

14 Million New Migrants Flocked to Russia in 2011

By [Natalya Krainova](#)

February 02, 2012

The  Moscow Times

Almost 14 million foreigners and stateless people legally arrived in Russia last year, the head of the Federal Migration Service said at a news conference Thursday.

Konstantin Romodanovsky announced that 13.8 million people had legally entered the country in 2011, among them 9.7 million citizens of CIS countries.

Of the legal immigrants, about 2.7 million were from Ukraine, about 2 million from Uzbekistan, less than 1.5 million from Kazakhstan and just less than 1 million from Tajikistan.

Azerbaijan, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia all had in the neighborhood of half a million each, according to a diagram presented by Romodanovsky.

In 2011, migration officials registered almost 10 million foreigners and stateless individuals,

almost 810,000 more than in 2010, according to another table on the FMS [website](#).

The FMS press office could not immediately explain the discrepancy between the 14 million migrants mentioned by Romodanovsky and the 10 million migrants indicated in the table.

It also couldn't provide a breakdown of how many of those 10 million immigrants arrived legally.

Migration officials discovered almost 220,000 foreigners and stateless individuals in Russia illegally in 2011, a drop of almost 27,000 from the 2010 figure, according to statistics [posted](#) earlier on the FMS website.

The table didn't say when these illegal immigrants arrived in Russia. Of the 220,000 illegal immigrants, about 76,000 left Russia voluntarily, and almost 29,000 were deported.

In addition, 428 were held criminally liable, and almost 218,000 were punished for administrative violations, the FMS website said.

More than 5,600 illegal immigrants who were deported came from countries that have a visa regime with Russia.

Emigrants from those countries agreed to help authorities after the FMS requested their cooperation, Romodanovsky said, refusing to name the countries.

Romodanovsky also said Thursday that the FMS is proposing tougher penalties for immigration violations.

Under the proposed regulations, foreigners who repeatedly violate Russian migration laws would be banned from entering the country for five years instead of three.

Also, the maximum prison term for organizers of illegal immigration would be increased from five to 10 years.

Finally, the proposals oblige migrant workers hired to work in public service occupations to pass a Russian language exam.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin came up with similar proposals at an FMS meeting last week and in his article published in Nezavisimaya Gazeta on Jan. 23.

The FMS does not have enough employees to detect all illegal immigrants, Romodanovsky said Thursday.

About 5,000 migration officials work across Russia, including about 940 in Moscow, the Moscow region, St. Petersburg and the Leningrad region, the FMS chief said.

A [table](#) on the FMS website stated that 6,640 migration officials work across Russia. That figure could not be immediately reconciled with the one given by Romodanovsky.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2012/02/02/14-million-new-migrants-flocked-to-russia-in-2011-a12350>