

# Russian Pedophilia Cases Soared by One-Third in 2014

March 04, 2015

**The**  **Moscow Times**

The number of children recognized as victims of pedophilia surged by 35.6 percent last year, children's ombudsman Pavel Astakhov said late Tuesday on Twitter.

That increase far outpaced the 7.2 percent rise in the total number of crimes against children, according to Astakhov, who did not provide an explanation for the upticks.

More than 95,400 children were registered as victims of crime last year, as compared with 89,000 the year before, Astakhov wrote, citing statistics by the Interior Ministry. Of the victims last year, more than 2,500 died, he said.

He added that 946 acts of pedophilia allegedly committed by the victims' family members were reported last year, 380 cases of which were believed to have been committed by a parental guardian.

Astakhov also said the Russian justice system is too soft on pedophiles, and that he wants to make sure that pedophiles do not get out of jail before serving out their entire terms.

He urged an elimination of the statute of limitations on pedophilia in order to ensure that pedophiles can never escape culpability. The Criminal Code provides for sentences of up to 15 years for especially grave crimes. However, there are various categories with different statutes of limitations.

Astakhov told Vesti FM radio on Wednesday that the currently statute of limitations is too short and should be changed, according to a transcript of the interview on the station's website.

He also voiced his belief that convicted pedophiles who are released from jail should remain under observation for the rest of their lives.

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