

Astakhov: Foreigners Should Undergo Psychological Testing Before Adopting in Russia

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Children's Rights Ombudsman Pavel Astakhov.

Foreigners wishing to adopt Russian children should be required to undergo psychological testing, Children's Rights Ombudsman Pavel Astakhov said Monday.

Astakhov told RIA Novosti that previous attempts to legally mandate psychological testing in Russia for would-be adoptive parents have been rejected.

However, following the death of a 5-year-old boy in Italy last week who had been adopted in Russia, Astakhov said, "I believe that it is necessary to spend an hour here and go through testing that will show that the person is healthy."

Maxim Maravalle, whose last name was Kichigin at birth, died on July 17 in Pescara, Italy. Several Russian media sources have reported that the young boy was strangled to death.

"The crime was committed by the boy's adopted father, Massimo Maravalle, who was

arrested by the police. Pescara's Prosecutor General has opened a criminal case against [him]," the Russian Foreign Ministry wrote in a statement released Saturday.

The statement added that the crime may have been committed in connection with a mental illness.

Conservative State Duma deputy Yelena Mizulina called for a probe Friday into Italy's selection of adoptive parents and called for the use of harsher criteria selection for prospective parents.

Olga Batalina, the first deputy chairman of the State Duma Committee on Family, Women and Children, supported Astakhov's proposition on Monday, adding that its application would require amendments to Russia's current legislation.

A total of 560 Russian children — half of all children involved in foreign adoptions — were adopted by Italian parents in 2013. At present, Italy is the leading destination for Russian orphans adopted by foreign families.

See also:

[Death of Adopted Russian Boy in Italy Sparks Outrage](#)

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