

Putin Signs Order to Restructure Government Ministries

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President Vladimir Putin has signed an executive order to restructure several government ministries after meeting with Prime Minister-designate Dmitry Medvedev on Tuesday.

Among other shifts, the order [created](#) a Ministry of Science and Higher Education separate from the Education Ministry and added digital development to the portfolio of the Ministry of Communications and Mass Media, while adding a tenth deputy prime ministerial post. In his inauguration speech on May 7, Putin [promised](#) to focus on domestic policy and deliver a “modern and dynamic” Russia over the next six years.

“This will allow us to make better use of our potential in the development of both education systems,” Medvedev [told](#) Putin.

“Considering that the current government has proven effective, there are no major changes in the suggested new structure,” Medvedev said.

“The more Putin uses the words ‘renewal’ and ‘breakthrough’ in his rhetoric, the more conservative he becomes in real actions,” Putin’s former speechwriter, political analyst Abbas Gallyamov, was [cited](#) as saying by the Vedomosti business daily.

“The changes that have occurred are mostly decorative,” he added.

Other experts interviewed by Vedomosti highlighted the division of labor at the Education Ministry as “logical” and “reasonable.”

Historian Askold Ivanchik welcomed the inclusion of universities into the Science Ministry’s area of responsibility, but cautioned that “this is yet another undesirable step toward the fact that science will be managed not by scientists, but by officials.”

“Who will become the minister of science and higher education is important. If it’s a scientist [...] then that’s good, if it’s an official — the situation will worsen,” he was cited as saying.

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