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Foreign Language Skills Valued by Russians, Poll Says

By The Moscow Times

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Nearly 60 percent of Russians speak at least one foreign language, while almost half would like to learn one, a poll conducted by the Public Opinion Foundation found.

Fifty-seven percent of the poll's participants said they know a foreign language with English the most common at 38 percent of respondents. German was the second most common language at 19 percent, while knowledge of French and Spanish was claimed by three and one percent respectively.

Among respondents who studied a foreign language, 38 percent said they had benefited from the gained knowledge, with many saying they had used their language skills recently in foreign trips, at work or while browsing the Internet. Most respondents, 57 percent, said knowledge of foreign languages constitutes an important skill in people's lives, while 40 percent said they do not consider it necessary.

Meanwhile, 46 percent of the polled Russians indicated that they would like to learn a foreign language. A quarter of respondents said they would like to learn English, 7 percent said they would choose French and 5 percent wanted to pick up German. The most commonly cited reason for those not wanting to learn a foreign language was old age, followed by the lack of a need to.

The poll was conducted over the phone with 1,000 respondents who could give multiple answers to each question, the report said.

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