

Russia Spends \$143 Million on Ukrainian Refugees

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The government has so far spent nearly 5 billion rubles (\$143 million) on aid for Ukrainians who have fled to Russia to escape the ongoing turmoil in their country, Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said Tuesday.

The government has also cut processing times for temporary asylum applications from three months to three days and has increased the quota for the number of foreigners who can be granted temporary stay in Russia by 50 percent, or 51,000 extra places, according to an order published on the government's website.

About 26,000 Ukrainians, 10,000 of them children, are staying in just under 400 temporary settlements in Russia, Medvedev said at a meeting on the issue of Ukrainian asylum seekers.

More than 3.5 billion rubles have been spent on resettling Ukrainians in temporary accommodation in Russia, he said.

Since April 1, more than 500,000 former residents of southeastern Ukraine have entered Russia, most of whom are now living near the border, said Konstantin Romodanovsky, head of Russia's Federal Migration Service.

There are now nearly 2 million Ukrainians in Russia, he added.

Medvedev earlier this month took exception to the U.S. State Department's suggestion that the refugee situation may not be as bleak as portrayed in the Russian media.

"There are a huge number of refugees. Tens of thousands. People are fleeing from the war. American propaganda claims they were going 'on holiday to their grandmothers.' [Such] cynicism knows no limits," Medvedev wrote on his Facebook page.

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