

Number of Russians Living in Poverty Nears 22 Million

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Almost a seventh of the Russian population is living below the poverty line, official data published Wednesday show.

In the first six months of the year, the number of Russians living on less than the minimum income grew to 21.7 million people — a 14.8 percent increase from the same period last year, according to data published online by federal statistics agency Rosstat.

This means that almost one in seven Russians, or 15.1 percent of the population, is living on less than the 10,017 rubles (\$147) a month designated as the minimum income needed to make ends meet.

In reality, the number of Russians living in poverty is likely to be significantly higher. In a

survey conducted by the state-run VTsIOM pollster in August, the average figure cited as the minimum living wage was 22,700 rubles (\$334).

Soaring inflation has caused real wages to fall, while some state sectors of the economy have seen pay cuts. In August, real wages were 9 percent lower than in October 2014 after a nine-month consecutive decline — the first such drop since 1999, Vedomosti reported Wednesday.

The VTsIOM poll had a margin of error of 3.5 percentage points.

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