

St. Pete Authorities Deny Authorship of Contentious Brochure

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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An illustration from "The Labor Migrant's Guide." Bloggers criticized the publication for its depiction of migrants as craftsmen's tools.

St. Petersburg authorities rushed on Friday to deny authoring a controversial brochure for labor migrants that has caused a scandal in the northern capital.

The brochure, titled "The Labor Migrant's Guide," appeared on the official [website](#) of the St. Petersburg administration's Tolerance program Thursday, drawing criticism from bloggers for its depiction of the city's migrants as craftsmen's tools, including a putty knife, broom and paint brush, while locals appeared in human form.

City authorities pointed the finger at the Look at the Future nongovernmental organization, which they said designed and authored the project.

Local officials even went as far as to provide the cell phone number of Look at the Future's

head, Gleb Panfilov, in an effort to deflect bad press.

For his part, Panfilov said that his organization had carried out extensive surveys among migrants prior to publication to determine whether the information in the brochure was accessible to migrant workers.

In comments carried by Interfax, he denied having received any complaints from migrants over the brochure's contents.

"These pictures haven't caused any negative emotions. In fact, choosing these pictures in the form of laborer's instruments, we didn't have migrants in mind, but simply helpers," Panfilov said.

Aside from the controversial images, the brochure contains information on rules for entering Russia, HIV prevention, labor regulations and a code of conduct in St. Petersburg.

In particular, the brochure's authors advise migrants not to wear their national dress, sports clothes, squat on their haunches or speak too loudly.

The brochure was published in four languages: Russian, Kyrgyz, Tajik and Uzbek.

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