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Siberia's Kemerovo Region Plans Youth Pregnancy Promotion Drive

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Sergei Malgavko / TASS

Authorities in Siberia's Kemerovo region have launched a multimillion-ruble tender for a pro-natal campaign among university students and high schoolers, according to the government procurement website.

The Kuzbass Regional Medical Information and Analytical Center is offering a 67.8 million ruble ($851,500) contract to produce a campaign that will focus on "the advantages of giving birth before age 25," the health benefits of large families and information about puberty. Some of its pre-approved slogans include "I Want to Be Born," "I Want a Baby" and "Mom, We Did It."

The campaign's target audience is listed as high schoolers, university students, and the youth, as well as middle-aged adults, according to the Telegram news channel Sibirsky Express, which was the first to report on the government tender. The deadline for bids is Aug. 21.

The winning contractor will create and place billboards across the Kemerovo region, produce "viral" videos for social media, design mascots, emojis and sticker packs for messenger apps.

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The tender comes amid Russia's wider push to address its demographic crisis, which has worsened in the more than three years since Moscow launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine. President Vladimir Putin has made boosting birth rates, now at a 25-year low, a top priority as mortality rates rise.

The Kemerovo region, home to more than 2.5 million people, has seen population decline for at least 25 years. It is also among a handful of Russian regions that have introduced controversial one-time payments of 100,000 rubles for high school students who give birth.

Sibirsky Express reported that Olesya Prindul, head of the Kuzbass Regional Medical Information and Analytical Center, is alleged to have ties to the region's former healthcare minister, who is under investigation for suspected bribery involving medical supply contracts.

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