

Migration Service Chief Made a Cabinet Minister

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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President Vladimir Putin signed a decree Tuesday making the head of the Federal Migration Service a federal minister, signaling that the service's powers will likely be expanded.

The decree ordering the change was published on the Kremlin's website Tuesday.

The Federal Migration Service is headed by Konstantin Romodanovsky, a career security service officer who served in both the KGB and its successor agency, the Federal Security Service, or FSB.

The service, currently part of the Interior Ministry, was created in 2004 and absorbed some police structures dealing with visas and registration of foreign citizens.

The move could strengthen the power of the service under Putin, who has indicated plans to tighten control over immigration from former Soviet Union countries.

Putin said in his state-of-the-nation address last month that migrants from former Soviet states coming to Russia to seek work should be required to have foreign travel passports instead of just their so-called "internal passports," or domestic identification cards.

The measure is apparently intended to help limit illegal immigration, which is a hot-button issue for many Russians and has contributed to a rise in nationalist sentiments.

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