are continued today by numerous writers.

### Cinema, animation and media[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=41)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|left|Former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in the](/wiki/File:Medvedev_-_Russia_Today_3.jpg) [Washington](/wiki/Washington,_D.C.) studio of [Russia Today TV](/wiki/Russia_Today_TV) with [Margarita Simonyan](/wiki/Margarita_Simonyan) Russian and later [Soviet cinema](/wiki/Soviet_cinema) was a hotbed of invention in the period immediately following 1917, resulting in world-renowned films such as [*The Battleship Potemkin*](/wiki/The_Battleship_Potemkin) by [Sergei Eisenstein](/wiki/Sergei_Eisenstein).<ref name=film>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> Eisenstein was a student of filmmaker and theorist [Lev Kuleshov](/wiki/Lev_Kuleshov), who developed the [Soviet montage theory](/wiki/Soviet_montage_theory) of film editing at the world's first film school, the [All-Union Institute of Cinematography](/wiki/All-Union_Institute_of_Cinematography). [Dziga Vertov](/wiki/Dziga_Vertov), whose *kino-glaz* ("film-eye") theory—that the camera, like the human eye, is best used to explore real life—had a huge impact on the development of documentary film making and cinema realism. The subsequent state policy of socialist realism somewhat limited creativity; however, many Soviet films in this style were artistically successful, including [*Chapaev*](/wiki/Chapaev_(film)), [*The Cranes Are Flying*](/wiki/The_Cranes_Are_Flying), and [*Ballad of a Soldier*](/wiki/Ballad_of_a_Soldier).<ref name=film/>

The 1960s and 1970s saw a greater variety of artistic styles in Soviet cinema. [Eldar Ryazanov's](/wiki/Eldar_Ryazanov) and [Leonid Gaidai's](/wiki/Leonid_Gaidai) comedies of that time were immensely popular, with many of the catch phrases still in use today. In 1961–68 [Sergey Bondarchuk](/wiki/Sergey_Bondarchuk) directed an [Oscar](/wiki/Academy_Award)-winning [film adaptation](/wiki/War_and_Peace_(film_series)) of Leo Tolstoy's epic [*War and Peace*](/wiki/War_and_Peace), which was [the most expensive film](/wiki/The_most_expensive_film) made in the Soviet Union.[[297]](#cite_note-297) In 1969, [Vladimir Motyl's](/wiki/Vladimir_Motyl) [*White Sun of the Desert*](/wiki/White_Sun_of_the_Desert) was released, a very popular film in a genre of [ostern](/wiki/Ostern); the film is traditionally watched by [cosmonauts](/wiki/Cosmonauts) before any trip into space.[[298]](#cite_note-298) [thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Shukhov_tower_shabolovka_moscow_02.jpg)[Shukhov Tower](/wiki/Shukhov_Tower) in Moscow served early radio and TV broadcasting. [Russian animation](/wiki/Russian_animation) dates back to late [Russian Empire](/wiki/Russian_Empire) times. During the Soviet era, [Soyuzmultfilm](/wiki/Soyuzmultfilm) studio was the largest animation producer. Soviet animators developed a great variety of pioneering techniques and aesthetic styles, with prominent directors including [Ivan Ivanov-Vano](/wiki/Ivan_Ivanov-Vano), [Fyodor Khitruk](/wiki/Fyodor_Khitruk) and [Aleksandr Tatarsky](/wiki/Aleksandr_Tatarsky). Many Soviet cartoon heroes such as the Russian-style [Winnie-the-Pooh](/wiki/Winnie-the-Pooh), cute little [Cheburashka](/wiki/Cheburashka), Wolf and Hare from [*Nu, Pogodi!*](/wiki/Nu,_Pogodi!), are iconic images in Russia and many surrounding countries.

The late 1980s and 1990s were a period of crisis in Russian cinema and animation. Although Russian filmmakers became free to express themselves, state subsidies were drastically reduced, resulting in fewer films produced. The early years of the 21st century have brought increased viewership and subsequent prosperity to the industry on the back of the economic revival. Production levels are already higher than in Britain and Germany.[[299]](#cite_note-299) Russia's total box-office revenue in 2007 was $565 million, up 37% from the previous year.[[300]](#cite_note-300) In 2002 the [*Russian Ark*](/wiki/Russian_Ark) became the first feature film ever to be shot in a single take. The traditions of Soviet animation were developed recently by such directors as [Aleksandr Petrov](/wiki/Aleksandr_Petrov_(animator)) and studios like [Melnitsa Animation](/wiki/Melnitsa_Animation).

