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Russia Allocates 5K Full-Ride University Scholarships for African Students

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Yaroslav Belyaev / TASS

Russia has allocated more than 5,000 state-funded university places for students from African countries in the current academic year, the head of the state-sponsored cultural diplomacy agency Rossotrudnichestvo said.

“This year, we received over 40,000 applications, twice as many as in the previous period,” Yevgeny Primakov said at the opening of the Russia-Africa Expo 2025 in Moscow, adding that the highest number of applicants came from Sudan, Guinea, Ghana and Chad.

Primakov noted that Moscow is actively expanding its humanitarian and educational cooperation with African countries.

“We are currently developing projects in five key countries: Egypt, Zambia, Tanzania, South Africa and Ethiopia,” he said.

He also announced plans to further grow the network of Russian cultural and education

centers, known as Russkiy Dom ("Russian Houses"), which aim to strengthen Russia's cultural and academic footprint on the continent.

"Under the partnership program, we've signed agreements with 14 centers across various African countries," Primakov said.

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The growing network of Russian Houses reflects increasing interest among young Africans in Russian education and language, he added.

"Russian language courses are now offered in many African countries, and attending them opens the door to Russian scholarships, universities, career opportunities and a new way of life," he said.

Critics accuse Russian Houses of serving as covert Kremlin propaganda and disinformation operations in the countries where they operate.

Primakov also said Rossotrudnichestvo plans to expand its scholarship programs beyond Africa.

In July, he announced that Russia would increase the number of state-funded university spots available to North Korean students, citing strong government support for the move.

"There is clear demand for expanding the quota, and the government has approved it," he said, noting that most North Korean students focus on technical fields and "are very talented."

He added that Russia is ready to offer free university places to Afghan citizens as well, but that such cooperation depends on receiving "a clear and transparent decision" from the Taliban allowing young Afghans to study in Russia.

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