

**The Presidential Administration
within the Belarusian Governance Structure:
Functions, Personnel, and Influence**

ABSTRACT

This study examines the central role of the Presidential Administration (PA) of the Republic of Belarus within the country's system of governance. In a personalist system of rule, in which all key decision-making power is concentrated in the hands of Aliaksandar Lukashenka, the PA occupies a unique position. It supports the work of the head of state, participates in the drafting and formalisation of his decisions, and oversees their implementation. The PA serves as a means of screening staff for promotions or redeployment, a coordinator of state ideology, a conduit for legislative initiatives, and an instrument of control over the state apparatus. Furthermore, it acts as the primary intermediary between Lukashenka and other state institutions.

Following the 2020 political crisis, the PA's significance has not diminished, despite the formal strengthening of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly and the Security Council within the governance structure. In fact, its role in personnel policy, ideological work, and oversight of the regions has grown. This research demonstrates that the authority exercised by PA officials derives from their proximity to Lukashenka and their mandate to act on his behalf. This enables the PA to intervene in areas that formally fall within the competence of other state bodies. Consequently, the PA should be regarded as the pivotal institution within Lukashenka's system of power

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INTRODUCTION

The existence of a Presidential Administration (hereinafter referred to as the PA) within the system of public administration is not unique to Belarus. Most democratic countries with a presidential form of government have similar structures. In democracies, however, they operate within a system of checks and balances. Their influence on public administration is determined by the balance between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, as well as by the specific characteristics of each country's constitutional model.

What distinguishes Belarus is Aliaksandar Lukashenka's (Aleksandr Lukashenko¹) authoritarian personalist regime. The head of state stands above all branches of power and, in practice, controls or otherwise strongly influences them. Consequently, as it reports directly to Lukashenka, the PA is arguably the principal centre of power and a key institution of state governance. In terms of its influence over decision-making, the PA may exercise greater influence than the government, the parliament, the courts, or the media. In Belarus, all of these either coordinate their actions with the PA or carry out its instructions.

The Constitution of Belarus, adopted in March 1994, created the post of president but, crucially, the original text did not mention the PA. Lukashenka established the PA, following his election as president in July 1994, through [Decree No. 6 of 22 July 1994](#), 'On the Formation of the Administration of the President of the Republic of Belarus'. The structure, tasks and powers of the new body were set out in [Presidential Decree No. 23 of 5 August 1994](#), 'On the Approval of the Regulations on the Administration of the President of the Republic of Belarus'. The adoption of these regulations marked [the official establishment of this state body](#).

Following its creation, the PA began to perform a wide variety of functions: it provided information and analytical support on domestic and foreign policy, as well as on socio-economic matters; implemented personnel policy; coordinated interaction between the head of state and the Supreme Council (at that time the unicameral legislative body); and performed a range of other functions. In later years, Lukashenka repeatedly adjusted the functions of the PA through decrees, steadily strengthening its role within the system of power.

At the same time, for the general public, the PA remains a rather closed and opaque institution. Its significance is understood by a small circle of people, a group that largely consists of civil servants whose duties have brought them into contact with PA staff, and of experts who study political influence in Belarus. For the outside observer, it is difficult to determine precisely what the PA does. Its closed nature hinders systematic study of it and information regarding the influence of its officials on decisions made by Lukashenka remains largely inaccessible. There is no comprehensive understanding of the PA's internal structure and personnel.

Within the Belarusian public administration system, the head of the PA is often seen as the 'second person' in the state, although such a perception contradicts the constitutional provisions governing the transfer of power. These imply that the Chair of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly (i.e. head of the upper chamber of the parliament) is 'number two' since, according to

¹ This paper uses transliteration from Belarusian for personal names and place names, with transliteration from Russian provided in brackets throughout.

the Constitution as amended following a 2022 referendum, if the president is unable to perform his duties it is to the chair of the upper chamber that presidential powers are transferred, rather than to the head of the PA. Furthermore, in the event of the president's death, the head of the upper house of the parliament would chair meetings of the Security Council until the appointment of a new president. Between 1996 and 2022, the Constitution assigned these powers to the prime minister.

Heads of the Administration are, as a rule, restrained in their public communication. Under Lukashenka, eleven individuals have held the position of head of the PA. Some of them knew Lukashenka before his presidency and contributed to his rise to power, including Leanid Sinitsyn (Leonid Sinitsyn) and Viktar Sheiman (Viktor Sheiman). A number of PA heads worked alongside Lukashenka for an extended period of time, including Ural Latypau (Ural Latypov) and Uladzimir Makei (Vladimir Makei). Others were appointed to the position after serving in other senior state positions, among them Natallia Kachanova (Natalya Kochanova) and Dzmitry Krutoi (Dmitry Krutoi).

The aim of this study is to analyse the role of the PA within the Belarusian system of governance. To this end, using open sources, we analyse the evolution of its functions from its inception up to the time of writing (May 2026), and examine the biographies and career trajectories of its heads. Based on expert interviews, we also examine the role of the PA within Belarus's power vertical, as well as its influence on the governmental bureaucracy, state ideology, and economic policies. The study further assesses the degree of influence that PA officials exert over decisions made by Lukashenka.

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LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND FUNCTIONS: THE PRESIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATION'S EVOLUTION OVER TIME

The legal framework defining the status and functions of the PA has evolved alongside the transformation of Belarus's political system. Initially, in 1994, the PA was established as a working body to support Lukashenka's activities. Following a 1996 constitutional referendum, which formally strengthened Lukashenka's authority over all branches of power, the PA's role and position in the governance system changed significantly. It emerged as the most influential institution in state governance and decision-making. The amended 1996 Constitution introduced Article 84(5), stating that 'the President shall establish, abolish and reorganise the Administration of the President of the Republic of Belarus.' In other words, Lukashenka obtained full authority over the formation, reorganisation, and dissolution of the PA. Effectively, he became the ultimate decision-maker with regard to the institution's structure.

As noted in one of the interviews: *'As early as 1994-1995, Lukashenka was attempting to concentrate political power not provided for in the Constitution in the hands of the Administration. Political decision-making began to shift into the presidential vertical. At the time, this led to conflicts with the Supreme Council [the parliament at the time]. After 1996, when alternative centres of power had been suppressed, nothing stood in the way of concentrating all key political, personnel, and other important decisions within the PA. From an institutional perspective, in 1996-1997 the Administration became the most important structure in the country.'*

The legal formalisation of this new role came in 1997. Presidential [Decree No. 97 of 23 January 1997](#), 'Issues of the Administration of the President of the Republic of Belarus', defined the PA no longer merely as a 'working body', but as a 'state administration body'. At the same time, its functions were expanded to include maintaining the head of state's personnel register, coordinating ideological work, participating in the preparation of proposals on the main directions of policy, interacting with the government on socio-economic matters, coordinating the activities of state media, studying public opinion, and managing relations with public institutions and handling citizens' appeals.

The next major phase in the PA's transformation took place in 2017. This was part of a broader effort to [optimise staffing levels across the state apparatus](#), which Lukashenka had initiated in 2016. The stated objectives were to reduce bureaucracy within state bodies and increase civil servants' salaries. Thus, according to [Decree No. 40 of 13 February 2017](#), 'On the Optimisation of the Administration of the President of the Republic of Belarus', the number of PA staff was reduced by 30 per cent to 118 employees.

However, this quantitative reduction did not imply a weakening of the PA's influence. On the contrary, two new positions were introduced within the PA structure: assistant to the president for legislative and judicial affairs, and assistant to the president for the development of the financial and credit system. As a result, the PA acquired additional instruments of control over key areas of governance essential to maintaining power and ensuring the stability of the authoritarian system: the legislative, judicial, and financial spheres. Moreover, following the downsizing of the PA, Lukashenka abolished the position of assistant to the president for foreign

policy, a decision that some observers linked to the efforts of Uladzimir Makei, the foreign minister at the time, who may have wished to remove a position in the PA that could duplicate his role.

Furthermore, the 2017 decree elevated the status of the presidential press secretary. It placed this position on the same level as that of an assistant to the president and established its direct subordination to the head of state. The document also significantly expanded the press secretary's powers: it transferred to this office the coordination of state media activities, including the Second National Television Channel (ONT), Capital Television (STV), and the Belarusian Telegraph Agency (BelTA); placed the speechwriting department under the press secretary's authority; and assigned the press secretary responsibility for approving the appointments to senior positions in state media and coordinating the work of 'press services across state bodies'.

Thus, from 2017 onwards, the PA further strengthened its control over key state institutions – parliament, the courts, the National Bank, and the government's economic bloc – as well as over the state information space.

The next modification to the PA's functions occurred in 2025 and was formalised by [Decree No. 303 of 14 August 2025](#), 'On the Administration of the President of the Republic of Belarus'. One of the most significant innovations was the inclusion, among the PA's functions, of facilitating the president's interaction with the All-Belarusian People's Assembly (ABPA)². Following the constitutional referendum of February 2022, the ABPA acquired the status of the supreme representative body. Arguably, this status could have implied direct interaction with the head of state, but the 2025 decree instead tied its operations institutionally to the PA, thereby embedding the ABPA into the presidential vertical.

Significant changes also occurred in the powers of presidential assistants. In carrying out Lukashenka's directives, they were granted the right to involve security agencies, as well as to initiate disciplinary measures against officials found to have breached regulations. This enhanced the status of presidential assistants as supervisors who also enjoy the backing of the security apparatus.