Russia was among the first countries to [introduce radio](/wiki/Radio_Day) and [television](/wiki/Timeline_of_the_introduction_of_television). While there were few channels in the Soviet time, in the past two decades many new state and privately owned [radio stations](/wiki/Russian_language_radio_stations) and [TV channels](/wiki/TV_in_Russia) have appeared. In 2005 a state-run English language [Russia Today TV](/wiki/Russia_Today_TV) started broadcasting, and its Arabic version [Rusiya Al-Yaum](/wiki/Rusiya_Al-Yaum) was launched in 2007.

### Sports[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=42)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|left|The](/wiki/File:Reprezentacja_Rosji2.jpg) [Russia national football team](/wiki/Russia_national_football_team) at [UEFA Euro 2012](/wiki/UEFA_Euro_2012)

Combining the [total medals](/wiki/All-time_Olympic_Games_medal_count) of the Soviet Union and Russia, the country is second among all nations by number of gold medals both at the [Summer Olympics](/wiki/Summer_Olympics) and at the [Winter Olympics](/wiki/Winter_Olympics). Soviet and later [Russian athletes](/wiki/Russia_at_the_Olympics) have always been in the top three for the number of gold medals collected at the Summer Olympics. Soviet gymnasts, track-and-field athletes, weight lifters, wrestlers, boxers, fencers, shooters, cross country skiers, biathletes, speed skaters and figure skaters were consistently among the best in the world, along with Soviet basketball, handball, volleyball and ice hockey players.[[301]](#cite_note-301) The [1980 Summer Olympics](/wiki/1980_Summer_Olympics) were held in Moscow while the [2014 Winter Olympics](/wiki/2014_Winter_Olympics) were hosted in [Sochi](/wiki/Sochi).

[thumb|](/wiki/File:RIAN_archive_386859_KHL_finals_-_Ak_Bars_vs._Lokomotiv_Yaroslavl_1-0.jpg)[KHL](/wiki/Kontinental_Hockey_League) finals, the league is considered to be the second-best in the world Although [ice hockey](/wiki/Ice_hockey) was only introduced during the Soviet era, the national team managed to win gold at almost all the [Olympics](/wiki/Ice_hockey_at_the_Olympic_Games) and [World Championships](/wiki/IIHF) they contested. Russian players [Valery Kharlamov](/wiki/Valery_Kharlamov), [Sergei Makarov](/wiki/Sergei_Makarov_(ice_hockey)), [Vyacheslav Fetisov](/wiki/Vyacheslav_Fetisov) and [Vladislav Tretiak](/wiki/Vladislav_Tretiak) hold four of six positions in the [IIHF](/wiki/IIHF) *Team of the Century*.[[302]](#cite_note-302) Russia has not won the Olympic ice hockey tournament since the [Unified Team](/wiki/Unified_Team_at_the_Olympics) won gold in 1992. Recently Russia won the [2008](/wiki/2008_IIHF_World_Championships), [2009](/wiki/2009_IIHF_World_Championship),[[303]](#cite_note-303) [2012](/wiki/2012_IIHF_World_Championship) and the [2014 IIHF World Championships](/wiki/2014_IIHF_World_Championship). Russia dominated the 2012 tournament, winning all of its ten matches—the first time any team had done so since the Soviet Union in 1989.[[304]](#cite_note-304) The [Kontinental Hockey League](/wiki/Kontinental_Hockey_League) (KHL) was founded in 2008 as a successor to the [Russian Superleague](/wiki/Russian_Superleague). It is seen as a rival to the [National Hockey League](/wiki/National_Hockey_League) (NHL), is ranked the top hockey league in Europe [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of),[[305]](#cite_note-305) and the second-best in the world.[[306]](#cite_note-306) It is an international professional ice hockey league in [Eurasia](/wiki/Eurasia) and consists of 28 teams, of which 21 are based in Russia and 7 more are located in [Latvia](/wiki/Latvia), [Kazakhstan](/wiki/Kazakhstan), [Belarus](/wiki/Belarus), [Finland](/wiki/Finland), [Slovakia](/wiki/Slovakia), and [Croatia](/wiki/Croatia).

