

Deputy Prime Minister Elected Chair of Board of Liberal University

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Arkady Dvorkovich

Deputy Prime Minister Arkady Dvorkovich was elected chairman of the board of directors of the New Economic School, one of the few remaining bastions of liberal economic thought in Russia, news agency Interfax reported Friday.

Dvorkovich, an economist and graduate of the New Economic School (NES), is known to be a close associate of Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev. While working as a presidential adviser during Medvedev's presidency, Dvorkovich advocated for liberal economic reforms.

He has been appointed to the board of the NES at a time when Russian universities are coming under increasing pressure to reign in academics who are too vocal in their criticism of the Kremlin's policies.

The NES emerged at the center of this tug-of-war in 2013, when prominent Russian

economist Sergei Guriev, then rector of the university, fled Russia fearing political prosecution.

The Higher School of Economics (HSE), another center of liberal economic thought, has also seen a wave of politically motivated resignations.

In May, economist Konstantin Sonin — a former colleague of Guriev's at NES — left his position at HSE for a position at the University of Chicago.

Sonin had earlier stepped down from his position as vice rector of HSE in what friends described as a response to pressure from the university's administration.

Late last year, prominent economist and Kremlin critic Sergei Aleksashenko stepped down from his position as editor of a respected macroeconomic bulletin published by HSE. Aleksashenko and colleagues at the university said at the time that he had been pressured to resign.

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