The shifts in the functions of assistants to the head of state serving as inspectors for the regions and the city of Minsk are particularly noticeable. Decree No. 303 of 14 August 2025 appeared to reflect the lessons of 2020, when protests in certain regions posed particular challenges to the regime. The duties of assistants to the head of state serving as inspectors for the regions now include monitoring threats to national security, ensuring political stability in the region, evaluating ideological work, and supervising the activities of civil society organisations, religious organisations, and other institutions. The work of assistants with the population has also taken on a more pronounced propaganda dimension. They must now not only conduct meetings with citizens

² The All-Belarusian People's Assembly was first convened in 1996 as a pro-regime political forum intended to demonstrate public support for Aliaksandr Lukashenka. It has up to 1,200 delegates, including Lukashenka, representatives of the legislative, executive, judicial branches, and delegates formally elected from local councils and pro-regime civil society organisations.

at least once a month, but also explain the state's political direction at meetings with labour collectives.

The same logic was reflected in [the appointment of high-ranking security officials to regional posts after 2020](#). For instance, former Minister of Internal Affairs Yury Karaeu was appointed Assistant to the President and Inspector for the Hrodna Region. Former KGB chairman Valery Vakulchyk became assistant to the president and inspector for the Brest region. Consequently, the PA extended its oversight of political loyalty, public sentiment, and the quality of ideological work to the regional level.

At the same time, the PA's relations with other state bodies also changed. For example, the 2025 decree regulating the activities of the PA omits the clause in earlier documentation stating that its head is *ex officio* a member of the Council of Ministers and its Presidium. This may indicate a reduced emphasis on collegial decision-making with the government and a greater focus on exercising control over the process.

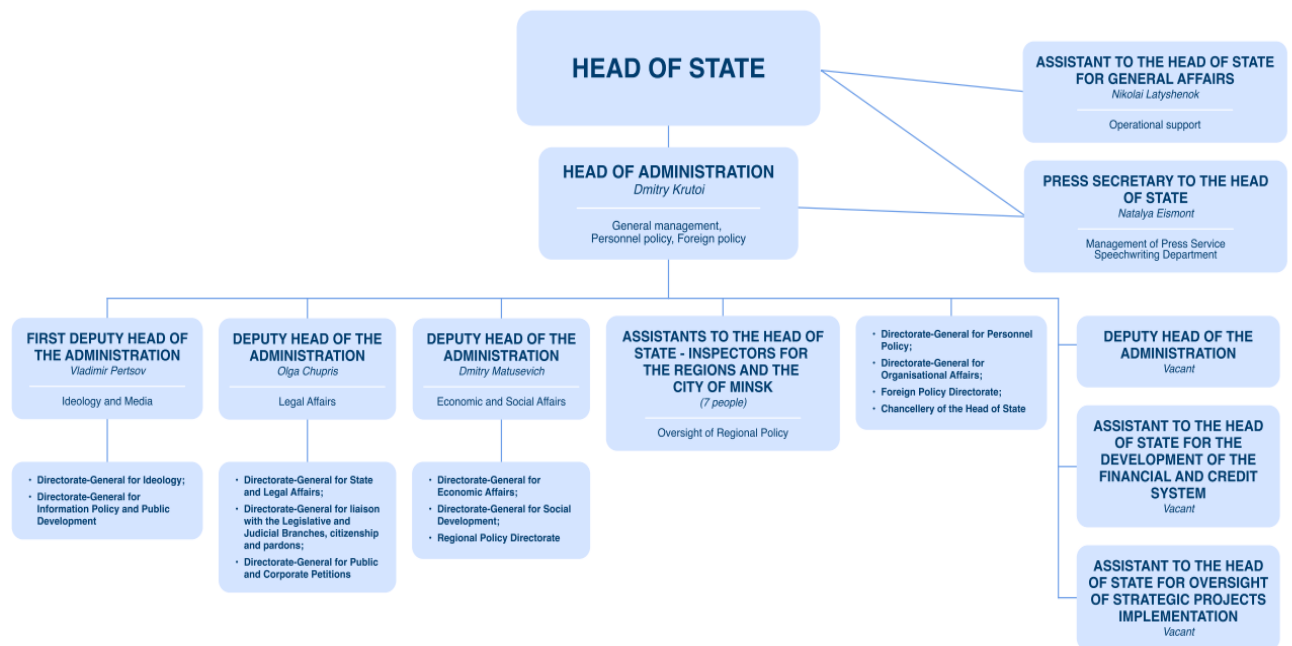
Thus, the modifications to the legal framework regulating the powers and functions of the PA demonstrate a gradual increase in the institution's role within the system of power. In 1994, it was established as a working body under the head of state; as early as 1997, however, it became the central element of the presidential vertical, and in 2017 it acquired instruments of control over the legislative, financial, and information spheres. Following the 2020 political crisis, the PA reinforced its supervisory function, especially in the regions. Overall, the evolution of the PA's functions reflects the core logic of the Belarusian political system: the expansion of its functions has accompanied Lukashenka's efforts to tighten control over state institutions and societal attitudes.

THE PRESIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATION’S STRUCTURE AND KEY OFFICIALS

Until 2020, information regarding the structure of the PA was publicly available. As with other state bodies, however, the 2020 political crisis led to even less transparency within an already rather closed system, where an increasing number of documents began to be issued under the ‘for official use’ (FOU) classification. For instance, [Decree No. 303 of 14 August 2025](#), ‘On the Administration of the President of the Republic of Belarus’, classifies information about the PA’s structure in the same way. At the same time, in June 2025, the Head of the PA, Dzmitry Krutoi, [publicly stated](#) that the PA employs 114 individuals with civil servant status. According to Decree No. 303, the head of the PA is to have four deputies, one of whom is designated as the ‘first’ deputy. As of May 2026, one deputy position remains vacant.

Structurally, the PA consists of directorates general, directorates, and departments (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Structure of the PA



Source: Author’s summary of data from open sources

Lukashenka personally approves the PA’s structure and exercises direct control over leadership appointments, including the heads of directorates-general, directorates, and departments. Rank-and-file staff are the only area where the head of the PA acts independently. In practice, this means that the head of the PA has no real personnel autonomy, as Lukashenka’s control extends to virtually all appointments within the institution. Moreover, before any official is appointed to the PA, they are vetted ‘under a magnifying glass’ by the security agencies.

An analysis of the PA's leadership and its current management structure makes it possible to identify how areas of responsibility are distributed among key officials, which units are subordinate to them, and which auxiliary organisations fall under the PA's control.

The PA head coordinates the activities of the assistants to the head of state serving as inspectors for the regions and the city of Minsk (seven officials), the assistant to the head of state for the development of the financial and credit system (vacant as of May 2026), the assistant to the head of state for oversight of strategic projects implementation (vacant), and the press secretary to the head of state, whose status is equivalent to that of an assistant to the head of state.

The head of the PA also directly oversees several structural units:

- The directorate-general for personnel policy
- The directorate-general for organisational affairs
- The foreign policy directorate
- The chancellery of the head of state

The first deputy head of the PA is responsible for information policy, coordinates the activities of state bodies regarding the implementation of the ideology of the Belarusian state, and handles interactions with socio-political institutions.

The first deputy head of the PA oversees:

- The directorate-general for ideology
- The directorate-general for information policy and public development (a new structural unit within the Administration reportedly established following the post-2020 reorganisation of the PA's ideological vertical)

The deputy head of the PA for legal affairs and relations with the legislative and judicial branches oversees:

- The directorate-general for state and legal affairs
- The directorate-general for liaison with the legislative and judicial branches, citizenship and pardons
- The directorate-general for public and corporate petitions

The deputy head of the PA for economic and social affairs oversees:

- The directorate-general for economic affairs
- The directorate-general for social development
- The regional policy directorate

The press secretary is directly subordinate to the head of state, manages the activities of the head of state's press service, and oversees the speechwriting department.

The position of assistant to the head of state for legislative and judicial affairs has been excluded from the new structure. Furthermore, based on open sources, it is difficult to determine whether Viktor Sheiman, a special envoy of the head of state, is included in the PA's formal structure. No relevant document regarding a formal appointment could be found.

To deliberate on important state matters, a collegium has been established within the PA. Its members include:

- The head of the PA, who chairs the collegium
- The deputy heads of the PA
- The assistant to the head of state for general affairs
- The press secretary to the head of state
- The assistants to the head of state serving as inspectors for the regions and the city of Minsk
- The head of the directorate-general for personnel policy

Beyond the formal structure of the PA, a network of subordinate auxiliary organisations operates under its auspices. This network includes: [the Academy of Public Administration](#) under the aegis of the president, the premier higher education institution in the civil service system; [the Belarusian Institute for Strategic Research](#), a research body; [the National Centre for Legislation and Legal Information](#), a research and practical body; [the Belarus Today Publishing House](#), the country's largest media holding; and [the National Press Centre](#), a non-profit organisation.

The current head of the PA, Dzmitry Krutoi (Dmitry Krutoi), has held this position since 27 June 2024. Prior to his appointment, he served as ambassador to Russia from 2022 to 2024 and deputy head of the PA from 2020 to 2022. Uladzimir Pertsau (Vladimir Pertsov) has been first deputy head of the PA since 22 May 2025. Previously, he served as deputy head of the Administration from 2024 to 2025 and Minister of Information from 2021 to 2024. Pertsov succeeded Natallia Piatkevich (Natalia Petkevich), who held the position of first deputy head for just under a year before being appointed as a deputy prime minister. The position of deputy head of the PA responsible for the legal affairs and relations with the legislative and judicial branches has been held by Volha Chuprys (Olga Chupris) since 6 December 2019. She also chairs the commission on pardons under Lukashenka. Before her appointment to the PA, she worked as vice-rector for academic affairs at the Belarusian State University. The position of deputy head of the PA overseeing economic and social affairs has been held by Dzmitry Matusevich (Dmitry Matusevich) since 27 March 2025. Prior to this, he served as chair of the state property committee from 2020 to 2025 and deputy minister of economy from 2017 to 2020.

The assistant to the head of state for general affairs, Mikalai Latyshonak (Nikolai Latyshenok), has served in this capacity since February 2018. The assistant for general affairs provides operational support for Lukashenka's activities and is directly subordinate to him. The post of press secretary to the head of state has been held by Natallia Eismant (Natalya Eismont) since 2014.

