

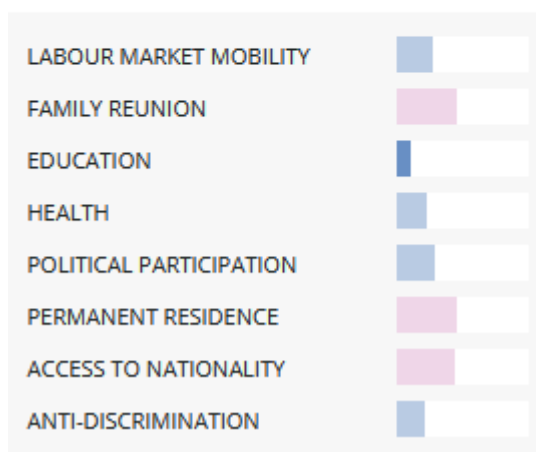


RUSSIA



Rank:

MIPEX Score (with Health): **31**



Changes in policy

As in most MIPEX countries, foreign citizens in Russia have benefited from a few small improvements over the past five years. From 2014 to 2019, Russia's MIPEX score improved by +2 points, similar to the average MIPEX country (+2 points on average). These changes are starting to acknowledge the issue of equal opportunities for foreign and Russian citizens, a critical area of weakness in Russia's integration policies. Political participation is one of those weaknesses that recent policies have started to address. Immigrant leaders of national immigrant associations have been offered some state funding and ad hoc opportunities to consult national policymakers through national commissions and councils. Another area of slight improvement is permanent residence. Those migrants able to qualify for permanent residence under Federal Law 115 of 2019 should be slightly more secure when renewing their permit. However, these changes are quite small that indicates only minor improvements in Russian integration policy.

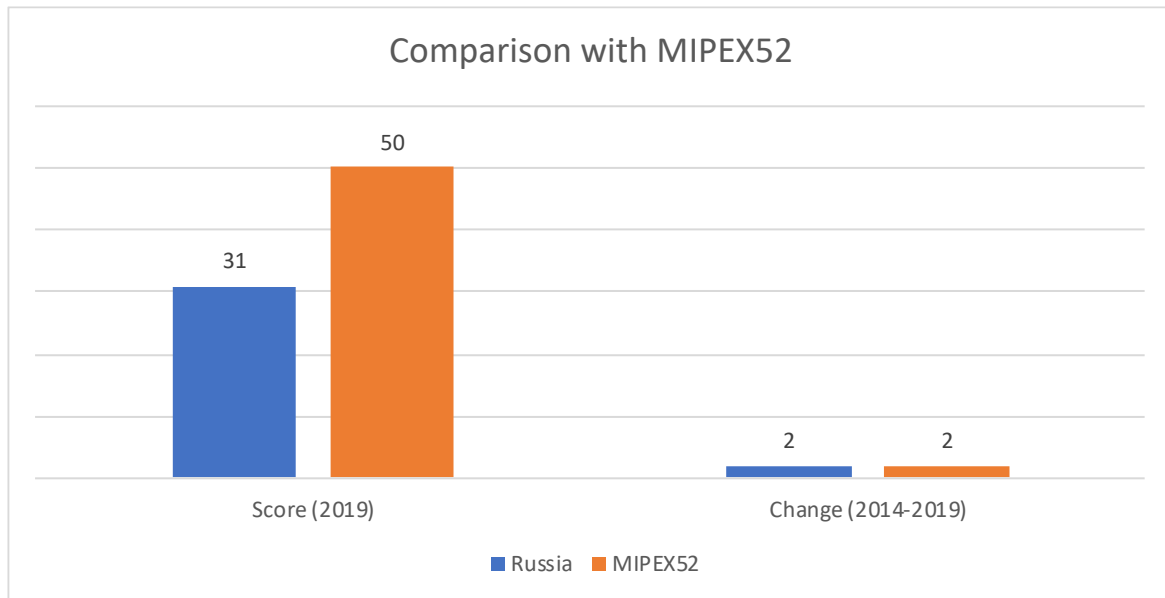
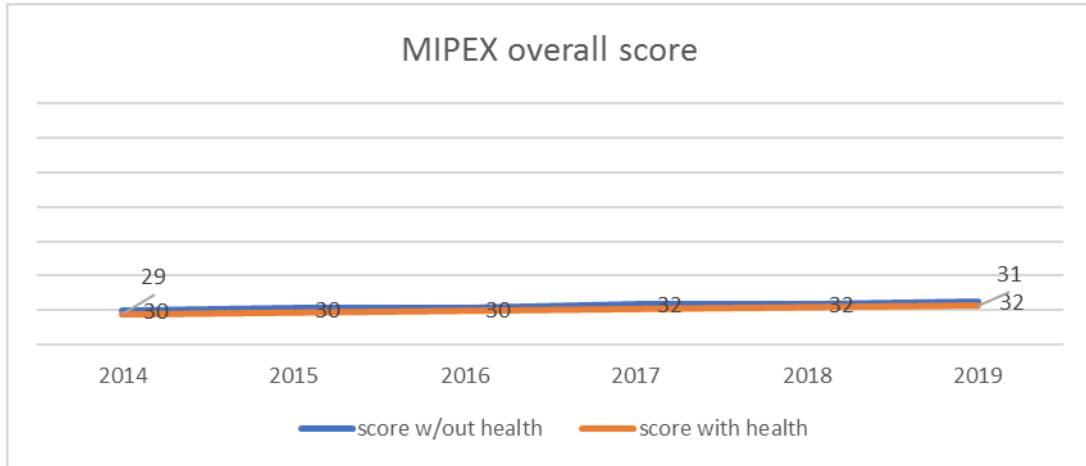
Positive changes on MIPEX indicators:

