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Russia's Putin Order Cuts to Interior Ministry Payroll As Economy Struggles

By The Moscow Times

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Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed an order reducing the maximum number of staff on the Interior Ministry payroll by 110,000, or about 10 percent, according to a document posted on a government website on Monday.

The measure is the latest example of belt-tightening by Russia, where the economy is sliding towards recession, hurt by weak oil prices and Western sanctions over the Ukraine conflict.

The document states that the maximum number of Interior Ministry employees paid from the federal budget should be set at just over 1 million people, excluding security staff and people taking care of ministry buildings.

It amends a previous order signed by Putin in May 2014 that had set the number at just over 1.11 million.

It was not immediately clear which employees the Interior Ministry would have to cut, or

whether a portion of them could be shifted to non-payroll work. Its payroll largely consists of the police force and related paramilitary forces responsible for law and order, as well as civilian administrators.

Analysts say the country's bloated bureaucracy drags on growth and fuels corruption.

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