

Foreign Dignitaries Not Invited to Russia's WWII Victory Parade – Kremlin

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Russia will mark the 76th anniversary of the Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany in a massive military parade on Red Square on May 9. **Sergei Kiselyov / Moskva News Agency**

Russia will not invite foreign dignitaries to its annual World War II victory parade on Red Square next month, the Kremlin [announced](#) Wednesday.

“This year is not a [major] anniversary year, so we don’t intend to invite foreign participants,” President Vladimir Putin’s spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

Related article: [Russia to Display Advanced Armata Tanks at Red Square Parade](#)

“The rest will probably involve the usual invitations, but with added nuances that our sanitary authorities will determine closer to the date,” Interfax quoted Peskov as saying.

His comments follow reporting that suggests Moscow plans to lift coronavirus restrictions on mass gatherings to carry out the event. According to the RBC news website, the Mayor’s Office

plans to announce the [relaxed rules](#) by April 26.

Peskov previously [vowed](#) that the 2021 Victory Day parade will take place on its traditional date of May 9.

Last year's event, which marked the 75th anniversary of the Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany, was postponed by over a month due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The pandemic also scuttled plans for Chinese leader Xi Jinping and French President Emmanuel Macron to attend the 2020 parade. Instead, Putin was flanked by heads of former Soviet republics and elderly war veterans in uniforms decorated with medals.

Peskov last month said that Russia's daily Covid-19 caseload of under 9,000 — a threefold drop from the country's peak during the second wave late last year — raised hopes that health officials would allow mass attendance at the parade.

This year's parade will showcase 12,000 troops as well as up to 200 pieces of military hardware, including Russia's state-of-the-art Armata tanks.

With preparations in full swing, Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu ordered military chiefs Tuesday to take measures against the spread of Covid-19 among guests and participants.

Russia has one of the world's highest Covid-19 death tolls and caseloads.

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