

# Russia's Economic Crisis Forces Secret Service FSB to Downsize

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The FSB headquarters in Moscow.

Russia is reportedly downsizing the Federal Security Service (FSB) and reducing its police force by 10 percent in light of the country's severe economic downturn.

Practically every regional branch of the FSB, an internal intelligence agency that succeeded the Soviet KGB, has received an order from the agency's chief Alexander Bortnikov to reduce the size of its staff, St. Petersburg news site Fontanka.ru reported Wednesday.

The first cuts to be made will be to the FSB's regional financial planning and economic divisions, and the jobs of retiring staff members will not be filled this year, the report said, citing the order as well as undisclosed sources.

Similarly, the federal police force is reducing staff by "at least 10 percent," Fontanka.ru reported last week, citing an order by the Interior Ministry's head, Vladimir Kolokoltsev.

The police force's regional branches are also restricted from hiring new employees this year,

the news site said.

Russia has entered into an economic crisis over the past year amid the plummeting price of oil and the toll taken by Western sanctions imposed against Russia over its Ukraine policy.

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