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# 170K Russian IT Specialists Could Emigrate by April – Industry

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**Sophia Sandurskaya / Moskva News Agency**

Up to 170,000 Russian IT specialists could flee the country by the end of April, industry figures warned Russian lawmakers Tuesday.

Between 50,000-70,000 have already left Russia, the Russian Association for Electronic Communications (RAEC) estimates, in what the industry body is calling the "first wave" of a mass exodus of creative, entrepreneurial and prosperous Russians following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine and the country's mounting international isolation.

Another 100,000 could leave in April, RAEC head Sergei Plugotarenko told Russian MPs during a session on the future of the country's IT industry.

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Young Russians have fled the country in huge numbers in the weeks since Russia invaded

Ukraine on Feb. 24, with many heading to former Soviet countries like Georgia, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan, as well as Turkey and Dubai.

“The only thing holding back the second wave is expensive tickets, expensive accommodation [in many countries] ... and no financial connectivity, it is now impossible to conduct [cross-border] transactions,” said Plugotarenko in a session titled “development of the IT industry in the context of sanctions,” Russia’s state-run Interfax news agency reported.

“But the second wave will definitely happen — according to our forecasts, 70,000-100,000 thousand people will leave in April — and that’s just IT specialists.”

The Russian government has introduced strict capital controls in response to Western sanctions, banning Russians from buying foreign currency at home and prohibiting sending dollars, euros and other hard currencies out of the country.

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