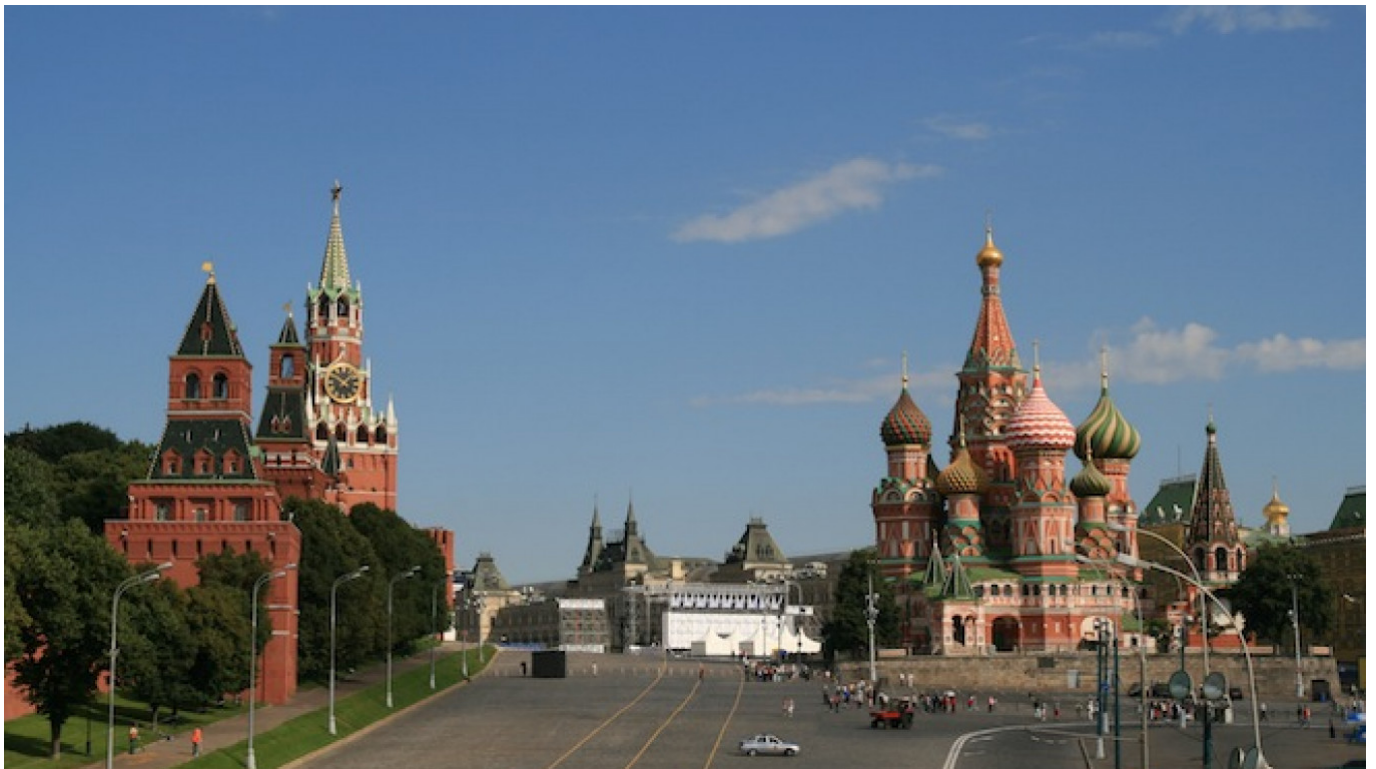


Russia Beats U.S. and Japan as Best Place to Live for Expats, Survey Shows

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A general view of Red Square in Moscow.

Russia has ranked 17th on HSBC Bank's annual list of the world's best countries for expats, beating other destinations like Japan, France and the United Kingdom.

Expats in 34 countries were asked in the [HSBC Expat poll](#) published Wednesday to judge their experiences on living abroad in three main categories — experience, economics and raising children — with Russia performing particularly well in the experience bracket.

Overall, Russia ranked in top spot for the quality of its social life on offer as well as for the opportunities available to make local friends, while it came in third for its working environment, the poll showed.

Perhaps surprisingly, Russia also scored top for "learning the local language," but only ranked 17th when it came to expats actually using their new linguistic skills.

The survey published online also shared some of the respondents' tips on life as an expat in Russia, with one suggestion reading: "If someone does not smile, don't take it personally. The younger generation are much friendlier and in many cases people speak English."

While expats were quick to make the most of the social life on offer in Russia, it seems they were less willing to take up the cuisine. Russia scored poorly for "enjoying local food" and "adapting to local food."

In the economics bracket, Russia ranked highly among expats for household income although those polled gave low marks to the state of the Russian economy, which has taken a battering following a drop in oil prices and Western sanctions against Moscow for its policy on Ukraine.

And while expats valued the quality of education available for their young ones in Russia — ranking it in fifth place — the country came last when expats were asked if their children had become more outgoing following their relocation abroad.

Topping the HSBC list for the second year running was Switzerland, which scored extremely well in the economics bracket, as well as for the quality of life available to residents.

Singapore, China, Germany and Bahrain ranked second to fifth, respectively, while Egypt propped up the rear of the list, one place ahead of the United Kingdom, the poll showed.

The U.S., ranked 30th, performed poorly in the survey, which was conducted exclusively among clients of HSBC's offshore banking service and therefore could have limited the profile of those questioned.

The HSBC survey was conducted by research company YouGov between April and May 2014, among 9,288 participants. Only those countries in which at least 100 expats replied were included in the report, while no margin of error for the poll was provided.

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