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Polls: Younger, Wealthier Russians More Willing to Emigrate

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Alexandr Avilov / Moskva News Agency

One in five residents of Moscow have expressed a willingness to emigrate, according to the results of two polls that contrast the traveling habits of residents of the capital to those of other Russians.

According to an independent survey by the Levada-Center published on Wednesday, Muscovites travel abroad at twice the rate of their counterparts in other cities. The results show a stratification in travel opportunities between wealthier and younger capital residents, and the rest of Russia.

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While a quarter of nationwide respondents said they own a valid passport, and a third have

traveled abroad at least once, that number is significantly higher among residents of Moscow, more than half of whom said they own a passport, while two-thirds have been abroad at least once.

Twice as many Muscovites as small town or rural residents said they are not against permanently leaving Russia.

Immigration also appeals to younger and wealthier Russians, according to the polls. For every older respondent, three younger Russians say they are willing to emigrate. For every poor respondent, two wealthy Russians say they would like to leave.

The gap between who has the means to travel, and who doesn't, grows starker when broken down by education and place of residence. Four times as many higher-educated respondents, five times as many wealthy Russians, and eight times as many Muscovites have said they are able to travel abroad.

The survey in Moscow was carried out among 512 residents between April 20 and May 3. Elsewhere, the Levada-Center conducted the survey among 1,600 people in 52 Russian regions between April 20 and April 24.

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