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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Almost Half of Russians Support Kremlin Plans to Tax Unemployed 'Parasites'

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Artyom Geodakyan / TASS

Almost half of Russians — 45 percent — support
Kremlin plans to charge the unemployed
for the use of public services, according to a survey by state-run pollster the Russian Public Opinion Research Center (VTsIOM).

Some forty-five percent of respondents said that the extra charges should apply to those who did not have a job "without a good reason," the RIA Novosti news website reported. Another 21 percent of respondents defined all unemployed people as "parasites."

Forty-five percent also agreed that a year of hard labor was an "adequate punishment" on those who refused to work.

The tax could soon become a reality, with Deputy Prime Minister Olga Golodets announcing a bill for the proposal on Wednesday.

The draft law stipulates that▣able-bodied, unemployed citizens will have to pay for the use of▣social infrastructure. Groups such as veterans and mothers with▣children under the age of three will be exempt, Russia's Vzglad news▣outlet reported Wednesday.

Deputy Labor Minister Andrei Pudov▣also confirmed that his department was looking into the tax, RIA▣Novosti reported.

Russian lawmakers are consulting with▣their counterparts in Belarus, were a similar system has already been▣implemented, RIA Novosti reported.

Working-age adults who live in Belarus▣
must pay a fine if they are not in employment — and
paying taxes —▣for at least 183 days a year. Students, the elderly, and mothers▣caring for three or more children are exempt.

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