Overall, the structure of the PA demonstrates that this body functions as a parallel centre of governance relative to other state institutions. The PA's areas of oversight encompass personnel policy, ideology, the legal system, the information sphere, the economy, and regional policy. This implies not only supporting the activities of the head of state, but also coordinating and controlling spheres that formally fall within the competence of the government, parliament, courts, the local government bodies, and state media. Such a system establishes a direct dependence of the state apparatus on the PA.

THE ROLE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATION WITHIN BELARUS'S SYSTEM OF POWER AND GOVERNANCE

Given the personalist regime in Belarus, with all power concentrated in Lukashenka's hands and all key state decisions dependent on him, the PA plays an exceptionally important role. Lukashenka treats the Administration as his personal political headquarters, which functions simultaneously as an oversight body and a bureaucratic barrier, shielding the head of state from other governmental bodies. Furthermore, virtually all key personnel appointments and decisions made at the highest level are assessed and vetted in the PA.

It can be argued that the PA acts as an *éminence grise* and supreme arbiter, while also possessing a *de facto* veto power over initiatives put forward by any state body. Although the final word on any matter always rests with Lukashenka, the PA is the institution where his decisions are prepared and formalised, and where initiatives proposed by other state bodies are assessed and evaluated. In practice, this means that the PA influences how Lukashenka's political course is shaped and implemented across nearly all spheres of state administration.

In interviews, former civil servants noted that the PA can contest decisions made by the government, line ministries, the Prosecutor General's Office, and the Supreme and Constitutional Courts – or, conversely, it can align with them on certain issues. In any case, all actors take the PA's position into account and, whenever possible, seek to clarify its stance:

'If a ministry received conflicting information regarding the positions of the government and the Administration, it would seek to accommodate the position held by the Administration. This does not mean that it always wins in every matter or dispute, but its opinion is normally taken into account.'

Within Belarus's system of power, the PA acts as an oversight body standing above all others, with the ability to issue instructions to the government, parliament, and other state administration bodies. Describing the PA, one expert noted that: *'The self-identification of this body is shaped by the fact that the word "president" appears in its name; its functions are defined as the "right hand" of the head of state, which is allowed to do anything simply because PA officials can whisper their opinion directly into the leader's ear. They understand that they are all-powerful, that they have opportunities which are often not even written down on paper. The only limits are the extent to which Lukashenka himself allows them to act in this way, and the degree of ambition of the people holding positions in the Administration.'*

Within Belarus's existing system of power and governance, civilian, non-security agencies generally act strictly within the limits of their competencies and powers, and do not interfere in adjacent spheres. In this sense, the PA occupies a special position: its staff can always refer to the fact that they are acting on behalf of the head of state, which allows them to go beyond the standard logic of inter-agency interaction. Thanks to this special status, the PA is able to coordinate, control, and adjust the decisions of other state bodies, giving it an exclusive position within the system.

THE PRESIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATION'S INFLUENCE ON PERSONNEL POLICY, IDEOLOGY, AND THE ECONOMY

To understand the position of the PA within the system of power, it is necessary to examine its formal competencies and its influence on specific areas of state administration. The most illustrative fields in this regard are personnel policy, ideology, and the economy.

Personnel policy regarding senior officials in Belarus is based on the principle of a centralised vertical. Lukashenka personally appoints or approves the appointment of the government leadership, ministers, the Prosecutor General, the chairs of the Constitutional and Supreme Courts, the leadership of the security sector, university rectors, the heads of regional, city and district executive committees, the management of all strategic enterprises where the state owns more than a 50 per cent share, as well as ambassadors and judges. This is the so-called personnel register.³ In total, the personnel register comprises approximately 850 individuals.

The PA plays a key role both in shaping personnel policy and directly in high-level appointments. In 2023, an inter-agency working group established within the PA developed the 'Concept of the State Personnel Policy of the Republic of Belarus', approved on 3 January 2024 by Decree No. 1. This document introduces the term 'personnel security', which encompasses the protection of the state from internal and external risks related to human resources. The Concept outlines measures to prevent the outflow of personnel from the country, as well as to create conditions for the return of specialists who have moved abroad. In effect, it acknowledges the country's labour shortage that has worsened since 2020 partly owing to politically motivated emigration.

In terms of high-level appointments, the PA's directorate-general for personnel policy selects and evaluates candidates for leadership positions within the state administration system. It is this directorate that conducts interviews with candidates, reviews their employment history, and assesses their compliance with the law. This process includes evaluating their loyalty. The PA collaborates closely with security agencies, which conduct a separate vetting of candidates.

As noted in an interview: 'The PA gathers information about candidates from various sources. The body initiating the appointment provides an evaluation of professional performance. The security and intelligence services provide a general characterisation of the official, including their overall loyalty and information regarding any misconduct. In this regard, the security officials possess a tool to either lobby for or block a particular candidacy.'

Upon the completion of these checks, Lukashenka makes the decision and formally appoints the selected and approved candidates during a meeting on the so-called 'personnel day'.⁴ The PA's competence also includes approving candidates for mid-level management positions, such as heads

³ Personnel registers represent a list of positions in state bodies and other organisations. BIPART, 'A Minister's Path: Career Trajectories in Financial Governance in Belarus', 2025, https://bipart.eu/picture/library/fin_block_eng_final.pdf

⁴ 'Personnel Day' is a dedicated meeting at which Lukashenka decides on appointments to state bodies, regional administrations, the diplomatic service, state-owned enterprises, and other institutions.

of directorates and departments within ministries, which do not require a decision from the head of state.

Overall, the PA has a near-monopoly over personnel policy. It evaluates the general loyalty of appointees and determines how well they align with the tasks defined by Lukashenka for a specific position. It is within the PA that officials determine whether appointees are capable of interpreting Lukashenka's statements 'correctly' from an ideological point of view and ensuring the fulfilment of the objectives set before them. As one interviewee remarked: *'The selection of candidates for positions depends entirely on the PA. They have to select people, constantly screen CVs, and think about who can be appointed where. This is probably a rather difficult task, given that there are not that many qualified personnel available.'*

At the same time, certain officials outside the PA possess informal influence over personnel policy. For instance, Natallia Kachanova (Natalya Kochanova), who served as head of the PA from December 2016 to December 2019, retained influence in this area even after moving to her new role in the Council of the Republic. Lukashenka [continues to consult her](#) regularly on personnel issues. Ultimately, however, it is the PA that places a given decision on Lukashenka's desk.

Thus, personnel policy serves as one of the key mechanisms of Lukashenka's political control over the state administration system. The ability to appoint and approve appointments to a wide range of positions allows Lukashenka to control all branches of power, the regions, state enterprises, and universities, as well as to influence their decisions. In personnel matters, the PA plays a central role, as all appointments pass through this institution.

The state ideology in Belarus, whose content and meanings are determined by Lukashenka's political cues, is integral to the presidential vertical. In this regard, the role of the PA lies not so much in formulating ideology as in correctly interpreting it, adapting it to the political line, and subsequently transmitting it throughout the entire vertical of power. The dependence of ideological policy on signals from 'above' makes it highly flexible. As noted in an interview: *'Ideology is determined by what Lukashenka says. If he has declared the need to develop relations not only with Russia but also with the EU and the US, and spoken about the importance of diversifying foreign trade flows according to the principle of "30% to Russia, 30% to the European Union, and 30% to the rest of the world", then the entire state ideology followed this. When Lukashenka's rhetoric shifted towards maximum rapprochement with Russia and harsh criticism of the West, ideology changed accordingly.'*

One interviewee linked the state's increased attention to matters of national identity with periods of heightened tension with the Kremlin. According to the interviewee, it was precisely during such periods, on the initiative of the KGB, that state structures were encouraged to support the national agenda more actively. The PA not only supported this course but also acted as one of its key vehicles. In particular, the organisation of events marking the centenary of the Belarusian People's Republic (BNR) in Minsk in 2018 was viewed as part of a broader policy of the managed use of national symbols and identity in the interests of the regime.

Within the PA, the main official responsible for ideological work is its first deputy head, Uladzimir Pertsou. Along with the PA's directorate-general for ideology, he is responsible for ensuring that

Lukashenka's views are formalised as state ideological policy and conveyed to all levels of the state apparatus and the media. While other bodies, including the Ministry of Information and the leadership of the main state media outlets, participate in the implementation of ideological policy, one interviewee assessed that: *'The key reference points are still set precisely within the PA: it is there that the main trends are shaped, political orders originate, and initiatives that do not correspond to Lukashenka's current line are blocked.'*

In the current configuration, alongside Pertsou, who directly oversees ideological work, a special role is also played by the press secretary to the head of state. Natallia Eismant is responsible for Lukashenka's public communications and the shaping of his public image. At various times, certain figures outside the PA could exert a noticeable influence on the ideological line. An example would be Pavel Yakubovich, the former editor-in-chief of the *Sovetskaya Belorussiya* newspaper, who until 2018 was one of the most influential figures in shaping ideological policy. In the present situation, however, the primary influence over ideology is concentrated within the 'Pertsou-Eismant' tandem.

In terms of the practical organisation of ideological work, the PA's directorate-general for ideology compiles monthly 'Materials for Members of Information and Propaganda Groups'. This is a document setting out what local ideologists should say to target audiences such as workers in the real economy, the intelligentsia, and young people. For instance, [the theme for May 2026](#) was defined as 'Trends and New Directions in the Development of Tourism in Belarus'. Specific 'unified information days' are designated for meetings between ideologists and the public. On a weekly basis, the PA holds meetings with the leadership of the ideological vertical, including state media executives and the press secretaries of state bodies. These meetings cover key upcoming events involving Lukashenka in the following week and guide the tone of their coverage in the state media.

