

Policies Result in 'Poverty Culture'

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Russia's social policy has failed, as it undercuts the middle class and fosters a "poverty culture" on a scale previously unseen in the country, a government-ordered report said Tuesday.

About 6.3 million able-bodied men of working age deliberately refused employment in 2009, compared with 5.9 million in 2000, said the [report](#), a copy of which was provided to Vedomosti.

The number of people living below the poverty line fell from 29 percent in 2000 to 13.1 percent last year, but the problem still poses a threat for the country's future because poor families have more children, the report said.

Meanwhile, excessive centralization of power hampers development of industries crucial for a modern economy — such as education, medicine, media and IT — inhibiting professional communities from self-governance and decision making.

The current release of the report is preliminary, with the final one to be presented at a government meeting later this month. No Cabinet member made any official comments

on the report.

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