

COVID-19 Pandemic and Migrant Workers in Russia (Summary)

HORIE Norio

Professor, Center for Far Eastern Studies, University of Toyama

Collaborative Researcher, ERINA

The movement of people across national borders has been severely restricted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and a fresh supply of migrant workers crossing into Russia from neighboring countries was cut off for one year starting April 2020. The entry of foreigners was consolidated at airports and halted at land borders. The supply of foreign workers who newly entered in Russia was limited in 2020, but many who had arrived before the pandemic remained unintentionally, were allowed to stay legally, and often had their legal status restored with amnesty. As for industry, the agricultural sector struggled to secure foreign workers in 2020. In the soybean-producing regions of the Russian Far East, the inability of Chinese agricultural workers and managers to migrate had a negative impact on production, surpassing the effect of natural disasters like the floods of 2019. Restrictions on the movement of people across national borders caused by the COVID-19 crisis led many foreign workers in Russia to overstay and/or live precariously without employment and, at the same time, caused far-reaching damage in certain industries due to the shortage of migrant workers.

Keywords: COVID-19 pandemic, Migrant workers, Borders, Russia

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