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Economic Crisis Driving Foreigners Out of Russia – Experts

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Expats from Western countries are not the only ones who no longer benefit from working in Russia.

Foreigners that used to live and work in Russia are now fleeing en masse, the Federal Migration Service has revealed.

Since January 2014, 41 percent of Spanish nationals, 38 percent of British nationals, 36 percent of U.S. nationals and 31 percent of German nationals have left Russia, the Noviye Izvestia newspaper reported Monday.

The falling price of oil and several waves of sanctions imposed against Russia by the West in connection with the annexation of Crimea and the ongoing Ukraine conflict led the ruble to lose 40 percent of its value against the dollar in 2014, helping plunge the country into an economic crisis.

Many large international corporations have shut down their branches in Russia, or have culled

their foreign specialists — who typically earn significantly more than their Russian counterparts — Noviye Izvestia reported.

Foreign specialists often earn 25-30 percent more than their similarly qualified colleagues from Russia, Ella Mikhailova, a consultant for Penny Lane Personnel recruiting agency, was cited as saying by Noviye Izvestia.

“In addition to that, expats often get perks — such as an apartment in the city center, a car, a gym membership, health insurance, compensation for plane tickets,” which makes them even more expensive for businesses that have been hit hard by the economic crisis, she was quoted as saying.

Expats from Western countries are not the only ones who no longer benefit from working in Russia. By the start of this month, some 20 percent of Tajik nationals had left Russia, Vedomosti financial daily reported Monday.

In 2014, between 1.2 and 1.3 million Tajik citizens worked in Russia, the report stated. By July 1, only 1 million remained.

Sumangul Tagoizoda, Tajik minister of labor and migration, attributed the trend to Russia's economic crisis and stricter migration legislation, the Interfax news agency reported Monday.

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