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Fewer Russians Getting Married Despite State's Encouragement to Start Families – Official Data

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Marriage registration in Moscow. **Sergei Vedyashkin / Moskva News Agency**

Russia saw a 10% drop in marriages last year despite state efforts to encourage citizens to start families, according to official data cited by the broadcaster RTVI.

Around 950,000 marriages were registered in 2023 compared to 1.05 million the previous year, the outlet said, citing state statistics agency Rosstat.

The year-on-year decline — which was observed in every Russian region — was sharpest in ethnic republics including Chechnya (36% fewer marriages), the Chukotka autonomous district (31%) and Dagestan (24%).

Marriages surged in 2022 after the Kremlin declared a "partial" mobilization of reservists for the war in Ukraine in September and some regions offered fast-track marriage registrations. The partial draft and Russia's invasion of Ukraine earlier that year triggered a mass exodus of

Russians abroad.

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In November 2023, President Vladimir Putin urged Russian women to "revive" the past practice of giving birth to "seven, eight, or even more children."

"Large families must become the norm, a way of life for all Russia's peoples," Putin said at an event organized by the Russian Orthodox Church.

RTVI noted that some of the biggest drops in marriages were recorded in regions that the Defense Ministry hailed as the most successful at recruiting contract soldiers.

Rosstat forecasts that low birth rates and declining immigration could cause Russia's population to shrink from its current 146 million to around 130 million in the next two decades.

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