

Minister Plans Accelerated Privatization

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Improvements in the stock market mean that the privatization of several large state corporations can be accelerated, and the sale of 19 percent of the country's largest oil firm Rosneft can be fast-tracked to this year, Economic Development Minister Aleksei Ulyukayev said.

Stakes in Rosneft, Aeroflot, shipyard Sovcomflot, Novorossiysk Commercial Sea Port, VTB bank, and the first 5 percent of Russian Railways can all be sold this year, Ulyukayev said.

In recent years, the government's privatization plans have been dogged by foot-dragging, as officials opt to wait for more favorable market conditions.

"The year before last was good for bonds. Last year we saw very large rises in the stock market. This year there will most likely be an increase in global credit. The growing interest in investing in assets will give many of our companies the opportunity of holding IPOs, including those that have been deferred in previous years," Ulyukayev told Interfax.

A Federal Property Management Agency spokesman said the agency agreed with Ulyukayev that privatization should be sped up. However, no official decision has been made, according to another FPMA employee.

"For example, there are no approved plans to privatize 19 percent of Rosneft this year," the source said.

The sale of stakes in Rosneft, Russian Railways, and VTB had been planned for after 2014.

The largest privatization deal slated for 2014 was the sale of 43.1 percent of Rostelecom, which would have brought in \$5 billion to the federal budget, Communications and Press Minister Nikolai Nikiforov said in September.

Additionally, work is being done on the partial partial privatization of Sovcomflot, the sale of 20 percent of Novorossiiskii Commercial Sea Port, and a reduction of the state's share in Aeroflot to 50 percent plus one share.

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