

Russia Sees Sharp Drop in Foreigners Taking Citizenship Amid Migration Crackdown

March 23, 2026



Sergei Vedyashkin / Moskva News Agency

The number of foreigners acquiring Russian citizenship fell sharply in 2025, extending a multi-year decline that began after Moscow launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, according to Interior Ministry data [cited](#) by the Kommersant business daily.

Just 152,400 people received Russian passports last year, down 27.1% from 2024. The figure marks a steep fall from 735,000 in 2021, the last full pre-war year, and 691,000 in 2022. The number dropped further to 378,000 in 2023 and 209,000 in 2024.

The decline reflects both waning interest in Russian citizenship among foreigners and tightening migration policies as authorities step up controls while still relying on migrant labor to support the economy.

The number of temporary residence permits issued also fell significantly, dropping 29.7%

year-on-year to 31,300 in 2025. That compares with 89,700 in 2023 and 44,500 in 2024.

Permanent residence permits followed a similar trend, decreasing 27.3% to 156,200 last year, down from 273,100 in 2023 and 214,900 in 2024.

The tightening environment has coincided with a broader decline in the foreign population. The number of legally residing foreign nationals in Russia fell 8.6% year-on-year to 5.7 million in 2025. Registrations of foreign minors dropped 24.5% to 591,300, while the number of registered foreign women fell 7.6% to 1.7 million.

At the same time, the number of foreign workers formally employed in Russia continued to rise. As of Jan. 1, 2026, nearly 3 million foreigners were working under labor or civil contracts, up 7.6% from a year earlier. Employment contracts with citizens of Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) members rose 18.9% to 981,200.

Authorities have also stepped up enforcement measures. Since February 2025, around 850,000 people have been added to a registry of controlled individuals, a list targeting migration violators.

Those included face restrictions on activities such as registering businesses, marrying, purchasing property, opening bank accounts and obtaining driver's licenses.

Around 60,000 people were expelled from Russia in 2025, roughly three times fewer than in 2024, when 190,200 deportations were recorded.

Separately, participation in the state program encouraging the resettlement of "compatriots" to Russia also declined. About 26,700 people [relocated](#) under the scheme in 2025, down nearly 16% year-on-year and the lowest figure since 2010.

The total was almost three times lower than in 2021, when 78,500 people moved to Russia under the program.

The news of the decline in foreigners seeking citizenship comes as Russia faces a deepening [demographic](#) crisis. UN estimates have indicated that the country's population could decline by between 25% and 50% by [2100](#).

The Russian government has worked to offset the decline by offering [financial](#) incentives to mothers, [curbing](#) access to abortion and advising doctors to refer women to [psychiatrists](#) if they do not wish to have children.

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