

Police Say 'Only' 8 Mob Bosses Remain in Moscow

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Moscow has been the scene of many high-profile mob hits.

At least eight mob bosses currently reside in Moscow, with many of the 44 registered having been chased out of the city, a police representative said Thursday.

"Different sources offer different information about how many mob bosses are in Moscow. A total of 44 are registered, but only eight actually live on the territory of Moscow," Mikhail Gusakov, deputy head of the Interior Ministry's manhunt unit, was cited as saying by Interfax news agency on Thursday.

Some of those registered live outside of Russia or Moscow, he said, while others have already been prosecuted for their crimes, Interfax reported.

Gusakov noted that in 2014 nine mob bosses were brought to justice, Interfax reported.

In late December, the Rosbalt news agency said "several dozen" mob bosses had converged

in Moscow for the largest meeting of the criminal underworld in years.

Moscow has been the scene of many high-profile mob hits, including the 1990s-style assassination of Aslan Usoyan, better known as Grandpa ("Ded") Khasan, in 2013. Usoyan was killed by a sniper in broad daylight while exiting a restaurant in central Moscow, triggering fears of a gangland war erupting in the city.

The phenomenon of "vory v zakone," or thieves-in-law, gained momentum with the fall of the Soviet Union, when the leaders of prison groups in the gulags established a flourishing black market that exploited the instability of the new government. Russia's biggest organized crime organizations comprise Georgians, Armenians and Azeri nationals.

In its heyday in the late '90s, Russia's various organized crime factions had such great reach that then-director of the FBI Louis Freeh described the Russian mafia as the greatest threat to U.S. national security, though he later retracted the claim, the BBC reported.

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