

50% of Russians Support Adoption Ban, Poll Says

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Fifty percent of Russians support the Dima Yakovlev bill banning adoptions of Russian orphans by U.S. citizens, according to the Levada Center's latest public opinion poll.

The Levada Center said 20 percent of Russians were strongly in support of the bill, while 30 percent expressed general support, Gazeta.ru reported Wednesday.

Opponents of the bill made up 31 percent of the respondents.

In Moscow, however, the reaction to the bill showed the opposite trend: Half of those asked were against the bill, while 37 percent supported it.

At the same time, 64 percent of respondents expressed doubt that the measures called for in the bill would improve the plight of children in orphanages, address their medical needs or provide them with a better future. Only 24 percent said they felt otherwise.

The poll also found that while 38 percent of Russians felt the Dima Yakovlev bill actually served to protect Russian children's rights abroad, 40 percent considered any attempts to tie the law to children's rights "demagoguery and cynical manipulation of public opinion."

"It seems that the adoption of the Dima Yakovlev law has deepened the rift between the authorities and the most modernized part of the Russian population, a rift which clearly manifested itself in 2012," the Levada Center said.

The bill, named after an adopted Russian boy who died while in the custody of his adoptive U.S. family, sparked strong public protest, including the "March Against Scoundrels" rally held on Jan. 13, where many protesters called the bill "anti-orphan" and accused officials of using children as a weapon for political reasons.

A VTsIOM poll earlier in January said 76 percent of Russians backed the adoption ban.

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