The Moscow Times
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Baby Boxes Increase 'Terrorism Risk,' Claims Top Russian Health Official

November 29, 2016



Dmitry Lovetsky

A top Russian health official has labelled the country's controversial baby box scheme "a terrorism risk," the Interfax news agency reported Tuesday.

Oleg Filippov, deputy director of childcare and maternity services, said that baby boxes – heated enclosures where mothers can give up their children without being identified – increased the risk of terrorist attacks due to their "anonymous nature."

Filippov also said he was concerned by "non-certified equipment" in the boxes, telling a meeting at the Russian State Duma that the enclosures had not been confirmed as safe.

Boxing in unwanted children: Read more about the controversial baby box scheme dividing Russia.

In June, ultraconservative lawmaker Yelena Mizulina introduced a bill banning the baby boxes.

The politician claimed that the boxes did not reduce infanticide, but led to a growing number of abandoned babies and an increased risk of child trafficking.

Under the proposed law, any organization breaking the law would face a fine of up to five million rubles ($15,000) or 90 day suspension of activity.

There are currently 19 baby box schemes functioning across 12 Russian regions. The first services were introduced in 2011 by the charitable foundation Cradle of Hope, based in the central Russian region of Perm. Thirty-one babies have been rescued using the scheme.

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