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27,000 Emigrated From Russia Last Year, Chief Migration Official Says

By The Moscow Times

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About 26,000-27,000 Russian citizens emigrated from Russia last year for permanent residence abroad, primarily for employment reasons, said Federal Migration Service chief Konstantin Romodanovsky in an interview published Tuesday.

"Since 2008 we have been seeing a decreasing number of people going abroad for permanent residence," Romodanovsky told Komsomolskaya Pravda.

He added that the number of those leaving the country "is not in millions or hundreds of thousands", Itar-Tass reported.

The majority of those who left the country have not severed their ties with Russia for good. They leave the country for several years primarily for employment reasons, Romodanovsky said.

"Some can afford living between two homes. But overall our compatriots, as life shows, are not wealthy enough to have residence both here and abroad," Romodanovsky said.

At the same time, almost 140,000 foreigners received Russian citizenship last year. Together with those who were granted permanent residence status the number of new legal aliens and naturalized persons last year exceeded 260,000 people, the chief immigration official said.

According to the current demographic policy Russian migration authorities aim to bring that number to over 300,000 people each year, Romodanovsky said.

He added that many applications for Russian citizenship originate in the countries of the former Soviet Union especially Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan, Interfax reported.

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