

# Supreme Court Allows German Couple to Adopt Russian Child

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Russia's Supreme Court has overturned a lower court's decision and allowed a German couple to adopt a Russian orphan with disabilities, the Kommersant newspaper reported Tuesday.

A district court in the far eastern Russian region of Primorye had claimed that Germany recognizes same-sex marriages, and the 4-year-old girl might end up in an LGBT family if she were allowed to be adopted, the report said.

Alexander Golovanov, the lawyer for the German man and woman seeking to adopt the Russian orphan, called the verdict “unprofessional,” Kommersant reported.

“Germany does not allow same-sex marriages, and there is no reason to think that the heterosexual Beisenov family, who have three biological children, will change their orientation,” Golovanov was quoted by Kommersant as saying.

“The [PrImorye] court's decision doomed the child to a slow death in the orphanage system,

where a child with a severe disability has practically no chance of finding a family,” he said, Kommersant reported.

The girl, Elvira, suffers from a congenital disability that affects her hands, making her unable to feed or dress herself, Kommersant reported.

The German couple said they had found a clinic that specializes in treating the kind of disabilities affecting Elvira, and argued that after treatment, she would be able to live a “normal” life, the report said.

The adoptive mother, Yulia Beisenova, scoffed at the lower court's reasoning.

“The court saw a hypothetical possibility for Elya to get into a same-sex union,” she said, Kommersant reported. “But in this case, Russians should also be banned from adopting, since there is also a hypothetical possibility that a couple will get divorced, one of the partners will go abroad and create a same-sex family there.”

Trying to fight the decision, the adoptive parents appealed to the Supreme Court and sent letters to President Vladimir Putin, Orthodox Church Patriarch Kirill, and Russian children's ombudsman Pavel Astakhov, Kommersant reported.

Astakhov said Elvira faces no “risk” of being placed in a same-sex couple, Kommersant reported.

The adoptive parents expect to receive the Supreme Court ruling on Thursday, and will travel to the far eastern city of Ussuriysk to pick up their adopted daughter and take her to Germany, the report said.

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