

Gypsies to Get State Support in Bid to Improve Image

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev's Cabinet has approved a raft of measures, including national television programs and federal financing schemes, to improve the image of Russia's Gypsies, Izvestia reported Wednesday.

The government plans to help Gypsies develop businesses, with aid for buying computers and office supplies, as well as offer legal assistance for working with documents and obtaining passports, if necessary. It will also promote Gypsy theatrical performances and traditional crafts, including blacksmithing, horse breeding, sewing, embroidery and weaving.

But in addition to the assistance, the state will crackdown on the sale of illegal drugs by members of the minority's estimated 180,000-plus population in Russia, Izvestia reported, citing a source in the federal government.

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