3.8. Women

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As Russia's 'decade-long' demographic crisis[612] has deepened due to the ongoing war in Ukraine, the government 'is throttling back access to abortion and stepping up incentives for women to have more babies.'[613] In November 2024, a federal law prohibiting 'propaganda of refusal to bear children' was signed into law, introducing censorship, fines, and arrests for promoting child-free lifestyles.[614] As noted by the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Russian Federation, Mariana Katzarova, the law 'restricts discourse on contraception, abortion, infertility and voluntary childlessness.'[615] The legislation echoes the so-called 'LGBT' propaganda and is part of a broader state campaign to defend 'traditional values.' It imposes fines of up to 400 000 [4 100 euros] for individuals and 5 million rubles [51 250 euros] for organisations that promote voluntary childlessness.[616]

Aligning with the Kremlin's stance, over a dozen regions have reportedly passed laws prohibiting 'coercion to abortion' in 2024,[617] introducing fines of up to 100 000 rubles [1 025 euros] 'for doctors and employers who are judged to have forced advice on pregnant women.'[618] In June 2024, the Komi Republic's parliament 'prohibited "coercion to abortion", effectively introducing heavy fines for facilitating the procedure.' Other 14 regions introduced similar laws. As reported by AI in 2024, numerous private clinics stopped offering abortion services, even though it has not been officially banned.[619]

Russia has not signed the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention).[620]

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