

Russia's Population Decline Hits Record Rate

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An aerial view of the Butovo Cemetery in Moscow. **Denis Voronin / Moskva News Agency**

Russia's population shrank by a record average of 86,000 people a month between January and May, state statistics agency Rosstat has said.

The decline surpasses the previous record contraction of 57,000 people a month in 2002, when Russia's population shrank to 145.3 million from nearly 146 million the previous year.

Russia's population has fallen to 145.1 million after a decline of 430,000 people, according to Rosstat's latest demographic report.

The rate of Russia's population decline has almost doubled since 2021 and nearly tripled since 2020, according to The Moscow Times' [Russian service](#).

Russia's population has been in near-constant decline for decades, and the coronavirus pandemic led to the country's largest natural population decline since the end of the Soviet Union in 2021.

Rosstat's data showed Russia's natural population — a figure which counts registered deaths and births, excluding the effects of migration — declined by 355,000 between January and May 2022.

Despite Russia's invasion of Ukraine that recent outside estimates say has resulted in the deaths of close to 40,000 Russian troops, the Rosstat data showed deaths declining by 36,100 compared with January–May 2021 and totaling 878,300 in January–May 2022.

Births also declined by 31,100 and totaled 523,200 over the same period.

An estimated 75,300 migrants have meanwhile left Russia, or 5,000 fewer than in January–May 2021.

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