

Kremlin Seeks Russian-Speaking Migrants to Offset Population Decline

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Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency

The Kremlin plans to attract up to 10 million Russian-speaking migrants in the next six years to reverse the country's population decline, the business daily Kommersant [reported](#) on Thursday.

Russia's population declined to 146.8 million in 2018, official data [released](#) on Thursday estimates, its first decrease in 10 years. Migration has been unable to offset natural population losses for the first time since 2008.

Related article: [Russia's Population Declines in 2018 for First Time in a Decade](#)

President Vladimir Putin has prioritized migration policy by [signing](#) a plan of action for 2019-2025 and [adding](#) migration to the remit of his [constitutional rights office](#).

The plan involves granting citizenship to anywhere from 5 to 10 million migrants,

Kommersant reported, citing unnamed sources involved in carrying out Putin's migration policy plan.

The Kremlin lists Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Moldova and other post-Soviet states with Russian-speaking populations as so-called "donor countries" where new Russian citizens could be recruited, the paper writes.

Russia needs up to 300,000 additional people per year in order to reach net-zero population growth, Kommersant's sources are quoted as saying.

Several bills designed to ease citizenship and immigration rules are also in the pipeline, some of which could be considered this May, Kommersant reported.

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