The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

President of Russia's Biggest Lobby Group Tapped as Putin's Next 'Business Tsar'

May 26, 2026



Alexander Shokhin. **kremlin.ru**

The president of Russia's largest business lobby will oversee a revamped version of the country's business ombudsman office, the Kremlin said Tuesday, ending a two-year vacancy at the top of the state watchdog.

Alexander Shokhin, who has led the pro-Kremlin Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (RSPP) since 2005, met with President Vladimir Putin earlier in the day to pitch a structural overhaul of the business ombudsman office.

The institution was created in 2012 to shield business owners and companies from arbitrary, unwarranted pressure by state law enforcement and government agencies.

During the Kremlin meeting on Tuesday, Putin endorsed Shokhin's proposal to transition the office of the Presidential Commissioner for Entrepreneurs' Rights away from a strict

government agency model, shifting it into a mixed "public-state institution."

Under the new framework, the ombudsman's office will reorganize into an Autonomous Non-Profit Organization (ANO). This non-membership corporate structure will be overseen by an executive body appointed directly by its founding members.

Shokhin argued that the transition to a non-profit model would be the most efficient and optimal path forward for processing business complaints.

Related article: Supreme Court Disbands Boris Titov's Party of Growth

The executive branch post has sat officially vacant since mid-2022, when founding business ombudsman Boris Titov, who was himself the head of the business lobby Delovaya Rossiya, stepped down after reaching his two-term limit.

Since then, Titov, a sparkling wine producer, has maintained temporary caretaker duties over the office. Putin appointed him as his special representative to international organizations in 2024.

Putin unveiled the creation of the business ombudsman post during the 2012 St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF). Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov announced Shokhin's appointment a week ahead of this year's forum.

Shokhin will remain the president of RSPP while he serves as business ombudsman.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2026/05/26/president-of-russias-biggest-lobby-group-tapped-as-putins-next-business-tsar-a92849