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Migrant Work Permit Sales Boost Moscow Budget

By The Moscow Times

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The Moscow city budget has earned 8.1 billion rubles ($127 million) from the sale of work permits to migrant workers and from income taxes paid by them so far this year, City Hall's economic policy department head Maxim Reshetnikov was quoted as saying Friday by the Interfax news agency.

That's already 2.5 times as much as in 2014, and the figure will reach 10 billion rubles ($156 million) by the end of the year, he said.

City income tax revenues rose 8.5 percent this year, with 2 percent of that increase coming from migrants, Reshetnikov was cited as saying. Under the work permits system, migrant workers from CIS countries pay a monthly fee for a permit to work in Russia.

Next year the department expects revenues from migrants to rise to 15 billion rubles ($234

million), equaling that brought in by Moscow's transport tax, the report said.

The revenue increase comes despite a reduction in the number of migrant workers arriving in Russia: Moscow's migrant registration center said in June that there were 40 percent fewer migrants coming to work here compared with last year, the TVC television channel reported at the time.

Another indication of the decrease in migrant numbers in Russia is the reduction in the amount of money being sent home by migrant workers, most of whom come to work in Russia from Central Asian countries. The National Bank of Tajikistan said in June that the volume of money sent from Russia had dropped by 42 percent in the first half of 2015, the Interfax news agency reported.

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