

Putin Visits Siberian Factory Producing Delayed Russian Airliner

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President Vladimir Putin made an unannounced visit Friday to an aviation plant in the Siberian city of Irkutsk, home to one of Russia's flagship civil aviation projects that has faced a decade of production delays.

The Kremlin [said](#) Putin toured the Irkutsk Aviation Plant, which produces Russia's MC-21 passenger jet. He was shown one fully assembled plane during the visit, while 18 MC-21-310 aircraft are currently being built, according to a Kremlin press release.

Irkutsk region Governor Igor Kobzev and Rostec CEO Sergei Chemezov accompanied the president.

Development of the MC-21 began in 2009. Mass production was originally scheduled to launch in 2016, but that timeline has been repeatedly pushed back.

State defense conglomerate Rostec currently aims to complete certification of the MC-21 by

late 2026, with commercial flights slated to begin months later.

The state-run news agency TASS [released](#) footage showing Putin inspecting the interior of an MC-21 cabin on Friday. In the video, Irkutsk Aviation Plant CEO Andrei Soynov can be heard describing the interior of the aircraft as “a comfortable size for passengers.”

Russia’s efforts to build its own commercial fleet have stalled as companies struggle to replace Western components and planes cut off by sanctions over the war in Ukraine.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters that Putin will next travel to Omsk, located roughly 2,000 kilometers (1,250 miles) west, for an official event with Kazakh authorities.

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