Since 2025, ideological work has also been extended to the private sector. [Directive No. 12](#), 'On the Implementation of the Foundations of the Ideology of the Belarusian State', dated 9 April 2025, established the 'obligation to implement the ideology of the Belarusian state in all spheres and economic entities, regardless of their form of ownership, and to ensure the involvement of citizens employed in the private sector of the national economy in the pro-state information and ideological field'. Characteristically, this directive was developed by [a working group under the PA](#), which further demonstrates the role of this institution in conducting ideological policy.

Thus, in its policy on ideology, the PA seeks to ensure political loyalty to Lukashenka among employees of state organisations and to maintain control over the public sphere. The 2025 directive indicates that ideological control is being systematically extended to society as a whole without exception.

Functionally, the PA does not play as significant a role in **economic matters** as it does in personnel policy or ideology. This is supported by [the absence of the economy from the list of the PA's core tasks](#) outlined by Lukashenka during a meeting with its leadership on 12 June 2025. Unlike in the political sphere, the government and the National Bank retain considerable weight when it comes to economic decision-making. It is these institutions that draft decisions, oversee their implementation, and bear responsibility for the consequences of economic policy. As one expert

noted in an interview: *‘Ultimately, the economy and finances are the responsibility of the members of the government and the National Bank. It is they who risk losing their posts, facing imprisonment, and being reprimanded by Lukashenka.’*

At the same time, this does not mean that the PA lacks influence over economic policy. As in other areas, the PA can act as an additional filter. Specifically, it prepares evaluations for Lukashenka of proposals submitted by the government or the National Bank and, if it chooses to do so, can attempt to block certain initiatives.

At present, the economic bloc of the authorities appears relatively homogeneous. Key positions within the PA, the government, and the financial sector are occupied by individuals with similar career trajectories, educational backgrounds, and they have extensive experience working together. Judging by the meetings chaired by Lukashenka, there are no fundamental differences in their approaches to economic development among the head of the PA Dzmitry Krutoi, the prime minister Aliaksandr Turchyn (Aleksandr Turchin), the first deputy prime minister Mikalai Snapkou (Nikolai Snopkov), and the head of the National Bank Raman Halouchanka (Roman Golovchenko). This reduces the likelihood of overt institutional conflicts between the PA, the government, and the National Bank. However, all of their initiatives are constrained by Lukashenka’s commitment to a command-administrative economic model.

An advantage of the PA’s current personnel composition is the absence of staunch anti-market figures within it, as was the case, for example, from 2001 to 2012, when the post of assistant to the head of state for economic affairs was held by Siarhei Tkachou (Sergei Tkachev). He was an ardent proponent of a planned economy and a fierce anti-liberal. This led to a conflict between him and the prime minister at the time, Mikhail Myasnikovich (Mikhail Miasnikovich), who served from 2010 to 2014. In particular, [Tkachev repeatedly attempted to block](#) the government’s relatively liberal initiatives. Against this historical backdrop, the current composition of the PA appears less adversarial towards the government’s economic bloc.

It is telling that the positions of assistant to the head of state for the development of the financial and credit system, vacant since 2023, and assistant to the head of state for oversight of strategic projects implementation, vacant since 2024, remain unfilled. This does not necessarily indicate a decline in attention towards these areas. Rather, the corresponding functions may have been redistributed between the head of the PA and his deputy head for economic affairs, given that under Western sanctions, Lukashenka may prefer the non-public administration of these issues.

Thus, in the economic sphere, the PA currently performs more of a mediating function. It is unlikely that it works against the economic bloc, but rather it helps the government and the National Bank to promote their initiatives before Lukashenka. It does this by framing others’ initiatives in a politically acceptable manner.

THE HEAD OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATION: THE ‘SECOND PERSON’ IN THE STATE?

In the formal hierarchy of power, the head of the PA occupies a prominent but not the highest position. In the personnel register of the Republic of Belarus, the post is listed as seventh among the twelve highest state officials. It is listed beneath the president and the chair of the All-Belarusian People’s Assembly (which are held by the same person), the prime minister, the chairs of both houses of parliament, and the chairs of the Constitutional and Supreme Courts. However, this formal ranking does not reflect the actual political weight of the head of the PA within the system.

The primary resource of the head of the PA stems not from protocol status, but from proximity to the head of state and from the PA’s role as the ‘political headquarters’ – a term Lukashenka himself uses to describe the institution. The head of the PA is present at most meetings involving Lukashenka, accompanies him on trips across the country, and records verbal directives. This allows him to act as the head of a body that conveys Lukashenka’s will to virtually any structure in the country. Regular access to Lukashenka gives the head of the PA the opportunity to convey his own position on a wide range of issues, which enhances his bureaucratic influence.

At the same time, the position of the head of the PA remains paradoxical. On the one hand, he or she stands in close proximity to Lukashenka and manages the body through which many of his directives pass. On the other hand, Lukashenka has constructed a system of power in which no single, obvious ‘second person’ can emerge. Lukashenka alone occupies the leading position and maintains a balance among all state bodies and, consequently, the individuals who head them.

It is therefore more accurate to describe the head of the PA as belonging to a narrow circle of the most influential officials, not as the ‘second person’. As noted in an interview: *‘In the Belarusian system, there is not a single “second person in the state”, but rather several number twos across different spheres of governance, roughly five to ten people.’*

In the civilian bloc of power, the head of the PA can be viewed as one of the key figures alongside the prime minister. In the sphere of security governance and repressive control over the country, greater weight is held by the head of the KGB Ivan Tsercel (Ivan Tertel) and the minister of internal affairs Ivan Kubrakou (Ivan Kubrakov). In the punitive and law-enforcement sphere, a significant role is played by Andrei Shved, who from 2020 to 2025 – prior to his appointment as head of the Supreme Court – served as Prosecutor General, headed the ‘return commission’, and oversaw the case concerning the genocide of the Belarusian people. The chairman of the State Control Committee, Vasil Herasimau (Vasily Gerasimov), is effectively the number two figure in matters of oversight of state administration bodies, enterprises, and officials.

The influence of the PA head is highly personalised. Certain exceptionally influential heads of the Administration ‘took’ their influence with them after moving to other positions. Experts highlighted Natallia Kachanova, who in 2019 left the post of head of the PA to become the chair of the upper house of parliament. Despite the parliament’s virtual lack of formal powers, Lukashenka continues to task Kachanova with overseeing various matters and asks her to share her own views, particularly regarding personnel appointments. Both the former head of the PA, Ihar Siarhieienka (Igor Sergeenko), who served from 2019 to 2024, and the current head, Dzmitry Krutoi, are forced to reckon with her. It is telling that, according to the Constitution as amended

in 2022, ‘in the event that the office of the president becomes vacant or the president is unable to perform his duties, his powers shall pass to the chair of the Council of the Republic until the newly elected president takes the oath’ – that is, to Kachanava. This legal provision bolsters Kachanava’s formal weight within the system of power and aligns with the level of trust that Lukashenka continues to place in her following her departure from the PA.

Some former civil servants expressed the view that during the period of relative liberalisation prior to 2020, Uladzimir Makei could have been described as the real ‘second’ person in the state. He headed the PA from 2008 to 2012 and subsequently led the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) for ten years until his sudden death in November 2022. According to expert assessments, Makei was skilled at manoeuvring and forming alliances within the power vertical, including with the leadership of security agencies. Even while heading the MFA, Makei retained Lukashenka’s trust up until the events of 2020. It was at his prompting that Belarus withstood pressure from Russia and refrained from recognising the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in 2008, when Makei headed the PA. Following the non-recognition of Crimea as Russian, Belarus managed to establish trust-based contacts with the leadership of Ukraine. In 2018, Makei convinced Lukashenka to avoid agreeing to the deployment of a Russian airbase in Belarus. He also advocated visa liberalisation. Under Makei, relations with the EU and the US reached an unprecedented level for Belarus. However, the post-election events of 2010, when he was head of the PA, and the events of 2020 demonstrated the limits of Makei’s influence over Lukashenka.

In summary, the head of the PA is not the ‘second person’ in the state in a strict sense. Lukashenka does not allow such a figure to emerge, as within his system of power no high-ranking official should gain a noticeable advantage over the others. The influence of the head of the PA is based on regular access to Lukashenka and the ability to formulate and monitor the execution of his directives. In the civilian sphere, he or she is among the most influential officials. However, within the security apparatus, other figures possess comparable, and in certain matters more significant, resources of influence.

HEADS OF THE ADMINISTRATION: APPOINTMENT PROCESS AND BIOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS

In total, eleven individuals have held the position of head of the PA during Lukashenka's time in power (see Table 1).