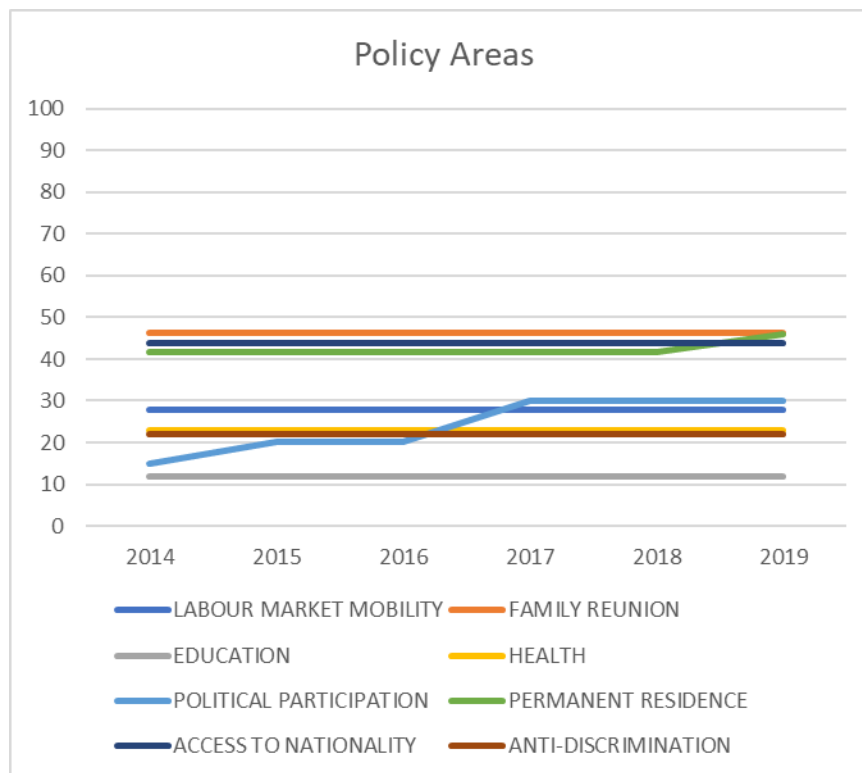
- Duration of the validity of permit for permanent residence
- Consultation of immigrant associations at national level
- Public funding for immigrant associations at national level



Negative changes on MIPEX indicators:

- None





Conclusions and recommendations

Russia's foreign-born population, one of the world's largest in raw numbers, face many obstacles and slightly unfavourable prospects for their long-term integration, because Russia's integration policies are some of the weakest of all 52 MIPEX countries. Overall, Russia scores 31 on the 100-point MIPEX scale, while the average MIPEX country scores 50/100. Russia ranks 3rd from the bottom, similar to China and slightly more advanced than Indonesia and India. The obstacles facing foreign citizens in Russia are greater than in neighbouring Moldova, Ukraine or any of EU or Central European country.

Russia's approach to integration is categorised by MIPEX as 'immigration without integration' because little is done for migrant integration by Russian policies. While foreign citizens may find some way to settle long-term and feel slightly secure in Russia, access to basic rights and equal opportunities are weaker in Russia than in most MIPEX countries.

