

1 Million Russian Suicides in 20 Years, Expert Says

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Russian suicide rates have declined in recent years, though certain regions are still plagued by alarmingly high statistics, TASS reported Tuesday.

Russia now boasts the 14th-highest suicide rate in the world, which in fact is a significant improvement considering it previously featured among the top 10, Boris Polozhy, head of the department of ecological and social problems at the Health Ministry's Serbsky Institute of Psychiatry, was cited as saying by TASS.

"But the problem is still far from solved," he added.

Over the past 20 years, 1 million Russians have committed suicide, Polozhy said, adding that current rates differ drastically from region to region.

"In the North Caucasus, South and Central Federal Districts, the situation is fairly stable, but in the Siberian and Far Eastern Districts, there are 30 cases of suicide per 100,000 people,"

Polozhy said in comments to TASS, adding that these rates were critically high.

The situation is worst in Altai, Tuva, Buryatia, Chukotka and the Nenets autonomous district, where Polozhy said there are 60 suicides per 100,000 residents.

Another worrying trend is that Russian men commit suicide five times more frequently than women; globally, men commit suicide three times more frequently than women on average.

Suicide rates among teenagers have also remained high over the past 20 years, Polozhy said, citing 16 cases of suicide per 100,000 teenagers. The world norm is six to seven such cases per 100,000.

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