

Russia Could Learn from U.S., Adoption Ban Proponent Says

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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An orphanage in Kaluga housing some of the estimated 650,000 registered Russian orphans. **dancer**

Russia could take a lesson from the U.S. on the matter of adopting abandoned children, children's ombudsman Pavel Astakhov said Monday.

"If Americans were allowed to adopt every single child on the planet, they would. It is their mentality. That is something Russians could learn from," the ombudsman said at a press conference in St. Petersburg.

Astakhov also said St. Petersburg was seeing a worrying increase in the number of children put up for adoption and noted that 300 mothers give up their newborns on a yearly basis, Interfax reported.

"Why do you have so many abandoned children?" he said, adding, "We have to find a different answer to this question than the general 'these are the socioeconomic circumstances' "

answer."

Eighty-four percent of children up for adoption are so-called social orphans, meaning that the children have at least one parent that is still alive.

"We have to find out the reason for this and fix it to give the greatest number of children the right to a family," Astakhov said, adding that no healthy state should let its children be adopted by foreigners.

The ombudsman is a fierce proponent of a ban on the adoption of Russian children by U.S. families that went into force on Jan. 1.

About 60,000 Russian children have been adopted by U.S. parents since the fall of the Soviet Union.

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