[Bandy](/wiki/Bandy), also known as [Russian hockey](/wiki/Russian_hockey), is another traditionally popular ice sport.[[307]](#cite_note-307) The Soviet Union won all the [Bandy World Championships](/wiki/Bandy_World_Championship) for men between 1957–79[[308]](#cite_note-308) and some thereafter too. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia has continuously been one of the most successful teams, winning many world championships.

[thumb|Dmitry Medvedev with the](/wiki/File:Dmitry_Medvedev_20_May_2008-2.jpg) [Russia men's national ice hockey team](/wiki/Russia_men's_national_ice_hockey_team) [thumb|Opening of the](/wiki/File:Opening_of_XXII_Winter_Olympic_Games_(2338-13).jpg) [2014 Winter Olympics](/wiki/2014_Winter_Olympics) Association football is one of the most popular sports in modern Russia. The Soviet national team became the first ever European Champions by winning [Euro 1960](/wiki/Euro_1960). Appearing in four [FIFA World Cups](/wiki/FIFA_World_Cup) from 1958 to 1970, [Lev Yashin](/wiki/Lev_Yashin) is regarded to be one of the greatest goalkeepers in the history of football, and was chosen on the [FIFA World Cup Dream Team](/wiki/FIFA_World_Cup_Dream_Team).[[309]](#cite_note-309)[[310]](#cite_note-310) The Soviet national team reached the final of [Euro 1988](/wiki/Euro_1988). In 1956 and 1988, the Soviet Union won gold at the [Olympic football tournament](/wiki/Football_at_the_Summer_Olympics#Men's_results). Russian clubs [CSKA Moscow](/wiki/PFC_CSKA_Moscow) and [Zenit St Petersburg](/wiki/Zenit_St_Petersburg) won the [UEFA Cup](/wiki/UEFA_Cup) in 2005 and 2008 respectively. The [Russian national football team](/wiki/Russian_national_football_team) reached the semi-finals of [Euro 2008](/wiki/Euro_2008), losing only to the eventual champions Spain. Russia will host the [2018 FIFA World Cup](/wiki/2018_FIFA_World_Cup), with 11 host cities located in the European part of the country and in the Ural region.

In 2007, the [Russian national basketball team](/wiki/Russian_national_basketball_team) won the [European Basketball Championship](/wiki/EuroBasket_2007). Russian basketball club [PBC CSKA Moscow](/wiki/PBC_CSKA_Moscow) is one of the top teams in Europe, winning the [Euroleague](/wiki/Euroleague) in [2006](/wiki/2005–06_Euroleague) and [2008](/wiki/2007–08_Euroleague).

[Larisa Latynina](/wiki/Larisa_Latynina), who currently holds the record for the most gold Olympic medals won by a woman (and held the record for most Olympic medals won per person from 1964 until 2012 when swimmer [Michael Phelps](/wiki/Michael_Phelps) replaced her record), established the USSR as the dominant force in gymnastics for many years.[[311]](#cite_note-311) Today, Russia is the leading nation in [rhythmic gymnastics](/wiki/Rhythmic_gymnastics) with [Yevgeniya Kanayeva](/wiki/Yevgeniya_Kanayeva). Russian [synchronized swimming](/wiki/Synchronized_swimming) is the best in the world, with almost all gold medals at Olympics and World Championships having been swept by Russians in recent decades. [Figure skating](/wiki/Figure_skating) is another popular sport in Russia, especially [pair skating](/wiki/Pair_skating) and [ice dancing](/wiki/Ice_dancing). With the exception of [2010](/wiki/Figure_skating_at_the_2010_Winter_Olympics) a Soviet or Russian pair has won gold at every Winter Olympics since 1964.

