

Youth Agency's Future in Hands of Hard-Hitting Nationalist

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Bosykh, in the black knit hat and olive jacket, is seen getting into a scuffle with filmmaker Taisiya Krugovykh during a protest in March against the detention of the punk band Pussy Riot.

The Kremlin is planning a major reorganization of the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs, and a committee headed by a man best known for punching a woman in the face at a Pussy Riot protest will now decide its fate, Izvestia reported Friday.

The committee will be run by Alexander Bosykh, director of youth policy for the nationalist Congress of Russian Communities and an aide to Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin. Members of the committee will come from the ranks of United Russia and the party's youth wing, Young Guard, the paper said.

Bosykh, 33, rose to wider public attention in March when he was photographed punching

documentary filmmaker Taisiya Krugovykh in the face outside a Moscow courthouse during a protest against the detention of the punk band Pussy Riot.

"All you have to do is tap some lesbian on the head and suddenly everyone knows everything about you," Bositykh told the Yekaterinburg news site Nakanune.ru later that month. "I have been doing good work since 2000."

The committee will be tasked with determining a new direction for the agency, which will likely see its budget significantly cut in the wake of the departure of its controversial leader, Vasily Yakemenko, a source within the presidential administration told Izvestia.

Among its tasks, the committee will seek to bring youth groups and the annual Seliger summer camp — which Yakemenko had run as a personal fiefdom — more firmly under government control.

The committee plans to hold informal meetings with youth groups around the country, with the first to be convened in Chechnya and Dagestan, the paper reported.

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