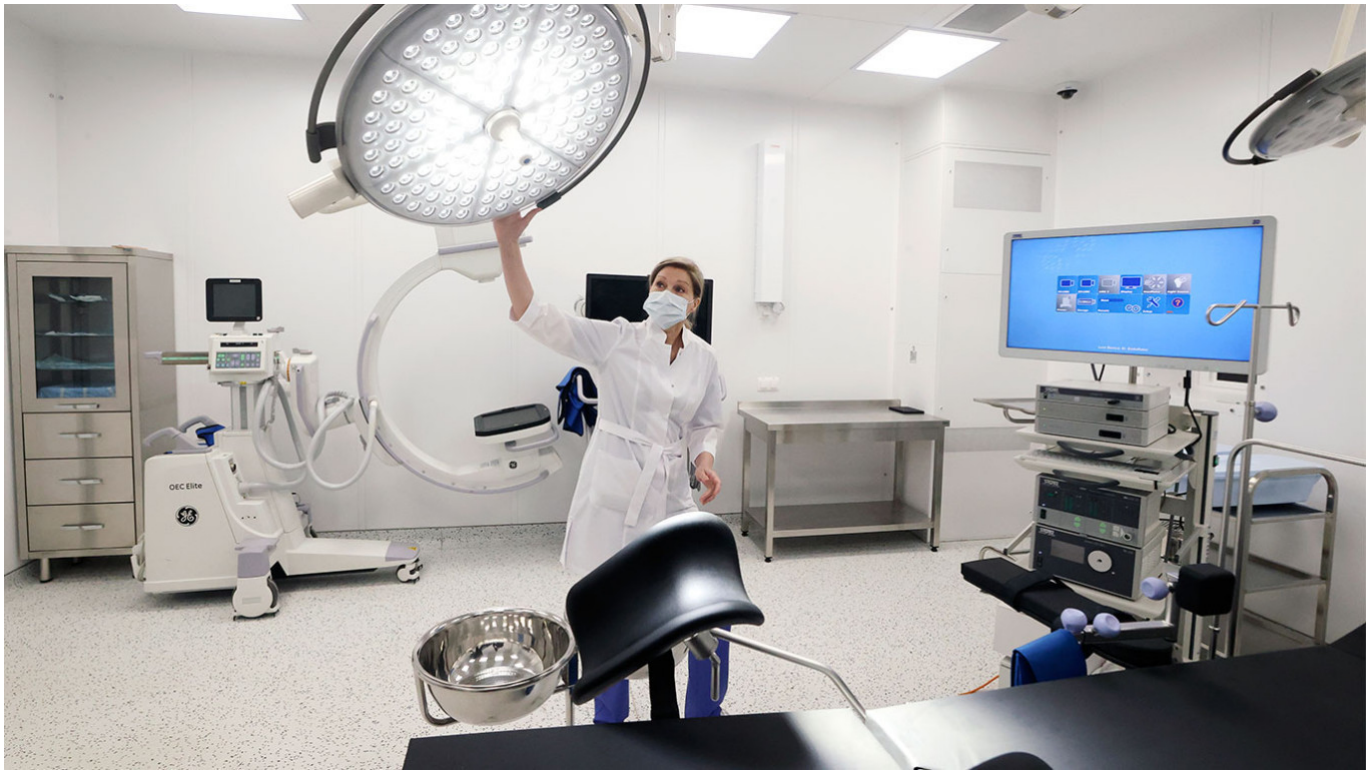
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Russia Expands Bans on 'Coercing' Women Into Abortions to 27th Region

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Alexander Demianchuk / TASS

Two Siberian regions have become the 26th and 27th Russian regions to adopt legislation this week banning the "coercion" of pregnant women into terminating a pregnancy amid efforts by conservative figures to expand state pressure to boost birth rates.

The neighboring Kemerovo region and Altai republic adopted laws Monday and Tuesday banning "persuasion, requests, offers, deception, bribery or other actions" aimed at encouraging a woman to have an abortion.

Exceptions apply to doctors providing medical or social reasons for abortion.

Officials say the measure is designed to "protect pregnant women in a situation of reproductive choice" and improve demographic trends.

Both laws take effect on Jan. 1, 2026.

The initiatives are backed by the pro-life Orthodox-aligned foundation Women for Life,

which launched a chatbot encouraging women to report relatives, partners or medical workers who "advised" them to terminate a pregnancy.

Related article: 'Give Me a Choice': Activists Urge Russian Doctors to Defend Women's Right to Abortion

No administrative cases into "coercion" have been opened so far, the independent news website Vyorstka reported Monday, citing Kremlin insiders who said federal authorities have not instructed regions to pursue prosecutions.

Regional officials told the outlet that proving "coercion" is nearly impossible.

Conservative lawmakers and activists linked to the Russian Orthodox Church are still pushing to introduce similar restrictions nationwide and plan to submit legislation by the end of this parliamentary session.

According to Vyorstka, the Kremlin has signaled support for exploring the federal bill, though officials privately question its practical benefit.

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