Since the end of the Soviet era, tennis has grown in popularity and Russia has produced a number of famous players, including [Maria Sharapova](/wiki/Maria_Sharapova), the world's highest paid female athlete.[[312]](#cite_note-312) In martial arts, Russia produced the sport [Sambo](/wiki/Sambo_(martial_art)) and renowned fighters, like [Fedor Emelianenko](/wiki/Fedor_Emelianenko). [Chess](/wiki/Chess) is a widely popular pastime in Russia; from 1927, Russian grandmasters have held the [world chess championship](/wiki/World_chess_championship) almost continuously.[[313]](#cite_note-313) The [2014 Winter Olympics](/wiki/2014_Winter_Olympics) were held in Sochi in the south of Russia. Russia won the largest number of medals among the participating nations with 13 gold, 11 silver, and 9 bronze medals for a total of 33 medals. Commentators evaluated the Games as having been an overall success.[[314]](#cite_note-314)[[315]](#cite_note-315) Formula One is also becoming increasingly popular in Russia. In 2010 [Vitaly Petrov](/wiki/Vitaly_Petrov) of [Vyborg](/wiki/Vyborg) became the first Russian to drive in Formula One, and was soon followed by a second - [Daniil Kvyat](/wiki/Daniil_Kvyat), from [Ufa](/wiki/Ufa) - in 2014. There had only been two Russian Grands Prix (in 1913 and 1914), but the [Russian Grand Prix](/wiki/Russian_Grand_Prix) returned as part of the [Formula One](/wiki/Formula_One) season in [2014](/wiki/2014_Formula_One_season), as part of a six-year deal.[[316]](#cite_note-316)

### National holidays and symbols[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=43)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Alyye_parusa.jpg)[Scarlet Sails](/wiki/Scarlet_Sails_(tradition)) celebration on the [Neva](/wiki/Neva) river in [Saint Petersburg](/wiki/Saint_Petersburg) There are seven [public holidays in Russia](/wiki/Public_holidays_in_Russia),[[317]](#cite_note-317) except those always celebrated on Sunday. Russian New Year traditions resemble those of the Western Christmas, with [New Year Trees](/wiki/New_Year_Tree) and gifts, and [Ded Moroz](/wiki/Ded_Moroz) ([Father Frost](/wiki/Father_Frost)) playing the same role as [Santa Claus](/wiki/Santa_Claus). [Orthodox Christmas](/wiki/Orthodox_Christmas) falls on 7 January, because the [Russian Orthodox Church](/wiki/Russian_Orthodox_Church) still follows the [Julian calendar](/wiki/Julian_calendar), and all Orthodox holidays are 13 days after Western ones. Two other major Christian holidays are Easter and [Trinity Sunday](/wiki/Trinity_Sunday). [Kurban Bayram](/wiki/Kurban_Bayram) and [Uraza Bayram](/wiki/Uraza_Bayram) are celebrated by Russian Muslims.

Further Russian public holidays include [Defender of the Fatherland Day](/wiki/Defender_of_the_Fatherland_Day) (23 February), which honors Russian men, especially those serving in the army; [International Women's Day](/wiki/International_Women's_Day) (8 March), which combines the traditions of [Mother's Day](/wiki/Mother's_Day) and [Valentine's Day](/wiki/Valentine's_Day); [Spring and Labor Day](/wiki/Spring_and_Labor_Day) (1 May); [Victory Day](/wiki/Victory_Day_(9_May)); [Russia Day](/wiki/Russia_Day) (12 June); and [Unity Day](/wiki/Unity_Day_(Russia)) (4 November), commemorating the popular uprising which expelled the Polish occupation force from Moscow in 1612.

[Victory Day](/wiki/Victory_Day_(9_May)) is the second most popular holiday in Russia; it commemorates the victory over [Nazism](/wiki/Nazism) in the [Great Patriotic War](/wiki/Great_Patriotic_War). A huge [military parade](/wiki/Military_parade), hosted by the [President of Russia](/wiki/President_of_Russia), is annually organised in Moscow on [Red Square](/wiki/Red_Square). Similar parades take place in all major Russian cities and cities with the status [*Hero city*](/wiki/Hero_city) or *City of Military Glory*.

Popular non-public holidays include [Old New Year](/wiki/Old_New_Year) (the New Year according to the Julian Calendar on 14 January), [Tatiana Day](/wiki/Tatiana_Day) (students holiday on 25 January), [Maslenitsa](/wiki/Maslenitsa) (a pre-Christian spring holiday a week before the [Great Lent](/wiki/Great_Lent)), [Cosmonautics Day](/wiki/Cosmonautics_Day) (in tribute to the first human trip into space), [Ivan Kupala Day](/wiki/Ivan_Kupala_Day) (another pre-Christian holiday on 7 July) and [Peter and Fevronia Day](/wiki/Peter_and_Fevronia_Day) (which takes place on 8 July and is the Russian analogue of Valentine's Day, focusing, however, on family love and fidelity).

