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Sberbank Won't Meet Proposed Profit Goals, Analysts Say

By The Moscow Times

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Investors are becoming increasingly concerned that Sberbank, the country's largest lender will not be able to reach its 2013 profit goals in an economic slowdown.

Late last year, the bank's president, German Gref, announced that by the end of 2013 the bank could earn between 370 billion and 390 billion rubles ($11.2 billion to $11.8 billion), Vedomosti reported.

Analysts said then that the forecast was cautious and realistic, but the worsening economic situation had investors increasingly skeptical that the state bank would be able to reach its earnings forecast.

Expected profit for the year now stands at about $348 billion rubles.

Most investors fear low growth in the bank's credit portfolio, which grew less than the market

in the second quarter — 4 percent against 5.4 percent — VTB Capital analyst Mikhail Shlemov said.

According to his calculations, the state bank's profit from January to June may not reach last year's 173 billion rubles. He also noted that in the second half of the year Sberbank traditionally earns less than in the first.

Shlemov added that Sberbank's management may lower the forecasts for 2013 during a conference call with analysts on Aug. 28.

The low profits do not seem to be affecting bonuses at the company, Slon.ru reported. Last week, Sberbank announced that members of its board would receive 208 million rubles, up from 181 million rubles last year.

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