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St. Petersburg Police Round Up Thousands of Migrant Workers in New Year's Raids – Reports

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St. Petersburg's Palace Square on New Year's Eve. **Peter Kovalev / TASS**

Police in St. Petersburg detained some 3,000 migrant workers during New Year's Eve celebrations, the local news website Fontanka reported Monday, citing anonymous sources.

More than 600 of those detained had allegedly broken Russia's immigration laws, Fontanka said, with over 100 people expected to be deported from the country.

Police carried out Sunday night's mass round-up of migrants near metro stations, as well as a popular New Year's Eve celebration spot in central St. Petersburg, according to the news outlet Bumaga.

Last year saw widespread and regular reports of police in cities across Russia rounding up migrant workers who recently received Russian citizenship but failed to complete their compulsory military registration.

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Some of the migrants, who are predominantly from Central Asian countries, have been handed military summons on the spot, while others are forcibly taken to military enlistment offices, according to reports.

Neither Fontanka nor Bumaga specified whether the migrant workers targeted in the New Year's Eve raids in St. Petersburg had been handed military summons.

On New Year's Day last year, Fontanka reported similar police round-ups, saying that law enforcement agents carried out "preventive raids" for violations of Russia's immigration laws.

Up to 2,000 people were believed to have been detained at the time, among them an unspecified number of migrant workers, as well as "dozens" of intoxicated residents and those accused of illegally launching fireworks.

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