

Russia's Regions Asked to Help Implement Economic Amnesty

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Russia's 83 regions have been asked to help speed up implementation of the country's recently passed economic amnesty.

Assistant business ombudsman Oleg Denisenko, who is in charge of business amnesty, asked regional governments to appoint supervisors so that amnesty plan is fulfilled, Kommersant reported.

In early July President Vladimir Putin approved the amnesty plan proposed by business ombudsman Boris Titov, according to which thousands of entrepreneurs may be freed in the period of six months.

Since the law took effect July 4, 205 entrepreneurs have been cleared of charges against them and 42 businessmen who were already serving their sentences were released from prisons or freed from other punishments.

Denisenko, a Communist Party State Duma deputy, said that ombudsman's office in Moscow was overwhelmed with letters asking for clarification on the terms and conditions of amnesty and with complaints from those whose amnesty requests were refused.

The assistant ombudsman noted that authorities have a limited time to process requests, as the amnesty only lasts for six months.

He said that 205 cases of amnesty was a "weighty figure" and blamed journalists for suggesting that "hundreds of thousands" would be freed.

Denisenko also added that some jailed entrepreneurs whose prison term comes soon to an end would likely refuse the amnesty in order not to pay the damages connected with their convictions, a requirement to qualify for amnesty.

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