

Medvedev Urges Governors Not to Give Apartments to Celebrities

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has urged regional leaders to exercise self-restraint in giving away apartments to newly crowned Russian citizens because it “causes social tensions.”

“I would recommend that some governors bestow apartments more carefully, because we have a long queue for them, and people cannot always avail themselves of mortgage services,” Medvedev said at a news conference on Wednesday.

“And when it is not the poorest people receiving an apartment as a gift, this, of course, causes social tensions,” he said, Interfax reported.

His comments came in response to a question about French actor Gerard Depardieu recently receiving two apartments after being granted Russian citizenship.

At the same time, Medvedev said he understands the desire of Russian authorities “to please a famous person,” and that he hoped Depardieu “will have a busy life throughout the Russian Federation.”

Depardieu received Russian citizenship in January and decided to settle down in the country after visiting Mordovia. He was given an apartment in the capital of Saransk.

In February, he became an honorary citizen of Chechnya, and Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov gave him a five-room apartment in Grozny.

A Novosibirsk resident responded in March by asking the prosecutor general to check the legality of Depardieu's gift, citing Article 49 of the Housing Code, which states that housing is provided by the state or municipal property fund only for citizens who are recognized as low income.

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