

Russian Officials Fight Perfume Boozers

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Officials in northwest Russia's republic of Komi are discussing a federal ban on large bottles of cologne in an attempt to stop residents drinking the perfume as a cheap alternative to vodka, the Flash Nord news outlet reported Thursday.

The authors of the initiative propose that bottles of perfume be reduced in size from 50 ml to 10 ml to ensure that cologne remains more expensive than traditional spirits.

The measures are intended to prevent residents from drinking the fragrances for their high alcohol content. "Dual-use" alcohol-based products — perfume, medicine, cleaning products — are the most common cause of poisoning in the area, Flash Nord reported.

The republic has a high level of alcoholism, with alcohol abuse significantly impacting local mortality rates. The numbers of deaths caused by chronic alcoholism stands above the national average in 10 of the region's towns, according to Russian consumer rights watchdog Rospotrebnadzor, Flash Nord reported. Komi ministers also discussed taking additional measures to ensure that that alcohol content in perfume and other dual-use products does not exceed legal limits.

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