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Russia's Kemerovo Region to Pay Pregnant Schoolgirls

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Sergei Malgavko / TASS

Authorities in Siberia's Kemerovo region will pay schoolgirls who give birth, Russian state media reported Tuesday, marking at least the third such regional initiative amid the Kremlin's push to reverse the country's demographic decline.

Under a regional government decree, legal guardians of eligible schoolgirls will receive a one-time payment of 100,000 rubles ($1,200) if the girl was at least 22 weeks pregnant as of Jan. 1, RIA Novosti reported.

The payments apply to full-time students enrolled in "general, professional or higher education institutions" who are registered at a maternity hospital, according to the decree.

At least eight other Russian regions have introduced similar incentives, though it is unclear whether they apply to school-age girls or university students, RIA Novosti said.

The Kemerovo region joins the Oryol and Bryansk regions in explicitly including schoolgirls in

pregnancy incentives. Last week, Oryol region Governor Andrei Klychkov defended the program, citing a Russian Labor Ministry recommendation from February 2025.

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At least 40 Russian regions have pledged to pay female university students at least 100,000 rubles for having children starting this year, according to the exiled news outlet 7x7.

The school pregnancy payments come amid Russia's broader efforts to address its demographic crisis, which has worsened in the three years since Moscow launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

President Vladimir Putin has prioritized boosting birth rates, which have fallen to a 25-year low while mortality rates rise.

The Kemerovo region, home to more than 2.5 million people, has faced population decline for at least 25 years.

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