

## **Programme for the Modernisation of Preschool Education in the Regions**

The shortage and poor quality of preschools is one of the most serious issues in Russia. The Moscow Government received 1,384 complaints related to this issue last year, which is the second highest number of complaints following 1,895 about the Unified State Exam. In the past 20 years, the shortage of places in preschools has deteriorated, and the professional qualification of preschool teachers is a matter of equal concern.

In this regard, the Moscow Government has made improving preschool education its priority in the social sphere system.

The improvements will involve three stages:

- Eliminating waiting lists for preschools.

Aim: to provide 100% accessibility of preschool education to all children aged three to seven by 2016 (article 1C of the Presidential Executive Order No.599 of May 7, 2012).

Implementation: to build new modern kindergartens and develop various forms of preschool education. The analysis of preschool waiting lists has revealed the need to create 1.2 million vacancies at preschool institutions between 2013-2015, taking into account the demographic data. This will ensure 100% accessibility of preschool education to children aged three to seven by 2016.

There are currently 7.8 million children aged three to seven in Russia (including 366,000 children who did not get a place in a preschool.) By 2016 there will be 8.7 million children of preschool age.

- Developing new requirements for professional qualifications of preschool teachers and staff.

Aim: to improve the qualifications of preschool teachers.

Implementation: to develop professional standard for preschool teachers, increase salaries of preschool teachers.

- Implementing new preschool education standards.

Aim: to ensure quality preschool education in various forms for children of preschool age.

Implementation: to develop a new federal state educational standard of preschool education.

Russia's constituent entities have developed roadmaps and submitted them to the Ministry of Education and Science specifying regional measures for modernising preschool education.

The roadmaps stipulate introducing 755,000 new jobs between 2013-2015, including:

1) 357,000 jobs at various preschool institutions, including non-governmental organisations (private, family kindergartens);

2) 398,000 jobs at state (municipal) preschool institutions that were renovated, adapted or newly built.

Consolidated budgets of Russian constituent entities will contribute 222 billion roubles for implementing these measures.

In order to meet the demand of 1.2 million places, it is necessary to establish 433,000 new vacancies in the coming three years. For these purposes the federal budget will provide two installments of 50 billion roubles in 2013.

The Ministry of Education and Science has drafted the governmental resolution "On the Procedure for Allocating and Distributing Subsidies from the Federal Budget to the Budgets of Russian Constituent Entities for Modernising the Regional Systems of the Preschool Education."

The subsidies will be provided to those constituent entities whose roadmaps aimed at providing 100% accessibility of preschool education to children aged three to seven by 2016 have been approved by the Ministry of Education and Science and which include:

- 1) the commitment to co-finance the construction and renovation of new premises for preschools from the regional budgets;
- 2) project documentation, including budget costs for the construction of new facilities;
- 3) provision of land plots for new preschools;
- 4) architectural plans that allow for a multifunctional use of preschool facilities for different educational purposes, including the option to adapt the facilities for primary schools quickly and without further expenses;
- 5) measures aimed at supporting and developing the private preschool education sector;
- 6) the schedule for increasing the salaries of preschool teachers and staff employed at the educational facilities that implement the main general education programme and are located in Russia's constituent entities.

The total amount of funds provided for the development of preschool education between 2013-2015 is estimated at over one trillion roubles, including 280 billion roubles of additional funds provided by the federal budget (including 100 billion roubles in 2013.)