Table 1. Biographies of the heads of the PA

Name	Tenure (years and months in office)	Age at Appointment	Previous Position	Subsequent Position	Education / Academic Degree
Dzmitry Krutoi (Dmitry Krutoi)	June 2024 - present (2 years)	43	Ambassador to Russia	-	Belarusian State Technological University; Academy of Public Administration under the aegis of the President
Ihar Siarhieienka (Igor Sergeenko)	December 2019 - March 2024 (4 years, 3 months)	56	First Deputy Chairman of the KGB	Chair of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly	Belarusian State University; Academy of Public Administration under the aegis of the President
Natallia Kachanova (Natalya Kochanova)	December 2016 - December 2019 (3 years)	56	Deputy Prime Minister	Chair of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly	Novopolotsk Polytechnic Institute; Academy of Public Administration under the aegis of the President
Aliaksandr Kosinieć (Aleksandr Kosinets)	December 2014 - December 2016 (2 years)	55	Chairman of the Vitebsk Regional Executive Committee	Assistant to the President	Vitebsk State Medical University; Faculty of Economics (Master's programme) of the Belarusian State University Doctor of Medical Sciences, Professor
Andrei Kabiakou (Andrei Kobayakov)	August 2012 - December 2014 (2 years, 4 months)	51	Ambassador to Russia	Prime Minister	Moscow Aviation Institute; Belarusian State Institute of National Economy; Institute of Political Science and Social Management of the Communist Party of Belarus
Uladzimir Makei (Vladimir Makei)	July 2008 - August 2012 (4 years, 1 month)	49	Assistant to the President	Minister of Foreign Affairs	Minsk State Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages; Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Austria
Hienadz Nievychlas (Gennady Nivyglas)	January 2006 - July 2008 (2 years, 6 months)	51	State Secretary of the Security Council	Chairman of the 'Belarusian Football Federation' Association	Moscow Higher Border Command School of the KGB; Border Faculty of the Higher School of the KGB of the USSR
Viktar Sheiman (Viktor Sheiman)	November 2004 - January 2006 (1 year, 2 months)	46	Prosecutor General	State Secretary of the Security Council	Blagoveshchensk Higher Tank Command School; Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Belarus
Ural Latypau (Ural Latypov)	September 2001 - November 2004 (3 years, 2 months)	50	State Secretary of the Security Council - Assistant to the President for National Security	Retired; Entered private business	Kazan State University named after V.I. Ulyanov (Lenin); Higher Courses of the KGB of the USSR in Minsk Doctor of Law, Professor
Mikhail Miasnikovich (Mikhail Myasnikovich)	October 1995 - September 2001 (nearly 6 years)	45	Deputy Prime Minister	President of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus	Brest Engineering and Building Institute; Minsk Higher Party School Doctor of Economic Sciences, Professor
Leaid Sinitsyn (Leonid Sinitsyn)	July 1994 - October 1995 (1 year, 3 months)	40	Member of the Supreme Soviet (Parliament); Head of A. Lukashenka's election campaign headquarters	Deputy Prime Minister until August 1998; subsequently retired and entered private business	Novopolotsk Polytechnic Institute

Source: Author's summary of data from open sources

The average age at which officials became head of the Administration is 49. The youngest was the first head of the PA, Leaid Sinitsyn, who was 40 years old at the time of his appointment in July 1994. He held the position until October 1995. The current head of the PA, Dzmitry Krutoi, was appointed at the age of 43. The oldest appointees were Ihar Siarhieienka and Natallia Kachanova, who were both appointed at the age of 56.

Mikhail Miasnikovich held the post of head of the PA the longest, lasting for nearly six years in the job. The shortest tenure was that of Viktar Sheiman, who led the PA for just one year and two months.

In terms of birthplace, natives of the Vitsebsk region stand out among the heads of the PA. Four out of the eleven heads of PA came from this region (Leaid Sinitsyn, Aliaksandr Kosinieć, Natallia Kachanova, and Ihar Siarhieienka). Two (Viktar Sheiman and Uladzimir Makei) were born in the Hrodna region. One (Mikhail Miasnikovich) was born in the Minsk region, one (Hienadz Nievychlas)

in the Brest region, and one (Dzmitry Krutoi) in the Mahiliou region. Another two were born outside Belarus: Ural Latypau in the Bashkir ASSR, and Andrei Kabiakou in Moscow, Russia.

Most heads of the PA – seven in total – received their higher education in Belarus. The remaining four (Latypau, Sheiman, Nievychlas and Kabiakou) studied in Russia. The only head of the PA to have studied outside the post-Soviet space was Makei, who undertook further studies at the Diplomatic Academy of the Austrian MFA in Vienna.

By professional background, the heads of the PA can be divided into several groups:

- Four out of the eleven came from the security structures (Latypau, Sheiman, Nievychlas, and Siarhieienka).
- Three had experience working in specialised economic agencies (Miasnikovich, Kabiakou and Krutoi).
- The remainder represented other spheres: Sinitsyn came from the engineering and construction sector, Makei from diplomacy, Kosinieć from medicine, and Kachanova from the housing and communal services sector.

When appointed, most heads of the PA already possessed many years of experience working in the state apparatus or within Lukashenka's immediate circle. Miasnikovich, Latypau, Kosinieć, and Kachanova had served as deputy prime ministers. Krutoi and Kabiakou followed a similar career path, having served as first deputy prime ministers, deputy heads of the PA, and ambassadors to Russia.

A distinct group consists of officials whose careers were linked to working directly with Lukashenka and to service in his security apparatus. Latypau, Sheiman, Nievychlas, and Makei spent considerable time in close working contact with Lukashenka as personal assistants or heads of the presidential security service. Some of them gained additional bureaucratic experience in the Security Council, serving as state secretary of that institution, prior to their appointment. The exception in this group was Makei, who was appointed head of the PA after serving for eight years as assistant to the president. Siarhieienka, for his part, built his career within the KGB and was appointed head of the PA from the post of first deputy chairman of that institution.

When selecting candidates to head the PA, Lukashenka likely relies primarily on his personal experience of interacting with that individual. To ensure comfortable and regular communications, Lukashenka also pays attention to the candidate's psychological compatibility. Beyond this, requirements typical of personnel policy within the state administration system are applied: the candidate must not raise any questions regarding their loyalty or devotion to the head of state; they must possess strong managerial qualities and the ability to organise the work of the bureaucratic apparatus. Furthermore, it is important for the candidate to be capable of resolving operational matters and pre-empting the emergence of problems. In effect, the head of the PA is expected to relieve Lukashenka of the burden of handling the most labour-intensive and time-consuming problems.

The experts we interviewed expressed the view that factors such as place of birth, education, or the professional sphere from which a candidate is chosen do not hold decisive significance for Lukashenka:

‘He selects the strongest individual he sees at any given moment. It has to be an all-rounder. As practice shows, it can be an economist, an international relations specialist, a security official, or simply a manager from any field, because the Administration is at the sharp end of everything. He must be a person of high capacity for work and organisational skill – a political operator capable of playing complex chess combinations in opposition to the heads of other state bodies and outmanoeuvring them.’

CAREER TRAJECTORIES OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S LEADERSHIP

The PA serves as one of the most important channels of career advancement within Belarus's governance system. It is a structure through which officials pass before taking up leadership positions in the government, state bodies, the diplomatic service, or the state media. Employment within the PA acts as a significant stage of career advancement while also confirming that an official has undergone additional vetting for managerial competence and loyalty to Lukashenka.

At present, seven former PA officials hold important senior positions in Belarusian state bodies (see Table 2).

Table 2. Former PA officials in the leadership of state bodies

Name	Current Position	Position / Work Experience within the PA	Years of Employment within the PA	Sphere
Mikalai Snapkou (Nikolai Snopkov)	First Deputy Prime Minister	Deputy Head of the PA	2014-2020; 2009	Economy
Natallia Piatkevich (Natalya Petkevich)	Deputy Prime Minister for Social Affairs	First Deputy Head of the PA; Deputy Head of the PA; Assistant to the President; Press Secretary to the President	2024-2025; 1994-2014	Social Policy
Maksim Ryzhankou (Maksim Ryzhenkov)	Minister of Foreign Affairs	First Deputy Head of the PA; Head of the Foreign Policy Directorate	2016-2024; 2006-2012	Foreign Policy
Yauhen Kavalenka (Evgeny Kovalenko)	Minister of Justice	Head of the Directorate-General for State and Legal Affairs	2020-2024	Law
Ina Miadzvedzeva (Inna Medvedeva)	Chair of the National Statistical Committee	Head of the Directorate-General for Economic Affairs	2005-2014	Economy / Statistics
Dzmitry Zhuk (Dmitry Zhuk)	Minister of Information	Head of Lukashenka's Press Service	1999-2003	Information Policy / Ideology
Marat Markau (Marat Markov)	Minister of Culture	Staff member of the Ideological Directorate	2003-2011	Information Policy / Ideology

Source: Author's summary of data from open sources

As can be seen from the table, leaders from various spheres of state administration have experience of working in the PA. Moreover, their appointments after leaving the PA are predominantly linked to the fields they previously handled within it. In other words, employment within the PA does not alter an official's professional trajectory; rather, it elevates their status within a familiar sphere. Such experience increases the official's bureaucratic weight and gives them the status of someone who has worked within Lukashenka's 'headquarters'. It also enhances their chances of subsequent appointment to leadership positions within the system.

In most cases, the PA becomes a stepping stone for career growth within the official's existing professional sphere. A typical career trajectory looks roughly as follows: an official joins the PA with accumulated experience, occupies a leadership position or works within a specialised division, and subsequently returns to the same sphere, but to a more senior post (see Table 3).

Table 3. Career trajectories

Sphere	Before Work in the PA	Positions in the PA	After Work in the PA
Economy	Government, economic agencies, financial institutions	Head of the PA; Deputy Head of the PA for economic affairs	Government, National Bank, statistical committee, integration structures (Eurasian Economic Commission)
Ideology and media	Ministry of Information, state media	Deputy Head of the PA for ideology; Directorate-General for Ideology; Press Service of the Head of State	Ministry of Information, state television channels, pro-government public organisations
Legal sphere	Ministry of Justice, legal units of university	Deputy Head of the PA for legal affairs; Directorate-General for State and Legal Affairs	Ministry of Justice, National Centre for Legislation and Legal Information
Foreign policy	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Head of the PA; First Deputy Head of the PA; Foreign Policy Directorate	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, embassies

Source: Author's summary of data from open sources

In the economic bloc, such career paths are clearly visible in the cases of Aliaksandr Yahorau (Aleksandr Egorov) and Maksim Yermalovich (Maksim Ermolovich). After heading the Development Bank, Yahorau served as deputy head of the PA in 2024-2025, before moving to the post of first deputy chair of the board of the National Bank. Yermalovich, previously minister of finance and ambassador to the United Kingdom, served as deputy head of the PA in 2022-2024, after which he was appointed minister for competition and antimonopoly regulation of the Eurasian Economic Commission.

