

Some 10,000 White-Collar Criminals to Qualify for Amnesty, Prosecutor Says

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Up to 10,000 first-time violators of financial laws should qualify for amnesty, Russia's chief prosecutor said.

"A very large number of businesspeople" have been exempted from criminal liability or given milder penalties, or released from custody, as part of the "humanizing" legislation, Prosecutor General Yury Chaika told President Vladimir Putin Tuesday.

It was not immediately clear whether he was referring to legislation other than the amnesty or to the amnesty itself, which came into effect last Thursday.

"In our estimate, the present amnesty will cover up to 10,000 businesspeople," he said, adding that the original estimates "were not quite correct."

Business ombudsman Boris Titov said in late June that the amnesty would cover about

100,000 people, including 13,500 people serving prison sentences and some 70,000–80,000 people who received suspended sentences or were given fines and other penalties not related to deprivation of freedom.

Chaika's estimate is higher than that offered by Garry Minkh, the president's authorized representative to the lower house of parliament, who said last Tuesday that about 3,000 people would benefit from the amnesty.

Minkh provided the following breakdown: 1,299 pending criminal cases to be dismissed under the amnesty, 180 people in prisons, 160 people in custody pending trial, and 1,035 people on probation.

The amnesty received final approval by Russia's lower house of parliament last Tuesday. It is an exclusive prerogative that does not require approval by the upper house or Putin's signature.

The approval came just 10 days after Putin called for first-time white-collar criminals to be pardoned as a way of strengthening entrepreneurial initiative.

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