

Moscow Could Issue 66,000 Extra Work Permits in 2014

By [Anna Dolgov](#)

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Moscow could sponsor an additional 66,000 work visas this year in response to high demand from foreign professionals and laborers seeking work in the city, and their potential employers, a news report said Monday.

The initial work permit quota for 2014 was 95,020, but City Hall has asked the Labor Ministry to raise it to 161,000, citing unused quotas that had been allocated to other regions and can now be redistributed, Izvestia reported Monday.

Nearly a quarter of the total projected allocation is expected to go to Ukrainians, a Moscow labor department spokesman, Anatoly Kurilov, said, Izvestia reported, adding that the violence in Ukraine's east may be among the reasons for the high share. Moldovans could be given another 30,000 permits, and Uzbeks 26,000, he added.

According to Labor Ministry draft order, 26,000 work permits will go to managerial-level employees, about 29,000 to construction workers, and 25,000 to unskilled laborers, the report said.

An unidentified official from the labor department attributed the distribution to employers' interest in skilled professionals, and a diminishing interest in laborers from Central Asia, Izvestia reported.

"Now more permits are being issued for European countries — Ukraine and Moldova — because skilled specialists arrive from there more often," the official was quoted as saying. "In the past, there were more permits for Asian countries, which mostly provided unskilled laborers."

The trend changed last year, the official added, Izvestia reported.

The fighting between pro-Moscow separatists and government forces in eastern Ukraine, which has caused some Ukrainians to seek homes and jobs in Russia, was also a factor in an increasing number of work permits being issued to the country's nationals, but not a major one, a labor department official said.

"Primarily, it is the decline in unskilled laborers that plays a role," the official was quoted as saying.

Head of the Working Migrants Union Renat Karimov told Izvestia that the number of foreign workers in Moscow is estimated at between 1 million and 2 million, many of whom do not have work permits, and that the planned quota increase should allow some undocumented workers — though only a small fraction of them — to gain legal status.

See also:

[Cabinet Sets 1.6 Million Quota For Foreign Work Visas in 2014](https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2014/07/28/moscow-could-issue-66000-extra-work-permits-in-2014-a37729)

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