In the information and ideological sphere, traditional movements of officials between the PA, the Ministry of Information, state media, and pro-government public organisations are clearly visible. For example, Ihar Lutsky (Igor Lutsky), after working in the Ministry of Information, including as minister, served as deputy head of the PA for ideology in 2021-2024 and then headed the ONT television channel. Andrei Kuntsevich became first deputy minister of information after serving as deputy head of the PA in 2019-2021. Volha Shpileuskaya (Olga Shpilevskaya), who headed the PA's directorate-general for ideology in 2008-2011, later became director of the Belarus office of the Mir Interstate Television and Radio Company and chair of the Belarusian Women's Union.

In the legal sphere, this logic is reflected in the PA's connection with specialised legal institutions. The minister of justice, Yauhen Kavalenka, headed the PA's directorate-general for state and legal affairs before his appointment in 2024. Andrei Matselski worked in the PA for around fifteen years in total, including as head of the same directorate, and later headed the National centre for legislation and legal information.

In the foreign policy sphere, the 'MFA – PA – MFA' career trajectory is a recurring pattern. For example, Uladzimir Makei worked in the MFA before moving to the PA, then served as Lukashenka's assistant and head of the PA, before becoming minister of foreign affairs in 2012. The current foreign minister Maksim Ryzhankou has a similar history. He came into the PA from the MFA, served as head of the foreign policy directorate and first deputy head of the PA, and in 2024 was appointed minister of foreign affairs. Ihar Sakreta (Igor Sekreta) also moved to the Administration

from the MFA. In 2019-2025, he headed the foreign policy directorate, after which he returned to the ministry as deputy minister, responsible among other things for the Western track.

Ihar Sakreta was succeeded as head of the Administration's foreign policy directorate by Dzmitry Mironchik (Dmitry Mironchik), who had previously headed the MFA's directorate-general for Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and before that had served as ambassador to Sweden and press secretary of the MFA. Valery Baranousky, formerly ambassador to Lithuania and Cuba, headed this directorate in 2015-2019 and now heads the directorate-general for international cooperation and trade in the office of the government.

A number of serving Belarusian ambassadors also have experience of working in the PA. Valyantsin Rybakou (Valentin Rybakov), Belarus's permanent representative to the UN in New York, who oversees Minsk's contacts with the Trump administration, worked as Lukashenka's foreign policy assistant in 2006-2013 and later served as deputy minister of foreign affairs. Valery Bryliou (Valery Brylev), who succeeded Rybakou as assistant to the head of state, also had significant ambassadorial experience.

This analysis of career trajectories shows that, in most cases, the PA has served as a springboard for civil servants. At the same time, in addition to political loyalty to Lukashenka, officials selected for the PA are expected to have professional expertise in the relevant field. Experience of working in the PA itself becomes an additional sign of trust from Lukashenka and increases the chances of further advancement within the system.

THE STRENGTHENING OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATION'S ROLE FOLLOWING THE 2020 POLITICAL CRISIS

Following the 2020 political crisis and the constitutional changes introduced in 2022, the institutions of the Belarusian state underwent significant changes. The All-Belarusian People's Assembly (ABPA) and the Security Council⁵ were formally strengthened. The ABPA acquired the status of the supreme representative body, while Lukashenka became its chair. The ABPA also received the constitutional right to elect judges to the Supreme and Constitutional Courts, members of the Central Election Commission, and to participate in the procedure for the early removal of the head of state from office.

In practice, however, these new powers did not turn the ABPA into an independent decision-making centre or give it real weight within the system of power. As one former civil servant noted in an interview, *'At first, the system was preparing for the possibility that the ABPA might be given more meaningful substance. But later, within the state apparatus, an understanding emerged that its strengthening had been linked solely to Lukashenka's view of a possible alternative configuration of power and preparation for a potential transition. However, circumstances changed, and Lukashenka changed his mind. At the current stage, the task is to let this story quietly fade and maintain it as a fiction.'*

In March 2026, during a round table convened with the title 'The Constitution of the Republic of Belarus as the Fundamental Basis of Civil Accord and Social Development', deputy head of the PA Volha Chuprys [described the ABPA](#) as 'insurance against unforeseen circumstances'. This formulation reflects its current place in the system: the ABPA is preserved as a reserve arrangement for special political circumstances. This is confirmed by another interview: *'The current situation does not mean that the ABPA will not be needed in the future. However, at this stage, there is no such task.'*

Officials, especially within the PA, clearly 'read' the lack of demand for the ABPA model. Yet the ABPA and PA are institutionally tied by the inclusion, mandated by a 2025 decree, of a function for the PA in 'ensuring the president's interaction with the ABPA'. In other words, the constitutional strengthening of the ABPA effectively amounted to the creation of an apparatus, the emergence of a separate budget for its financing, and additional paperwork. State bodies acquired yet another structure within the power vertical whose instructions they must respond to. However, this did not lead to a redistribution of influence between the PA and the ABPA in matters of personnel, ideology, or the management of the state apparatus. Lukashenka himself [commented in November 2024](#) that 'the ABPA should not prevent anyone from working or dominating other bodies of power'.

⁵ The Security Council of the Republic of Belarus is a constitutional supreme collegial coordination and political body under the head of state, responsible for the sphere of national security. It is chaired by Lukashenka. The Security Council includes the heads of key state bodies, including the head of the PA and the heads of the security bloc. The working body of the Security Council is the State Secretariat of the Security Council. The State Secretariat of the Security Council is not subordinate to the PA and is not part of its structure.

The PA's position was likewise unaffected by the 2022 constitutional changes governing the role of the Security Council in the event of a vacancy in the presidency or the president's incapacity. [Under the amended Constitution](#), in such a situation state bodies and officials act in accordance with the decisions of the Security Council, while the powers of the head of state pass to the chair of the Council of the Republic until the newly elected head of state takes the oath. These provisions only relate to an emergency situation, however, and do not affect the day-to-day work of state bodies.

In practical state governance, the Security Council is not a permanently functioning structure. It is a kind of collegial body bringing together the heads of key state authorities and the security bloc. [The State Secretariat of the Security Council](#) (hereinafter, the State Secretariat) performs primarily coordination, information and analytical, legal, organisational and technical functions in the field of national security. Unlike the PA, the State Secretariat's remit is much narrower and is focused mainly on security issues rather than on the daily management of the civilian sphere. At the same time, since most of its staff come from the security agencies, which acquired greater powers and freedom of action after 2020, the institutional weight of the State Secretariat has increased.

After 2020 Lukashenka clearly drew conclusions from the political crisis and further strengthened precisely those PA functions linked to ensuring the stability of the regime. The Administration began to exercise tighter control over personnel policy, the quality of work on ideology, interaction with the media, and work in the regions. The PA also began encouraging officials to maintain a more active presence on social media, including TikTok, Instagram, and X. At a meeting with the PA leadership on 12 June 2025, [Lukashenka set out the priorities](#) for this structure in exactly this logic: personnel, ideology, improvement of legislation, responses to citizens' appeals, and strengthening the role of assistants in the regions. These instructions were later reflected in Decree No. 303 of 14 August 2025, 'On the Administration of the President of the Republic of Belarus'.

Alongside this, after 2020 the control exercised by the security agencies over the state apparatus itself expanded. Practices were introduced involving interrogations of civil servants by the KGB, checks of computers and phone subscriptions, and polygraph tests. As one former civil servant noted, *'the narrowing of the boundaries of freedom within the country also led to a narrowing of the boundaries of freedom throughout the entire state apparatus'*. The security agencies became more actively involved in vetting potential appointees and monitoring serving officials. Personnel checks for appointments even to low-level positions are made by the PA with approval from the security structures.

The purge of disloyal personnel also affected the PA itself. After the 2020 protests, several PA employees left their posts, while several others were dismissed on suspicion of disloyalty. Although the scale of these departures and dismissals was limited and the PA staff broadly remained loyal to Lukashenka, the emergence of additional practices of control over officials can be characterised as a form of humiliation of the entire state apparatus. The security structures began to monitor more closely the political reliability of officials and to ensure the internal loyalty of the state apparatus.

Thus, after 2020 the PA became an instrument of post-crisis stabilisation for the regime. Its importance increased in those areas where manageability and loyalty are especially important to Lukashenka: personnel, ideology, the regions, and work with public sentiment. The ABPA received a new constitutional status and Lukashenka himself took over as its chair, but in day-to-day governance this body is embedded in the presidential vertical and institutionally tied to the PA. At the same time, it remains a reserve political arrangement that Lukashenka can use in his own interests if necessary. The State Secretariat of the Security Council was strengthened as a result of the overall growth in the influence of the security bloc after 2020, against the backdrop of Lukashenka's perception of internal risks as a threat to his rule.

THE PRESIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATION TODAY: WHO DOES LUKASHENKA LISTEN TO?

The influence of PA officials over Lukashenka is determined not only, and not so much, by the positions they hold, but by the degree of trust he places in them, the regularity of their access to him, and their control over the information that reaches the head of State.

In June 2024, Lukashenka renewed the PA's leadership. Dzmitry Krutoi replaced Ihar Siarhieienka, who had held the post since 2019, as head of the PA. The appointment of the 43-year-old Krutoi is likely linked to Lukashenka's positive experience of personal interactions with him, particularly during Krutoi's tenure as ambassador to Russia. Krutoi's time in Russia coincided with an exceptionally important period for Lukashenka, when Belarus came under EU and US sanctions because of its complicity in Russia's aggression against Ukraine. One of Krutoi's key tasks was to secure financial and economic compensation through Russia for the loss of access to EU and US markets, and to maintain the growth of Belarusian exports to Russia. By making this appointment, Lukashenka demonstrated his high assessment of Krutoi's managerial qualities and effectiveness not only in Moscow, but also in various posts in the government and the Administration. In addition, Krutoi's appointment may have been a signal to Moscow; the PA was now headed by an official well known to Russian elites.

