

Police Find Ostriches and Immigrants in Underground Factory

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Police have discovered an underground clothing factory in Moscow Region where dozens of immigrants from Vietnam were being held, together with a bear, ostriches and wild boars, the region's police department said Monday.

The Vietnamese workers told the police that they worked in shifts and were forbidden from leaving the workshop premises. Sixty-seven people who did not have papers documenting their right to live and work in Russia were detained by the police.

"The foreigners who have broken the law will be fined and deported from Russia," the police said in a statement.

The police also found "cages containing wild animals: a bear, ostriches and wild boars," the statement said. The factory's residents told the police that the animals had been bought from a circus.

All the items of clothing produced at the underground sweatshop had false famous brand names sewn into them, police said.

“They were made from poor quality materials and sold at markets in Moscow and the Moscow Region as well as at large chain stores,” the statement said.

Police are considering whether to launch a criminal case into the organization of illegal immigration and the illegal use of a trademark. The fate of the animals will be decided after an inspection is carried out.

Acting Mayor Sergei Sobyenin has made tightening migration controls a focal point of his mayoral campaign ahead of the elections scheduled for Sept. 8.

Last week, 2,500 migrants were detained in the capital in a three-day police operation. Eighty of them were deported, and 600 criminal offenses documented.

Russian officials, including President Vladimir Putin, have highlighted the risks of underregulated migration and drawn a link between migration and extremism. Sobyenin said last month that there were about 300,000 illegal migrants in Moscow and that most of the city's crimes were committed by "visitors."

Materials from The Moscow Times is included in this report.

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