

Putin's Children's Envoy Reveals She Adopted Child From Mariupol

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Vladimir Putin and Maria Lvova-Belova, Presidential Commissioner for Children's Rights in Russia. kremlin.ru

Russian President Vladimir Putin's commissioner for the protection of children's rights informed the Russian leader during a meeting on Thursday that she had recently adopted a 15-year-old child from the Russian-occupied city of Mariupol in eastern Ukraine.

"Now I know what it means to be a mother of a child from Donbas. It's hard, but we definitely love each other. I think we can handle anything," Maria Lvova-Belova [said](#) on Thursday in response to a question Putin asked her during a meeting at his Novo-Ogaryovo residence near Moscow.

The admission is likely to spark outrage as Lvova-Belova is at the center of a Russian program that oversees the forced deportation of Ukrainian children from Russian-occupied areas of eastern Ukraine to re-education camps in Russia.

At least 6,000 Ukrainian children are living in Russian camps at present in what could

constitute a war crime, a U.S. study [published](#) on Tuesday found.

The official, who has been under sanctions from multiple Western countries since last year for supporting Russia's invasion of Ukraine, said she had adopted the 15-year-old child "thanks" to Vladimir Putin.

Lvova-Belova, who according to official reports was already the mother and guardian of 22 mostly adopted children, was appointed Putin's children's rights commissioner in 2021.

She is also a member of the governing body of the pro-Kremlin United Russia party, the largest party in the Russian parliament.

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