

Russia to Slash Spending on Maternal and Child Health Care in 2017

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The Russian government plans to cut spending within the “Maternal and Child Health Care in 2013–2020” program in 2017, allocating only 2.1 billion rubles (\$33.6 million) instead of 4.7 billion (\$75.2 million), the [RBC news website](#) reported Wednesday, citing a side note in the 2017 budget.

The program in question, the report said, was adopted in 2013. Its main goals were to decrease child and maternal death rates, improve their health and prevent HIV transmission from mother to child. During the next three years, authorities planned to spend 17.5 billion rubles (\$280 million) on the program, but now the expenses are estimated to be three times lower — 6.1 billion rubles (\$97 million).

Lacking funds, the budget's side note says, Russia's Health Care Ministry is supposed to take money from the budgets of other state programs — for example, the one that develops high-tech medical care. That program's funding, however, will be slashed, too: In 2017, its budgetary allocation is only 57.6 billion rubles (\$921 million), compared to 154.1 billion (\$2.5

billion) in 2016.

At the same time, the budgetary funds allocated to the military will be cut by just 6 percent, an opposition politician Dmitry Gudkov, former independent State Duma deputy, wrote on his Facebook page. “The dry figures show your real priorities,” he wrote.

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