

# Alexander, Sofia Top Popular Names List in Moscow

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The most popular names for newborn babies in Moscow are Alexander and Sofia, the city's registry office agency said Friday.

The name Sofia was given to 5.4 percent of girls born in Moscow since January. It was followed in terms of popularity by Maria, Anna, Anastasia and Viktoria. Sofia and Maria have been the most popular girls' names since 2012.

Alexander tops the boys' names rating with 4.5 percent of baby boys being given the name this year.

The name was also last year's favorite, but in 2013 and 2012 it came in second, behind Artyom. This year, Artyom was the third most popular name after Alexander and Maxim. It is followed by Mikhail and Daniil.

Despite the overall trend for traditional names, some avant-garde names were registered

in 2014. Boys' names including Jazz, Sevastopol and Sila (Strength) were noted by registry offices, along with the girls' names Byzantium and Luna (Moon).

The registry office agency's director Irina Muravyeva said at the time that by calling their children Sevastopol or Byzantium, the parents were likely reacting to political events in the world, referring to the annexation of Crimea — where Sevastopol is located — and the subsequent wave of national pride that swept Russia immediately afterward.

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