

Russian Official Fired After Claiming Retirees Can Live off \$50 Pension

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Natalia Sokolova / Saratov.ru

A Russian official has been fired after insisting that a monthly pension of 3,500 rubles (\$53) is enough for the survival of the country's retirees.

Natalya Sokolova, the labor chief in the southern Volga region of Saratov, was [filmed](#) Wednesday arguing with a local lawmaker that \$53 per month is sufficient "for minimal physiological needs." Her debate with the outspoken deputy came months after the nationwide minimum wage was [raised](#) to the minimum subsistence level of almost \$200 on the eve of President Vladimir Putin's inauguration.

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The Saratov governor's office announced on Friday that Sokolova was relieved of her duties effective immediately.

“I consider it unacceptable for the head of a regional ministry to neglect vital topics for the people,” Governor Valery Radayev [said](#) in the announcement.

“Those who forget about their responsibilities will be strongly punished.”

Saratov region’s subsistence level for retirees [totals](#) \$108 while regional statisticians [estimate](#) they have the Volga Federal District’s cheapest consumer basket of \$48.

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