

Putin Asked to Pardon Millions of Illegal Immigrants

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The head of the Federation of Immigrants in Russia, Muhammad Amin Madzhumder, has requested that President Vladimir Putin grant amnesty to millions of illegal immigrants working in the country's shadow economy, Izvestia reported Wednesday.

"Due to the shadow economy and the growth of illegal immigration, the state budget does not receive several billion rubles annually," Madzhumder said in a letter to Putin. Immigrants "are willing to pay taxes and comply with the laws and traditions of the Russian Federation."

There are about 10 million illegal immigrants in Russia, said the letter, which Izvestia received but Putin's spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, said he hadn't. The Federal Migration Service also said it didn't get the letter.

United Russia Deputy Dmitry Sablin told Izvestia that the government must decide how many migrant workers are needed. "If 10 million people are working, are needed and do not violate

the law, then the government can increase the quota" of legal immigrants, he said.

Vyacheslav Postavin, former deputy head of the Federal Migration Service, said a similar amnesty took place in Russia from 2006 to 2007, when the government conducted legalization.

In October, the Federal Migration Service said there were 3.5 million illegal immigrants in Russia. But Postavin agreed with the letter's estimate: 10 million.

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