

Vkontakte Founder Pavel Durov Becomes Citizen of St. Kitts and Nevis

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Vkontakte social network founder Pavel Durov has reportedly acquired citizenship of St. Kitts and Nevis.

Vkontakte social network founder Pavel Durov acquired citizenship of St. Kitts and Nevis shortly before fleeing Russia amid a conflict with security services over data protection and privacy, a news report has said.

Durov, who was fired from his position as Vkontakte CEO last week, received a St. Kitts and Nevis passport by contributing \$250,000 to the Caribbean nation's sugar industry in February, an unidentified source close to the company's shareholders said, Izvestia reported Monday.

Durov's brother, Nikolai, who worked as a technical director at Vkontakte, is also seeking citizenship of the Caribbean nation through a similar investment program, the source added.

St. Kitts and Nevis citizenship may be obtained by investing \$400,000 in the country's real

estate, or by making a "non-refundable contribution" of \$250,000 to the Sugar Industry Diversification Foundation, according to the islands' citizenship-by-investment program website.

It takes between three and six months to process a citizenship application for St. Kitts and Nevis, a spokesperson for Henley Estates, a company that handles citizenship-by-investment applications for wealthy emigration-seekers, was cited as telling Izvestia.

The necessary funds also have to be invested after the application has been approved, the spokesperson said, indicating that Durov submitted his application several months ago.

Durov, who reportedly resisted months of increasing pressure from the Federal Security Service to release personal information about opposition activists who use Vkontakte, said that he learned about his dismissal from media reports last week.

He also said on his Vkontakte page that the social network will now fall under the "full control" of Kremlin-linked Rosneft CEO Igor Sechin, and Vkontakte billionaire shareholder Alisher Usmanov.

After he was fired as Vkontakte CEO, Durov apparently traveled from Russia to the United Arab Emirates, where he holds a long-term residence visa, an unidentified source said.

See also:

[Vkontakte Founder Pavel Durov Learns He's Been Fired Through Media](#)

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