

The Russian Federation

Capital:	Moscow
Religion:	Orthodox Christianity is the dominant religion in Russia, with approx. 100 million declared followers. Other smaller churches, such as Catholic, Armenian Gregorian and various Protestant have strong followings. Other traditional religions of Russia are Islam and Judaism. Buddhism is a dominant religion in the Buryatia, Tuva, and Kalmykia regions.
Government:	A federal semi-presidential constitutional republic. It is a multi-party system where the President of Russia is the head of state and appoints the Prime Minister with parliamentary approval.
Ethnic Groups:	Russians - 81%; others groups include: Tatars, Ukrainians, Bashkirs and Chuavashes
Language:	Russian is the official language throughout the country with 27 other co-official languages in different regions. These include Ossetic, Tatar, Chechen, Yakut and others.
Currency:	The unit of currency in Russia is the Russian Rubel.

- Russia, or formally: the Russian Federation, is the largest country in the world, spanning nine times zones and inhabited by 143 million people
- The East Slaves who emerged as a noticeable group in Europe between the third and eight centuries have been recognized as the precursors of the nation. In 988 the country adopted Orthodox Christianity and since then the Russian civilization have become a fusion of the Byzantine and Slavic cultures. By the eighteenth century the Russ Empire stretched from Poland in Europe to Alaska in North America.
- After the Russian Revolution in 1917, the country changed its name to the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (the SFSR) and become the leading part of the Soviet Union, the first socialist state on the globe. When the Soviet Union broke down in 1991, the Russian Federation became the successor of the SFSR.
- The country has changed deeply after the Soviet Union disintegration. The changes include privatization and market and trade liberalization. The control of enterprises was shifted from state agencies to individuals, most often connected in some way to the government. These transition processes were often corrupted and lawless and left the country suffering from a deep economic crisis in the 1990s.



- The contemporary picture of the country is a mixture of 'the old' and 'the new'. Many business people in Russia have spent most of their lives in the socialist era, which is often reflected by the hierarchical structure of the business practices.
- Nowadays, Russia is one of the fastest growing economies in the World. The country economy is ranked 9th place by nominal GDP.

Business and Social Etiquette

- Punctuality is a must. This means you are supposed to be 100% on time, while a couple of minutes delay on your Russian host part is considered of little importance. Therefore, do not expect to hear apologies if your hosts are late.
- Fax and e-mails are the best way of communication, as postal services are often unreliable.
- Paperwork is a crucial part of doing business in Russia. Business agreements are not valid until the relevant documents are signed. Generally, Russians have little faith in verbal agreements and unsigned documents.
- Appointments are necessary to meet a company's executives.
- Business hours are usually 9am to 6pm Monday-Friday and also Saturday mornings for some companies.
- The period between the end of July and August is the time of vacation for many business people and setting an appointment may be difficult.
- Once the appointment is booked, do everything you can to avoid cancellations.
- Dress code: Russian business people are very focused on the way they dress and they spend more money from their budget on clothing than many other nations. Men are supposed to wear suits, while women can chose between a suit or an elegant dress. Do not wear extravagant clothes or excessive jewellery on business occasions.
- The business structure in Russia is still hierarchical. At the beginning of the meeting the head of an organization is supposed to open the discussion and introductions should be made in order of importance.
- Physical contact, such as placing a hand on the arm or even embracing is common and accepted in business meetings.



- Be careful when making a compliment (e.g. if you start admiring a decorative object in a meeting room your host may think you want it and will insist you take it with you).
- Russians enjoy giving and receiving gifts and spend lots of money on them. Gifts are expected for social events as a 'thank-you' gesture. Bringing a small gift representing your company will be well regarded.
- Business cards are essential when conducting business. If possible, make sure one side of your card is in English, while the other is in Russian.
- Business meetings can take place in informal environments (e.g. restaurants) but the final agreements are always discussed in the company offices.
- Wearing coats in public spaces, such as theatres, universities, or offices is unacceptable. Coats should be left in a cloakroom.
- The Russian business environment is still male-dominated, however this is changing.



Language

- Be aware that Russian people may speak metaphorically and symbolically.
- You are allowed to show your emotions when speaking. Russians often do.
- It would make a good impression if you were able to speak a couple of sentences in the Russian language.
- Russians have three names: the first is the given name, the last is the father's family name and the middle name, which is made of the father's first name.
- If you are in a close, friendly relationship, you can use the first name only when addressing a person. In all other situations – use full names, both for men and women.

English

Russian

Phonetics

Hello	привет	Pri-vjet
Good morning	доброе утро	Do-bre-ju-tra
Good evening	Добрый вечер	Do-bryj-vie-chier
Good bye	до свидания	Do-svi-dan-ja
Yes	да	Da
No	нет	Niet
Please	пожалуйста	Pa-zha-los-ta
Thank you	спасибо	Spa-si-ba
You're welcome	добро пожаловать	Do-bro-po-za-lo-vach
I don't understand	Я не понимаю	Ya-nhie-po-ni-ma-ju