[thumb|](/wiki/File:Russian-Matroshka2.jpg)[Matryoshka doll](/wiki/Matryoshka_doll) taken apart State symbols of Russia include the [Byzantine](/wiki/Byzantine) [double-headed eagle](/wiki/Double-headed_eagle), combined with [St. George of Moscow](/wiki/St._George_of_Moscow) in the [Russian coat of arms](/wiki/Russian_coat_of_arms). The [Russian flag](/wiki/Russian_flag) dates from the late [Tsardom of Russia](/wiki/Tsardom_of_Russia) period and has been widely used since the time of the [Russian Empire](/wiki/Russian_Empire). The [Russian anthem](/wiki/Russian_anthem) shares its music with the [Soviet Anthem](/wiki/Soviet_Anthem), though not the lyrics. The imperial [motto](/wiki/Motto) *God is with us* and the Soviet motto *Proletarians of all countries, unite!* are now obsolete and no new motto has replaced them. The [hammer and sickle](/wiki/Hammer_and_sickle) and the full [Soviet coat of arms](/wiki/Soviet_coat_of_arms) are still widely seen in Russian cities as a part of old architectural decorations. The Soviet [Red Stars](/wiki/Red_Star) are also encountered, often on military equipment and war memorials. The [Red Banner](/wiki/Red_Banner) continues to be honored, especially the [Banner of Victory](/wiki/Banner_of_Victory) of 1945.

The [Matryoshka doll](/wiki/Matryoshka_doll) is a recognizable symbol of Russia, and the towers of [Moscow Kremlin](/wiki/Moscow_Kremlin) and [Saint Basil's Cathedral](/wiki/Saint_Basil's_Cathedral) in Moscow are Russia's main architectural icons. [Cheburashka](/wiki/Cheburashka) is a mascot of the [Russian national Olympic team](/wiki/Russian_national_Olympic_team). [St. Mary](/wiki/St._Mary), [St. Nicholas](/wiki/St._Nicholas), [St. Andrew](/wiki/St._Andrew), [St. George](/wiki/St._George), [St. Alexander Nevsky](/wiki/St._Alexander_Nevsky), [St. Sergius of Radonezh](/wiki/St._Sergius_of_Radonezh) and [St. Seraphim of Sarov](/wiki/St._Seraphim_of_Sarov) are Russia's [patron saints](/wiki/Patron_saint). [Chamomile](/wiki/Chamomile) is the [national flower](/wiki/National_flower), while [birch](/wiki/Birch) is the [national tree](/wiki/National_tree). The [Russian bear](/wiki/Russian_bear) is an animal symbol and a [national personification](/wiki/National_personification) of Russia, though this image has a Western origin and Russians themselves have accepted it only fairly recently. The native Russian national personification is [Mother Russia](/wiki/Mother_Russia).

### Tourism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=44)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|left|](/wiki/File:PeterhofGrandCascade.JPG)[Grand Cascade](/wiki/Peterhof_Palace#The_Grand_Cascade_and_Samson_Fountain) in [Peterhof](/wiki/Peterhof_Palace), a popular tourist destination in Saint Petersburg