The interviews suggest that Lukashenka listens to Krutoi, since the position itself implies a high level of trust. *'Krutoi undoubtedly has the necessary degree of trust from Lukashenka, since otherwise he simply would not have been able to occupy this post.'* Experts also noted that *'Krutoi dealt with the economy in practically all key positions in the country. He oversaw relations with Russia, dealt with integration issues, and worked as ambassador in Moscow. He is clearly one of Lukashenka's most important advisers. Perhaps not the only one. But certainly, one of the most important.'*

The replacement of Siarhieienka was mainly connected not so much with Krutoi's appointment as with the need to rotate Uladzimir Andreichanka (Vladimir Andreichenko) from the post of chair of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly. By that time, Andreichanka had headed the lower chamber of parliament for more than fifteen years, from 2008 to 2024, and was 75 years old. In addition, Siarhieienka had headed the PA for more than four years; only Mikhail Miasnikovich had served longer as head of the PA. In general, Lukashenka does not allow officials to remain in key senior state positions for too long. Exceptions are possible in institutions that perform service functions rather than having an independent political role. Apart from Andreichanka, exceptions to this practice included the chair of the Central Election Commission, Lidziya Yarmoshyna (Lidia Yermoshina), who headed that body for 25 years, and Valiantsin Sukala (Valentin Sukalo), who chaired the Supreme Court for 28 years. This tendency is also confirmed by assessments in the interviews: *'The post of chair of parliament became vacant. Lukashenka decided that there was a candidate for whom this would not even formally be a demotion. It is clear that in practice it would be, but it is not humiliating for the head of the Administration to be transferred to the post of chair of parliament.'*

As a result of the changes that took place in 2024, former heads of the PA came to lead both chambers of parliament: Natallia Kachanova chairs the Council of the Republic (the upper house), while Ihar Siarhieienka chairs the House of Representatives (the lower house). This further

demonstrates that, in the Belarusian system, the parliament forms part of the vertical of power and can be headed only by trusted figures.

Alongside the need to replace Andreichanka and the signal to Moscow, Siarhieienka's security background also probably influenced Lukashenka's decision to change the head of the PA. As noted in an interview: *'After 2020, the security officials had enough power to prevent uncontrolled processes among the bureaucracy, but not so much as to prevent civilian officials from doing their work. Lukashenka understood that, in these circumstances, Krutoi as head of the Administration was now, in principle, acceptable and no longer dangerous. In 2021 it would have been dangerous. In 2022, perhaps even in 2023. But now, in 2024, it became possible.'*

The return of Natallia Piatkievich to the inner circle in June 2024, and her appointment as first deputy head of the PA in place of Ryzhankou, came as something of a surprise to experts. Ryzhankou, in turn, replaced Siarhei Aleinik (Sergei Aleinik) as minister of foreign affairs. For the ten years leading up to her appointment, Piatkievich had not held any state office and in recent years had been on a long-term foreign posting in New York together with her husband, Valyantsin Rybakou, Belarus's permanent representative to the UN.

Observers link her return to the PA leadership to the need to ensure that the January 2025 presidential election proceeded without problems. When appointing Piatkievich, Lukashenka did not publicly comment on the tasks or functions he expected her to fulfil in the post. Around this time Minsk's first attempts to establish contact with the United States began, although they were not yet public. The relevant steps were being taken by Piatkievich's husband, Valyantsin Rybakou. 'Curating' the US track outside the MFA and preventing information about such attempts by Minsk from leaking into the public domain may have become an additional task assigned by Lukashenka to Piatkievich.

The Piatkievich-Rybakou tandem is notable because both husband and wife enjoy Lukashenka's trust. Rybakou is one of the few ambassadors who regularly receive an audience with him. Piatkievich's transfer to the post of deputy prime minister for social affairs less than a year after her arrival in the PA did not weaken her position as one of the most influential figures in the power hierarchy. Moreover, the functions of the deputy prime ministers were expanded immediately afterwards. In her case, this may have been a matter of moving a trusted Lukashenka figure to a politically sensitive area in order to smooth over problems in the social sphere.⁶

The degree of influence that the current first deputy head of the Administration, Uladzimir Pertsou, and the deputy heads Volha Chupryns and Dzmitry Matusevich have over decisions made by Lukashenka is determined primarily by their competencies and responsibility for the areas entrusted to them. Their influence is linked to specific fields: ideology, legal affairs, and the economy, respectively.

Pertsou's public activity shows that the PA's ideological work is increasingly shifting towards direct communication with different target audiences. He meets with students, party activists and officials responsible for working with the media. Particular emphasis is placed on social media,

⁶ BIPART, "Public administration news digest", 2025,
https://bipart.eu/picture/library/new_d_may-jun_2025.pdf

where state bodies and loyal young people are expected to disseminate the official position on a wide range of issues concerning life in Belarus and engage in polemics with critics of the authorities.

As a professional lawyer, deputy head of the Administration [Volha Chuprys](#) oversaw many legislative changes important to the authorities after 2020. The 2022 constitutional reform was carried out by [a working group under the PA](#). The PA also reviewed changes that were particularly problematic from the perspective of international law, including amendments to the Law ‘On Countering Extremism’ in 2021, the Code of Administrative Offences in 2021, [the Law on Mass Media in 2023](#), the decree establishing [the ‘returns commission’](#) in 2023, and [the passport decree](#) in 2023. Chuprys chairs the commission on pardons under Lukashenka and is a member of the returns commission. According to interview assessments, legal acts related to the release of political prisoners pass through her approval before reaching Lukashenka for signature.

Chuprys is also fairly active in the public sphere, [commenting](#) on high-profile legislative acts. Recently, she has provided explanations of Lukashenka’s decisions on pardons for political prisoners. Her influence is linked to the fact that, after 2020, law-making became one of the instruments for giving repressive form to Lukashenka’s decisions.

Dzmitry Matusevich has been in his position for slightly more than a year. As deputy head of the PA, he has not yet distinguished himself to the public. At the same time, when he previously served as chair of the State property committee, [he introduced a system](#) for selling vacant houses in villages for one base unit and created a unified register of vacant houses. Matusevich also promoted the ‘land amnesty’, which involved legalising land plots and buildings that had previously been registered with violations, and worked on the digitalisation of data on land and state property. His appointment can be viewed as the transfer to the PA of an official with practical experience in managing property and land issues that are important for socio-economic and regional policy.

Overall, the deputy heads of the PA appear to be responsible executors of Lukashenka’s will, but their influence on decision-making processes and their role within the system of governance are unlikely to extend beyond their functional responsibilities. As one former civil servant noted in an interview, *‘everyone understands how things should be done, what is expected of them, and no one will risk taking a special position for the sake of something’*.

The PA’s structural units influence the content of documents submitted for Lukashenka’s consideration, prepare records of the head of state’s instructions in various areas, and in this sense possess a certain degree of bureaucratic influence. In particular, the foreign policy directorate reviews and edits draft greetings on behalf of Lukashenka, talking points for negotiations with foreign leaders, and other foreign policy documents.

One former civil servant recalled how, in November 2016, [on the eve of Lukashenka’s meeting with a delegation from the European Union’s political and security committee](#), the MFA, as usual, submitted a package of documents to the PA, including a draft opening statement. The draft contained an initiative to launch a new large-scale dialogue on security in Europe, similar to the Helsinki process of 1975, which later became known as ‘Helsinki-2’. The head of the foreign policy directorate intended to remove this section from Lukashenka’s speech. However, the MFA

department that had prepared the package of documents considered the initiative promising and saw it as having potential for Belarus's future international positioning. In the end, the intervention of foreign minister Uladzimir Makei was required to ensure that the initiative remained in the final text for Lukashenka to deliver without amendments. Subsequently, 'Helsinki-2' became a favourable topic for Belarus on the international stage.

This example shows that the PA's influence is also exercised at the level of filtering, editing and finalising documents for Lukashenka. Even the PA's structural units can influence the agenda by removing or preserving specific substantive parts of documents. But such influence is not absolute and, in some cases, specialised agencies can defend their position if it is backed by a strong bureaucratic actor.

A special position within the power vertical is occupied by Lukashenka's press secretary, Natallia Eismant, who has held her post since 2014. She effectively performs the role of 'creative director' of Lukashenka's public image. Eismant was able to show Lukashenka how his image could be improved through a new approach to working with the media. At the same time, many of her working methods were clearly borrowed from Russia, where they had proved effective. Since Eismant has long enjoyed almost unhindered direct access to Lukashenka, her influence is generally higher than that of most other representatives of the nomenklatura. After 2020 Eismant has clearly enjoyed Lukashenka's special trust. Information from the Telegram channel '*Pul pervogo*', which she controls, sets the tone for the news agenda of the country's state media. She is also credited with the slogan 'Dictatorship is our brand'.

In interviews, experts stated that '*the entire state ideology is built around creating the correct image of Lukashenka. The quality of the information reaching Lukashenka also plays an important role here, and this information is effectively controlled and filtered by Eismant. Lukashenka entrusts her with other important functions as well. For example, she interprets and shapes the narratives around how agreements reached during foreign visits should be presented. It is telling that during the visits themselves, Lukashenka required Eismant to be present at the negotiating table.*' In addition, interviewees noted the significant role of her husband, the chairman of the Beltelecom company, in information propaganda and concluded that '*it is difficult to imagine a situation in which anyone, including the minister of information or others, could challenge her opinion or talking points when she is next to Lukashenka every day*'.

In addition to the obvious figures who influence Lukashenka's decisions to varying degrees by virtue of their positions, there is also a non-public group of people and structures that have influence over him. Interviewees argued that after 2020, the role of informal structures and people from Lukashenka's inner circle increased. Many key decisions are made not in the Administration itself, but in a narrower circle, including the family. Within the family circle, too, there are people to whom Lukashenka listens more than others, for example his elder son Viktor. He was dismissed from the post of assistant to the president for national security in March 2021 and currently serves as president of the National Olympic Committee. For a long time, he has also overseen relations with countries of the Middle East.

