The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Austria Expels 3 Russian Diplomats on Suspicion of Spying

By AFP

May 04, 2026



The Russian embassy in Vienna. **C.Stadler/Bwag (CC BY-SA 4.0)**

Austria has expelled three employees of the Russian Embassy in Vienna on suspicion of spying, its foreign ministry said Monday.

The move follows a report by public broadcaster ORF detailing installations on the Russian diplomatic compound's roof that authorities believe were used to collect and transmit data via satellite internet.

In a statement sent to AFP, Austria's foreign ministry confirmed the report, which said Russia's ambassador had been summoned in April over the issue.

"Espionage is a security problem for Austria. In this government, we have initiated a change of course and are taking consistent action against it," Austrian Foreign Minister Beate Meinl-Reisinger said in the statement.

"We have communicated this to the Russian side in no uncertain terms, including with regard to the forest of antennas at the Russian mission. What is clear is this: It is unacceptable for diplomatic immunity to be used to conduct espionage," she said.

The Russian Embassy called the expulsions "outrageous" and "politically motivated," vowing a "harsh" retaliatory response against Austria.

Since Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, Austria has expelled around a dozen Russian diplomats.

The conservative-led coalition government has vowed to broaden the scope of spying offenses to better protect the international agencies hosted in Vienna, including the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2026/05/04/austria-expels-3-russian-diplomats-on-suspicion-of-spying-a92676