Putin Sought to Boost Russian Population With 'Gay Propaganda' Law – Ex-British PM Cameron

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David Cameron and Vladimir Putin in 2013 **Kremlin.ru / Wikicommons**

Former British Prime Minister David Cameron has said in his new memoir that Russian President Vladimir Putin told him he passed a law against "gay propaganda" to reverse the country's declining birth rates.

Russia banned "propaganda of homosexuality toward minors" in 2013 around the same time England legalized same-sex marriage, drawing criticism from Western states and human rights activists. Russia has struggled with a demographic crisis in recent years, with population numbers falling for the first time in a decade to 146.8 million last year.

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"[Putin] said that Russia's problem was a declining population, and he needed men to marry

women and have lots of children," Cameron recounted the Russian president as saying during a 2013 chat.

Writing in his newly released memoirs titled "For the Record," Cameron described his talks with Putin at the G20 summit in St. Petersburg as "our iciest encounter yet."

Cameron served as British prime minister from 2010–2016, when he [quit](#) after a Brexit referendum in which a majority voted to leave the European Union.

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Putin has said he is not prejudiced against gay people, but has made comments which activists have criticized as being ambiguous and insulting toward LGBT people.

Despite criticism from Western activists and liberal Russians, the country's efforts to curb gay rights [have struck](#) a chord with a socially conservative Russian majority that is Putin's support base.

While some independent polls [say](#) Russians have largely negative views of LGBT people, other polls have [suggested](#) that attitudes toward equal rights for LGBT people are at a 14–year high.

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