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Russia Imposes Biometric, Drug Screening for Foreigners

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Sergei Savostyanov / TASS

Foreigners arriving in Russia for periods longer than three months will have to submit their fingerprints and other biometric data under a new law that President Vladimir Putin signed Thursday.

Migrant workers will be required to submit biometric data within 30 days, while those foreigners visiting outside of work will have a window of 90 days from arrival in Russia.

The same deadlines also apply to medical examinations to check for diseases including HIV as well as the presence of drugs, according to the legislation.

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The newly signed amendments to Russia's laws on biometrics and the legal status of foreigners allow the authorities to shorten the length of stay for refusing to undergo medical

examinations.

The foreigners' and all Russians' fingerprints will be stored in an official database until they reach the age of 100 or pass away.

Diplomats, international NGO workers, Belarusian nationals and children under the age of 6 are exempt from the biometric requirements.

The new requirements take effect 180 days after Putin's signature and the law's publication on July 1, 2021.

Russian Interior Minister Vladimir Kolokoltsev first announced plans to create a biometric database, which is expected to integrate with wanted lists and traffic surveillance, in 2014.

Russian law has also allowed the Interior Ministry and Federal Security Service (FSB) to gain access to bank customers' biometric data without their consent.

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