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Putin Bans Surrogacy for Foreigners

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Alexander Avilov / Moskva News Agency

President Vladimir Putin signed legislation Monday banning foreigners from having children with the help of a surrogate in Russia.

Only married Russian citizens or single Russian women unable to bear children for medical reasons are able to use surrogacy services under the new law. Children born by a surrogate mother are automatically granted Russian citizenship.

Russian lawmakers moved to ban surrogacy for foreigners following increasing warnings that wealthy foreigners exploit women and children in one of the few countries where commercial surrogacy is allowed.

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Vyacheslav Volodin, the speaker of Russia's lower house of parliament, said earlier this month that lawmakers passed the bill to "prevent the trafficking of our children [and] protect babies from falling into same-sex couples or becoming victims of crimes, including organ sales."

Under the new law, surrogacy is still available to couples where one of the spouses is a Russian citizen.

The ban takes effect on the day of the law's publication.

Putin and other Russian officials have over the past decade repeatedly claimed that foreign influence, particularly due to the acceptance of LGBT equality in the West, is threatening Russia's families and children, and have passed a tranche of laws aimed at protecting so-called "traditional family values."

In 2012, Putin banned United States citizens from adopting Russian children in response to Washington's adoption of the Magnitsky Act, which punishes Russians accused of rights abuses.

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