

# Russia

<b>Response to Information Request Number:</b>	RUS01002.IMJ
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<b>Subject:</b>	Russia: Information on the Treatment of Jews in the Russian Federation
<b>From:</b>	INS Resource Information Center, Washington, DC
<b>Keywords:</b>	Russian Federation / Jews / Anti-Semitism / Nationalism / Religious Minorities /

## Query:

What is the current situation of Jews and Anti-Semitism in Russia?

## Response:

The final years of the Yeltsin government witnessed an escalation of anti-Semitic political rhetoric and popular violence. Overt anti-Semitic statements from government officials were common, one member of the Russian Parliament calling openly for the murder of Jews. In 1998-1999 there were numerous incidents of anti-Semitic violence including several bombings or attempted bombings of synagogues. The rise of anti-Semitic political movements and acts of violence were concentrated in provincial cities, with a less dramatic incidence in Moscow (UCSJ, 1 August 2000).

According to the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, however, there has been a noticeable decrease in violent anti-Semitic incidents since the election of Vladimir Putin in March 2000. Putin has made numerous strong statements condemning anti-Semitism in Russia, and according to the head of the Federation of Russian Jewish Communities, Rabbi Berl Lazar, the number of Jewish communities, schools and institutions has increased significantly in recent years. According to the director of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia, Yonya Gorin, emigration to Israel has also declined markedly in recent years (Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 1 August 2000).

There remain concerns about extreme nationalist movements, especially outside Moscow, and the vocal anti-Semitism of members of the military, secret service and the leadership of the Communist Party. The arrest of Vladimir Gusinsky, an independent media mogul critical of the Putin government and the President of the World Jewish Congress, was seen by many as an attempt to intimidate Russian Jews as well as critics of the regime. Isolated acts of violence against Jews and other religious minorities continue to occur. In September 2000 a Jewish day school was vandalized in Ryazan, and in October 2000 Moscow's Central Synagogue was raided in connection with the Gusinsky affair (U.S. Dept. of State, 3 October 2000).

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<[http://www.usis.it/file2000\\_10/alia/a0100308.htm](http://www.usis.it/file2000_10/alia/a0100308.htm)> [Accessed on 6 February 2001].

#### Attachments

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