The Moscow Times
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Private Clinics in Russia's Kursk Region Stop Providing Abortions

November 10, 2023

Alexander Avilov / Moskva News Agency

Nearly all private clinics in southwestern Russia's Kursk region have stopped providing abortion services in a Kremlin-ordered effort to reverse the country's demographic crisis, a senior official said Thursday.

Kursk region Deputy Governor Andrei Belostotsky said authorities in Moscow had instructed regional governments to come up with their own policy solutions for boosting birth rates, according to the news website RIA Kursk.

Belostotsky said that four out of the Kursk region's five private clinics with certification for providing medical abortions made the "landmark" decision to stop offering these services.

The fifth clinic is expected to follow suit "very soon," the official added.

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“Now about 92% of women who decide to terminate their pregnancy will be [sent to] state clinics where we actively work with them,” Belostotsky told RIA Kursk.

“We conduct questionnaires, find out what problems make them decide to have an abortion, help them and give them time to think about it.”

A day earlier, Kremlin-backed authorities in annexed Crimea announced that private clinics on the peninsula had “voluntarily” stopped abortions.

So, too, did private clinics in the republic of Tatarstan stop providing abortion services in September.

Meanwhile, at least two other Russian regions have recently outlawed the act of “coercing” women into undergoing an abortion.

President Vladimir Putin last week addressed Russia’s demographic crisis at a meeting with state-backed civil society groups.

“Should we ban abortion pills? Or should we improve the socio-economic situation in the country, the wellbeing, real wages, social assistance, provide young families with help to buy housing, provide financial aid to young student familiar?” Putin asked.

“Let me think,” he said.

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