

Russia Gearing Up for National Holiday

By [The Moscow Times](#)

June 10, 2013

The  Moscow Times

On Wednesday, June 12, offices around Russia will empty as the country celebrates Russia Day, one of the nation's youngest public holidays.

Since the day falls in the middle of the week, it will not be rearranged to make up a long weekend.

"People will have to organize their working week to take this into account: Shock work from Monday to Tuesday and then again from Thursday to Friday [will be required]," Ivan Shklovets, deputy head of the Federal Labor and Employment Service, told Interfax.

Russia Day harks back to June 12, 1990, when the first Congress of People's Deputies ratified the Declaration of Sovereignty of the Russian Republic, marking the constitutional start of the Russian state.

Exactly a year later, Boris Yeltsin won 57 percent of the vote in Russia's first nationwide free elections to become Russia's first president.

June 12 became a public holiday in 1994. Originally named the Day of Signing the Declaration of State Sovereignty, the holiday was officially renamed in 2002.

Russia Day was conceived as a holiday of freedom, civil peace and warmhearted agreement of all people on the basis of law and fairness, according to its official website.

The day will see concerts, firework displays and various events, including a "Parade of Districts" starting at Pushkin Square, representing 12 Moscow districts and 12 centuries of Russian history.

A five-hour pop concert on Red Square, a jazz festival at Tsaritsyno park, a press festival at Park Pobedy, and a celebration called "Unity of Culture — Unity of Nation" at Kuzminki park will also be part of the day's festivities.

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