Russia's approach to integration matters because state policies can influence whether or not integration works as a two-way process. The way that governments treat international migrants strongly influences how well immigrants and the public interact and think of each other. Under Russia's current approach, the Russian public receives contradictory messages that immigrants are potential Russian citizens, but also are their subordinates and strangers.



According to global public opinion data, Russia has high level of negative feelings and uncertainty towards migrants. International research suggests that restrictive policies like Russia's create a 'vicious circle' of exclusion that reinforces fear and separation. The public experiences higher levels of xenophobia and islamophobia and lower levels of social trust, which leads them to fewer contacts and positive experiences with immigrants.

Obstacles emerge for foreign citizens across many areas of life in Russia. Compared to the policies in most of the 52 MIPEX countries, foreign citizens in Russia are left more exposed to poorer labour market conditions and healthcare and potential discrimination in all areas of life. Ad hoc opportunities and support for immigrant leaders are improving but still slightly unfavourable for full political participation in Russia, as in many European countries. Russia has halfway favourable policies for family reunification, permanent residence and access to nationality.

- **Labour market mobility:** *Slightly unfavourable:* Although foreign citizens can study, work and access public employment services, they may end up in poorer quality jobs because they are denied equal access to all sectors of the labour market, self-employment, public sector, social security and recognition of their qualifications. Russia ranks in the bottom 10 of the 52 MIPEX countries on labour market mobility, similar to Latvia and Poland but far below Moldova, Ukraine or the average EU or Central European country.
- **Family reunification:** *Halfway favourable:* Russia's approach to migrant families is only halfway favourable because their rights to reunite and settle in Russia differ dramatically depending on their sponsor. For example, highly-skilled workers and "visa-free" foreign citizens may be able to reunite all dependent family members, while other migrant workers may have no opportunity to reunite their family. Policies are also more inclusive in neighbouring Moldova, Ukraine and the EU. For example, in EU countries, all legal residents who can meet the minimum requirements are entitled to reunite with at least their spouse and minor children, who can live there as long as their sponsor or become independent residents themselves after 5 years.
- **Education:** *Unfavourable:* Ranked in the international bottom 10 on education, Russian schools do not function as a motor for the integration of immigrant children. While programmes exist for select foreign citizens in higher education, the compulsory education system does not systematically offer additional funding, training and support to schools with large numbers of immigrant children. Not all foreign children may even be able to access compulsory education, because of administrative obstacles due to their parents' documentation or legal status.
- **Health:** *Slightly unfavourable:* 4th from the bottom on migrant health, all legal residents must fulfil certain conditions and discretionary decisions to access healthcare, but then receive little targeted support or information to access these services. These obstacles are also common in Central Europe, the Baltics, Moldova and Ukraine.
- **Political participation:** *Slightly unfavourable:* Political participation is an area of weakness not only in Russia, but across Central Europe. Foreign citizens in Russia enjoy relatively few opportunities to participate. While associations of foreign citizens can benefit from ad hoc information, funding and consultations with government commissions and councils, political parties are closed to foreign citizens and the local right to vote is open to only permanent residents from Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.
- **Permanent residence:** *Halfway favourable:* A foreign citizen's chances to settle permanently in Russia are only halfway favourable because the rules are demanding and different depending on their immigration permit. Those who can obtain the right permit or pass the demanding economic,



language and integration checks can settle permanently in Russia, but they cannot access travel freely or social services outside of their region. While the procedures were simplified under Federal Law 115 of 2019, access to permanent residence is still much more restrictive and discretionary than most MIPEX countries, including EU countries, Moldova or Ukraine.

- **Access to nationality:** *Halfway favourable:* The obstacles to Russian nationality are similar to many 'newer' destination countries in the region. Access to Russian nationality is only halfway favourable for integration because Russia, like its neighbours, has yet to follow international reform trends to fully open up to dual nationality for all foreign citizens or birthright citizenship entitlements for their Russian-born children.
- **Anti-discrimination:** *Slightly unfavourable:* On anti-discrimination, Russia is ranked 5th from the bottom, far below Moldova, Ukraine, Turkey or the average EU or Central European country on anti-discrimination. In most areas of life, victims of ethnic, racial, religious and nationality discrimination have little chance to access justice in Russia, as they can rely on only vague wording in a few laws, no direct enforcement mechanisms and no independent specialised equality body.

