

Russia Tells Illegal Migrants from Post-Soviet Countries to Leave By June 15

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Russia relies on migrant workers, particularly from former Soviet states in Central Asia, for industries like construction and agriculture. **Dmitry Rogulin / TASS**

Russia has asked migrants from post-Soviet states living there illegally to leave the country by June 15, the state-run RIA Novosti news agency [reported](#) Friday.

In mid-December, President Vladimir Putin extended the residence status of foreign citizens living in Russia until June 15, 2021, due to the coronavirus pandemic. This covered migrants from Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries living in Russia without proper documentation.

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“These people will be punished by expulsion and closure of borders” if they don’t leave by the June 15 deadline, RIA Novosti quoted Deputy Interior Minister Alexander Gorovoy as saying at

an Interparliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth meeting.

According to Interior Ministry data, more than 332,000 illegal migrants from Uzbekistan currently reside in Russia, along with 247,000 from Tajikistan, 152,000 from Ukraine, 120,000 from Azerbaijan, 115,000 from Kyrgyzstan, 61,000 from Armenia, 56,000 from Moldova and 49,000 from Kazakhstan.

Russia is [experiencing](#) a labor shortage due to pandemic-related border closures and is looking to simplify entry requirements for migrant workers in industries like construction and agriculture. More than a year since the start of the pandemic, only a handful of countries' citizens are permitted to enter Russia.

The Interior Ministry [estimated](#) late last year that nearly half of all migrants living in Russia before the pandemic had since left the country.

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