Tourism in Russia has seen rapid growth since the late Soviet period, first domestic tourism and then international tourism, fueled by the rich cultural heritage and great natural variety of the country. Major tourist routes in Russia include a journey around the [Golden Ring](/wiki/Golden_Ring) of ancient cities, cruises on the big rivers like the [Volga](/wiki/Volga), and long journeys on the famous [Trans-Siberian Railway](/wiki/Trans-Siberian_Railway). In 2013, Russia was visited by 28.4 million [tourists](/wiki/Tourist); it is the ninth most visited country in the world and the seventh most visited in Europe.[[318]](#cite_note-318) The number of Western visitors dropped in 2014.[[319]](#cite_note-319) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Mamaev_kurgan_(ОКН).JPG)[*The Motherland Calls*](/wiki/The_Motherland_Calls) in [Volgograd](/wiki/Volgograd) is the tallest statue of a woman in the world (not including pedestals) The most visited destinations in Russia are Moscow and Saint Petersburg, the current and former capitals of the country. Recognized as [World Cities](/wiki/World_Cities), they feature such world-renowned museums as the [Tretyakov Gallery](/wiki/Tretyakov_Gallery) and the [Hermitage](/wiki/Hermitage_Museum), famous theaters like [Bolshoi](/wiki/Bolshoi_Theater) and [Mariinsky](/wiki/Mariinsky_Theater), ornate churches like Saint Basil's Cathedral, [Cathedral of Christ the Saviour](/wiki/Cathedral_of_Christ_the_Saviour), [Saint Isaac's Cathedral](/wiki/Saint_Isaac's_Cathedral) and [Church of the Savior on Blood](/wiki/Church_of_the_Savior_on_Blood), impressive fortifications like the [Kremlin](/wiki/Moscow_Kremlin) and [Peter and Paul Fortress](/wiki/Peter_and_Paul_Fortress), beautiful squares and streets like [Red Square](/wiki/Red_Square), [Palace Square](/wiki/Palace_Square), [Tverskaya Street](/wiki/Tverskaya_Street) and [Nevsky Prospect](/wiki/Nevsky_Prospect). Rich palaces and parks are found in the former imperial residences in suburbs of Moscow ([Kolomenskoye](/wiki/Kolomenskoye), [Tsaritsyno](/wiki/Tsaritsyno_Park)) and St Petersburg ([Peterhof](/wiki/Peterhof_Palace), [Strelna](/wiki/Strelna), [Oranienbaum](/wiki/Oranienbaum,_Russia), [Gatchina](/wiki/Gatchina_Palace), [Pavlovsk](/wiki/Pavlovsk_Palace) and [Tsarskoye Selo](/wiki/Tsarskoye_Selo)). Moscow displays [Soviet architecture](/wiki/Soviet_architecture) at its best, along with [modern skyscrapers](/wiki/Moscow_International_Business_Center), while St Petersburg, nicknamed *Venice of the North*, boasts of its classical architecture, many rivers, channels and [bridges](/wiki/Bridges_in_Saint_Petersburg).

[Kazan](/wiki/Kazan), the capital of [Tatarstan](/wiki/Tatarstan), shows a mix of Christian Russian and Muslim Tatar cultures. The city has registered a brand *The Third Capital of Russia*, though a number of other major cities compete for this status, including [Novosibirsk](/wiki/Novosibirsk), [Yekaterinburg](/wiki/Yekaterinburg) and [Nizhny Novgorod](/wiki/Nizhny_Novgorod).

The warm subtropical Black Sea coast of Russia is the site for a number of popular sea resorts, like [Sochi](/wiki/Sochi), the follow-up host of the [2014 Winter Olympics](/wiki/2014_Winter_Olympics). The mountains of the [Northern Caucasus](/wiki/Northern_Caucasus) contain popular ski resorts such as [Dombay](/wiki/Dombay,_Russia). The most famous natural destination in Russia is [Lake Baikal](/wiki/Lake_Baikal), *the Blue Eye of Siberia*. This unique lake, the oldest and deepest in the world, has crystal-clear waters and is surrounded by [taiga](/wiki/Taiga)-covered mountains. Other popular natural destinations include [Kamchatka](/wiki/Kamchatka) with its volcanoes and geysers, [Karelia](/wiki/Karelia) with its lakes and [granite](/wiki/Granite) rocks, the snowy [Altai Mountains](/wiki/Altai_Mountains), and the wild steppes of [Tyva](/wiki/Tyva).

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=45)]

[Template:Portal](/wiki/Template:Portal) [Template:Wikipedia books](/wiki/Template:Wikipedia_books)

* [Outline of Russia](/wiki/Outline_of_Russia)
* [Index of Soviet Union-related articles](/wiki/Index_of_Soviet_Union-related_articles)
* [International rankings of Russia](/wiki/International_rankings_of_Russia)
* [Timeline of Russian history](/wiki/Timeline_of_Russian_history)
* [Politics of Russia](/wiki/Politics_of_Russia)
* [Economy of Russia](/wiki/Economy_of_Russia)
* [Geology of Russia](/wiki/Geology_of_Russia)

## Notes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=46)]

[Template:Notelist](/wiki/Template:Notelist)

## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=47)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=48)]

