

Rolf Dealership Founder Jailed 9 Years in Absentia

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Sergei Petrov. **Video grab / YouTube**

A judge in Moscow [sentenced](#) the founder of Russia's largest car dealership and ex-lawmaker Sergei Petrov to nine years in prison in absentia after finding him guilty of using fake documents to smuggle billions of rubles out of the country.

Petrov, a billionaire who served in the lower-house State Duma between 2006 and 2016 as a member of the left-leaning A Just Russia party, was accused along with a group of accomplices of using fake documents to transfer around 4 billion rubles (\$47 million) to a Cyprus-registered company in 2014. In addition to prison time, a judge fined him 800,000 rubles (\$9,400) on Monday.

The exiled businessman, who currently lives in Austria, has previously denied the charges against him and accused authorities in Russia of seeking to punish him for his opposition to the Kremlin.

Petrov openly supported anti-government protests against President Vladimir Putin's re-

election in 2011–12. He also voted against a law that banned U.S. citizens from adopting Russian children and abstained from the vote on the 2014 annexation of Crimea.

Related article: [Putin Seizes Exiled Billionaire's Car Dealership](#)

The judge in Moscow on Monday also sentenced Tatyana Lukovetskaya, former CEO of the Rolf dealership network, and Georgiy Kafkalia, director of the Cypriot firm Panabel Limited, to 8.5 years in prison in absentia each for their alleged involvement in the smuggling scheme.

Prosecutors accused the group of funneling proceeds from Rolf's commercial operations to Panabel Limited with the help of a forged agreement that allowed the purchase of Rolf Estate shares at a vastly inflated price.

In December 2023, Putin [ordered](#) the state seizure of Rolf from Cypriot entity Delance Limited and Rolf Motors — marking one of the first major confiscations of a Russian-owned business amid broader state asset seizures following the 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Earlier that same year, a judge sentenced Rolf's former business development chief, Anatoly Kairo, to 8.5 years in prison on smuggling charges.

Forbes last ranked Petrov as Russia's 127th richest businessman in 2021, estimating his net worth at \$950 million at the time.

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