

Russia's HIV Deaths Hit 30K Per Year, Undermining Dwindling Labor Force

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Artyom Geodakyan / TASS

Around 30,000 Russians of working age die annually from HIV, according to Vadim Pokrovsky, the head of Russia's Federal Methodological Center for HIV/AIDS Prevention.

This figure continues to rise alongside increasing treatment costs for the government and a lack of early HIV testing.

Speaking to the state-run TASS news agency, Pokrovsky [revealed](#) that the Russian government spends 70 billion rubles (\$670 million) per year on HIV treatment. The epidemic is exacerbated by the loss of economically active individuals, which Pokrovsky highlighted as a critical economic blow.

“If each year we lose 30,000 young, able-bodied people who could work for another 20-30 years, that is an additional loss [to the economy],” he said.

Russia's HIV epidemic, which has [resulted](#) in 1.7 million infections and nearly 500,000 deaths

to date, stems primarily from gaps in early diagnosis and inconsistent treatment availability.

Reports indicate that shortages of antiretroviral drugs, including the vital medication Dolutegravir, have emerged due to disrupted supply chains and procurement issues, with some supply tenders being canceled altogether.

While heterosexual transmission is now the most common means of spreading HIV in Russia, marginalized groups such as drug users, sex workers and gay men remain disproportionately vulnerable.

Reduced funding for HIV testing — currently 30% below the recommended levels — has further undermined efforts at early detection, despite calls from medical experts for regular screenings to prevent immune system deterioration.

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