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Russia to Introduce Language Exams for Migrant Children to Enroll In School

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A migrant family in Moscow. **Moskva News Agency**

Russian lawmakers voted Wednesday to ban migrant children from attending school unless they pass a Russian language proficiency exam.

The lower-house State Duma passed the bill in a 409-1 vote.

"Before enrolling the children in school, there will be mandatory checks of their legal status in Russia and their Russian language proficiency," Duma Speaker Vyacheslav Volodin said.

The new rules will take effect on April 1, 2025, after upper-house Federation Council senators vote for the bill and President Vladimir Putin signs it into law.

Volodin claimed 41% of migrant children experienced "difficulties" with Russian language skills at the start of this school year.

The latest ban comes amid renewed anti-migrant sentiment following the deadly Moscow concert hall attack in March, which was claimed by the Islamic State and allegedly carried out

by citizens of Tajikistan.

The fallout from the attack included police raids and deportations of migrants, a majority of whom come from poor former Soviet Central Asian republics.

Volodin said the Duma had passed a total of 14 bills aimed at "improving" Russia's migration policy and combating illegal immigration since the start of 2024.

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