

Metrics Being Employed to Reduce Bureaucracy

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Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev on Thursday approved a list of metrics to track the efficiency of federal and regional officials in a move to improve conditions for doing business in Russia.

The list, published on the government's website, outlines key performance indicators that will facilitate assessment of how government agencies progress in reducing administrative barriers for entrepreneurs and companies.

In its evaluation, the government will primarily rely on the business community's opinion about the country's commercial environment on the federal level and in every region, Medvedev said at a Cabinet meeting.

In September, President Vladimir Putin ordered the government to submit criteria to measure the efficiency of bureaucrats' work based on key performance indicators, or KPIs, a concept

employed by international businesses to assess executives and divisions.

The move is expected to substantially improve Russia's position in the World Bank's Doing Business ranking, from 112th place now to 20th place in 2018, according to the list of KPIs.

The document stipulates that the work of the Federal Tax Service chief will be measured by the number of documents a company has to submit to export goods, which must decline from the current eight to four by 2018.

The maximum time an exporter spends on customs procedures must be reduced from 72 hours to 2 hours, while the time it takes for a customs check of vehicles at Russia's borders must reach 20 minutes by 2018, down from the current 80 minutes.

Getting a construction permit must take no more than 56 days by 2018 instead of the typical 448 days now. That target was set for the Federal Construction and Utilities Agency.

The task for the Finance Ministry is improving the country's credit rating by the major credit-rating agencies from the second-lowest investment grade now to grade A by 2018.

Measurements for regional officials include the annual increase in the number of jobs created, the volume of direct investment and the amount of new-road construction, the document said.

Introducing such indicators is critical for improving the country's business climate because it's a "principally new and effective approach to the system of government administration," said Alexander Galushka, chairman of Delovaya Rossia, a business lobbying organization.

Until recently, the government's work to improve the business climate was limited to amending existing legislation, with no real changes taking place, he said by telephone.

He said that specific measurements of work efficiency will lead officials to take personal responsibility for improving the performance of their agencies.

Business lobbying organizations said there's a visible trend of reducing administrative barriers facing companies and entrepreneurs in Russia.

A recent survey by Opora Rossii showed that the percentage of businessmen who were unimpeded by such barriers increased from 14.5 percent in 2011 to 21 percent this year, said the organization's deputy president, Vladislav Korochkin, Rossiiskaya Gazeta reported Thursday.

The Economic Development Ministry and the State Statistics Service have until Dec. 1 to submit proposals for general methods to be used to determine metrics for federal and regional officials, Medvedev said.

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