

Former Finance Minister Kudrin Finds Place on Putin's Economic Council

By [The Moscow Times](#)

November 01, 2013

The  **Moscow Times**

Former finance minister Alexei Kudrin has become a member of the presidium of the presidential Economic Council in a move that could signal his possible return to the Kremlin's inner circle.

"Joined the presidium of the Economic Council under the Russian President. We will be discussing the most pressing problems," Kudrin wrote Thursday on his Twitter blog.

The composition of the presidium was approved by President Vladimir Putin on Thursday. It includes the country's top economics and finance officials, such as First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov, Central Bank chairwoman Elvira Nabiullina, Finance Minister Anton Siluanov and head of the Audit Chamber Tatyana Golikova.

The Economic Council was set up by Putin in July last year as an advisory body on key aspects of Russia's social and economic development. Kudrin did not join the council at the time.

A longtime Putin ally, Kudrin, 53, resigned as finance minister and deputy prime minister in 2011 following a row with then-President Dmitry Medvedev over budget issues including rising defense spending and Russia's dependence on raw material exports.

Kudrin said on a number of occasions that he had refused to accept several offers to take up positions in the government since then because he continued to disagree with the current administration's policies.

The ex-minister made a partial return to national politics in April last year with the formal establishment of his Civil Initiatives Fund, an advisory body on political and economic issues "with a goal to identify and implement the best scenario for the country's development."

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