

Russia's Natural Population Declines for 4th Straight Year – Audit Chamber

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Alexander Avilov / Moskva News Agency

Russia's natural population decline has continued for a fourth consecutive year in 2019, the Audit Chamber [said](#) Thursday as the country continues to struggle with a demographic crisis.

Russia's total population [dropped](#) for the first time in a decade in 2018, totaling 146.8 million at the end of last year as migration numbers hit record lows. The United Nations has [predicted](#) that Russia's population could halve to fewer than 84 million people by 2100.

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“The natural population decline accelerating for the fourth year in a row creates serious risks for Russia's national goal of ensuring sustainable growth,” the Audit Chamber said.

There were 1.21 million deaths versus 994,300 live births in Russia between Jan. 1-Aug. 31, according to the Audit Chamber's quarterly budget report.

That amounts to a natural population decline of 219,200 and nearly equals the decline seen in all of 2018.

Russia's overall population has declined by 52,500 people since Jan. 1 and totaled 146.7 million as of Sept. 1, according to the Audit Chamber's report.

President Vladimir Putin has [prioritized](#) Russia's migration policy, signing a 2019-2025 plan of action that the Kremlin hopes will attract more Russian-speaking migrants and offset falling birth rates. The Audit Chamber said that migration has compensated for 76% of Russia's natural population decline so far this year.

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