[Template:Sister project links](/wiki/Template:Sister_project_links) [Template:Wiktionary](/wiki/Template:Wiktionary)

* [Template:Dmoz](/wiki/Template:Dmoz)
* [Template:Wikiatlas](/wiki/Template:Wikiatlas)
* [Template:Osmrelation-inline](/wiki/Template:Osmrelation-inline)
* [Template:CIA World Factbook link](/wiki/Template:CIA_World_Factbook_link)
* [Russia](http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/govpubs/for/russia.htm) at *UCB Libraries GovPubs*
* [Russia](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-17839672) from the [BBC News](/wiki/BBC_News)
* [Russia](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/513251/Russia) at [*Encyclopædia Britannica*](/wiki/Encyclopædia_Britannica)

Government

* [Official Russian governmental portal](http://www.gov.ru/index_en.html)
* [Chief of State and Cabinet Members](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/world-leaders-1/RS.html)
* [Russian News Agency "Ria Novosti"](http://en.rian.ru/)
* [Russian radio "Voice of Russia"](http://web.archive.org/web/20110513104203/http://english.ruvr.ru/2010/09/24/22168374.html)

Other

* [Post-Soviet Problems](http://repository.library.georgetown.edu/handle/10822/552653) from the [Dean Peter Krogh Foreign Affairs Digital Archives](https://repository.library.georgetown.edu/handle/10822/552494/browse?type=title)
* [Russia Beyond the Headlines](http://rbth.ru/) International news project about Russia
* [Way to Russia. An Introduction to Russia and Russian People](http://www.waytorussia.net/WhatIsRussia/Intro.html)
* [Russia cities and regions guide](http://russiatrek.org/)
* [Official Russia Travel Guide](http://www.russia-travel.com/)
* [Russian Consulate](http://russianconsulate.com/)
* [Russia Beyond the Headlines](http://rbth.ru/) International news project about Russia
* [Moscow Russia Insider's Guide](http://www.moscow-russia-insiders-guide.com/) Moscow and Russia through Muscovite's eyes.

[Template:Russia topics](/wiki/Template:Russia_topics) [Template:Russian souvenirs](/wiki/Template:Russian_souvenirs) [Template:Subdivisions of Russia](/wiki/Template:Subdivisions_of_Russia) [Template:World Heritage Sites in Russia](/wiki/Template:World_Heritage_Sites_in_Russia) [Template:Lists of Russians](/wiki/Template:Lists_of_Russians) [Template:Navboxes](/wiki/Template:Navboxes) [Template:Navboxes](/wiki/Template:Navboxes)

[Template:Use dmy dates](/wiki/Template:Use_dmy_dates) [Template:Geographic location](/wiki/Template:Geographic_location)

[Template:Authority control](/wiki/Template:Authority_control)

[Category:Russia](/wiki/Category:Russia) [Category:BRICS nations](/wiki/Category:BRICS_nations) [Category:Caspian littoral states](/wiki/Category:Caspian_littoral_states) [Category:Central Asian countries](/wiki/Category:Central_Asian_countries) [Category:Countries in Europe](/wiki/Category:Countries_in_Europe) [Category:East Asian countries](/wiki/Category:East_Asian_countries) [Category:Eastern Europe](/wiki/Category:Eastern_Europe) [Category:Federal republics](/wiki/Category:Federal_republics) [Category:G8 nations](/wiki/Category:G8_nations) [Category:G20 nations](/wiki/Category:G20_nations) [Category:Member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States](/wiki/Category:Member_states_of_the_Commonwealth_of_Independent_States) [Category:Member states of the Council of Europe](/wiki/Category:Member_states_of_the_Council_of_Europe) [Category:Member states of the United Nations](/wiki/Category:Member_states_of_the_United_Nations) [Category:North Asian countries](/wiki/Category:North_Asian_countries) [Category:Northeast Asian countries](/wiki/Category:Northeast_Asian_countries) [Category:Russian-speaking countries and territories](/wiki/Category:Russian-speaking_countries_and_territories) [Category:Slavic countries and territories](/wiki/Category:Slavic_countries_and_territories) [Category:States and territories established in 862](/wiki/Category:States_and_territories_established_in_862) [Category:Western Asian countries](/wiki/Category:Western_Asian_countries) [Category:E7 nations](/wiki/Category:E7_nations)