After Viktor Lukashenka left the post of assistant to the president for national security, this position within the PA appears, at least according to open data, to have been abolished. In other words, the formal mechanism through which a member of Lukashenka's family exercised

additional control over the security structures within the PA ceased to exist in its previous form. For Viktor, this most likely meant a change in the form of influence: from an official position within the PA to the informal status of a representative of the close family circle.

In addition, a small apparatus is permanently located alongside the head of state in the Palace of Independence, Lukashenka's residence, and its staff may also influence decisions. This influence may be exercised through the information they convey to the first person, or through the comments with which they submit documents to Lukashenka's desk at the final stage of consideration. As noted in the interviews: *'In general, this is like a certain inner circle of people who are constantly with him.'*

One former civil servant suggested that one such close figure is the assistant to the president for general affairs, Mikalai Latyshonak, who worked in Lukashenka's security service from 1995 and rose to become head of the personal protection department. The assistant for general affairs reports directly to the head of state. [When appointing Latyshonak](#) to this post, Lukashenka outlined his responsibilities as follows: *'The Assistant for General Affairs deals with matters from earth to sky. All the matters handled by the President.'* Latyshonak was one of the few representatives of the authorities who went out to speak to protesters in August 2020.

The influence of such informal figures is difficult to measure, since it is not always linked to the official hierarchy. The main source of this influence is their constant physical presence near Lukashenka. In a personalist system, this may be more important than a formal position.

At the same time, the possibility of daily access, as well as the influence of the family and the inner circle over Lukashenka, should not be overstated. Lukashenka has his own understanding of the world, and it is difficult to imagine that anyone could convince him of something that directly contradicts this understanding. Lukashenka may listen to the opinions of others, but when making key decisions he clearly relies on his own experience and intuition.

CONCLUSION

The Presidential Administration is one of the key structures in Belarus's power vertical. Its influence over the political system is ensured both by its direct proximity to Lukashenka and by its ability to act on his behalf. The PA does not make final decisions on Lukashenka's behalf. However, it is through this structure that most political decisions are prepared, formalised, approved, and subsequently implemented and monitored. In this sense, the PA serves as the link between Lukashenka and the entire state system.

The history of the PA reflects the evolution of the country's political system. Over time, Lukashenka has concentrated increasing amounts of power in his own hands, and the influence and significance of the PA have grown accordingly. In 1994 the PA was created as a working body under the head of state. After 1996 it became part of the presidential power vertical. Later, it acquired additional instruments of influence over almost all spheres of the country's life, including relations with other institutions, personnel policy, ideology, legislation, the information sphere, and regional policy. This is also reflected in the PA's structure: in practice, the PA and its subdivisions coordinate and oversee the activities of the government, parliament, the courts, and the local vertical.

The PA exerts its strongest influence when it comes to personnel policy. Through personnel decisions, Lukashenka maintains control over the state apparatus, the regions, enterprises, universities, and other institutions. The PA plays a central role in the operation of this system, participating in the selection, vetting, and approval of appointees. Following the political crisis of 2020, the influence of the security structures over personnel decisions increased, as they became more actively involved in vetting officials and assessing their loyalty.

Overall, the atmosphere that has emerged within the state apparatus and civil service since 2020 has had a constraining effect on even relatively liberal-minded officials. In the current environment, it is easier for an official to suppress liberal initiatives and engage in self-censorship than to put forward innovative ideas and attract attention. The system itself treats such ideas with extreme caution.

In the ideological sphere, the PA's task is to correctly interpret Lukashenka's current instructions, translate them into administrative tasks, and transmit them further down the power vertical. Through the PA, these instructions reach officials, state media, the regions, labour collectives, and public organisations. After the 2020 crisis, ideological work was intensified and extended to private organisations. The more active promotion of the authorities' ideological narratives on social media also became more apparent.

At the same time, the PA's influence in the economic sphere is exercised differently, as the relevant specialised bodies – the government and the National Bank – retain the leading roles. They prepare economic and financial decisions and bear responsibility for their implementation and outcomes. However, the PA remains an important intermediary between the government's economic bloc and Lukashenka. It can support particular initiatives or, conversely, seek to block them. As a result, the PA also exerts influence over economic policy.

The head of the PA has significant bureaucratic weight but is not the 'second person' in the state. Such a figure cannot exist in Lukashenka's system, since he will not allow an independent centre

of power to emerge separate from him. The head of the PA is therefore one among several influential officials.

An analysis of the biographies of the heads of the PA shows that there is no single professional template for this position, just as their place of birth is of little significance. The post of head of the PA has been held by people from different spheres: the security bloc, the economy, diplomacy, regional administration and economic management. What they had in common was significant bureaucratic experience, deep integration into the system, and a sufficient level of trust from Lukashenka.

The PA is also important as a career ‘springboard’ for officials. Work in the Administration raises their status and demonstrates that they have passed an additional vetting process and are able to work in the apparatus of the head of state. Despite this, working in the PA does not usually alter an official’s professional trajectory: economists continue to work in the economic sphere, diplomats in foreign policy, lawyers in the legal sphere, and ideologists and media managers in the information and ideological bloc.

After the political crisis of 2020 and the constitutional changes of 2022, Lukashenka further strengthened his power against the backdrop of increased centralisation of governance. The formal strengthening of the ABPA and the Security Council did not lead to a redistribution of power in their favour. The ABPA acquired a new status, but in day-to-day governance it became embedded in the presidential vertical. The State Secretariat of the Security Council strengthened as part of the security bloc.

Overall, after 2020 the Administration tightened control over the quality of work in the ideological and information spheres and adopted a tougher approach to personnel policy. Legislation in each of these areas was revised, and the PA played an important role in developing the country’s most repressive laws. Lukashenka’s assistants in the regions received additional powers aimed at pre-empting manifestations of public discontent and ensuring domestic political stability at the regional level.

As a rule, the capacity to influence Lukashenka is not determined by official positions alone. A formal office is important, but it is by no means always the deciding factor. Rather, what matters is the office holder: personal trust in them, regular access to Lukashenka, control over the information provided to the head of state, and the ability to be useful to him in a specific situation. Consequently, alongside the head of the PA and his deputies, the press secretary, assistants, as well as members of Lukashenka’s family and inner circle, can all wield influence over him.

The PA helps Lukashenka govern the state. It is through this body that his will is transformed into personnel decisions, ideological directives, legal acts, instructions, and mechanisms for monitoring their implementation. Formal institutions may alter in status and powers; the ABPA, the Security Council, or the security agencies may grow stronger in the future. However, real governance continues to revolve around Lukashenka and remains firmly in his hands. It is for this reason that the central role of the PA will be preserved for as long as the country’s system of power remains personalist.

Appendix No. 1. Tasks and functions of the Presidential Administration

The main **tasks** of the Administration:

1. To support the exercise by the president of the Republic of Belarus of his powers:
 - in the field of state personnel policy;
 - in the field of the ideology of the Belarusian state;
 - in the field of law;
 - in the field of foreign policy;
 - in the field of socio-economic policy;
 - in the field of debureaucratisation of the state apparatus, as well as in work with appeals from citizens and legal entities;
 - and other powers defined by the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus and by legislative acts.
2. To ensure the preparation and submission to the head of state of draft decisions of the president of the Republic of Belarus, as well as the implementation of, and oversight over the implementation of, decisions of the president of the Republic of Belarus, except in cases determined by the president of the Republic of Belarus.
3. To ensure the interaction of the president of the Republic of Belarus with the All-Belarusian People's Assembly, legislative, executive and judicial bodies, local self-government bodies, public associations, religious organisations and other socio-political institutions, as well as with the mass media.
4. To provide organisational, informational, expert-analytical and legal support for the activities of the president of the Republic of Belarus.
5. To perform other tasks defined by laws or by decisions of the president of the Republic of Belarus

The main **functions** of the Administration:

1. General management of the work of selecting, placing and certifying senior personnel of state bodies and other organisations, forming personnel reserves, and overseeing the organisation of this work.
2. Coordination and oversight of the maintenance of the personnel register of the Republic of Belarus, and maintenance of the personnel register of the head of state of the Republic of Belarus.
3. General management of the activities of state bodies and state organisations in the training, retraining, internships and advanced training of senior personnel and persons included in personnel reserves.
4. Approval of appointments to posts, dismissals from posts and extensions of contracts in cases provided for by legislation.
5. Preparation of materials on issues relating to the conferral of state awards of the Republic of Belarus and the announcement of commendations by the president of the Republic of

Belarus; oversight of the presentation of state awards; and maintenance of personal records of individuals who have received state awards.

6. Coordination and analysis of the effectiveness of ideological work in the republic; monitoring of its organisation and conduct; and ensuring cooperation among state bodies, public associations and other organisations in the sphere of the ideology of the Belarusian state.
7. Study of public opinion, analysis of the socio-political situation in the regions, and forecasting of its development.
8. Coordination of the activities of state-owned mass media; organisation of the work of state bodies and state organisations to inform the population about the domestic and foreign policy pursued by the president of the Republic of Belarus and the measures taken to implement it; and ensuring the functioning of the internet portal of the president of the Republic of Belarus.
9. Ensuring the interaction of the president of the Republic of Belarus with public associations, religious organisations and other socio-political institutions.
10. Preparation of materials for the annual addresses of the president of the Republic of Belarus to the Belarusian people and the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus.
11. Participation in the preparation of proposals for determining the main directions of domestic and foreign policy, as well as the mechanism for its implementation.
12. Systematic analysis of the socio-economic situation in the republic; preparation of expert opinions on proposals submitted for consideration by the president of the Republic of Belarus on issues of socio-economic development of the Republic of Belarus, including an assessment of the consequences of implementing such proposals.
13. Development of proposals for improving the socio-economic and other domestic policies of the state, including state youth and information policy, and policy in the fields of education, science, healthcare, demography, culture and sport, as well as ethno-confessional policy.
14. Ensuring the interaction of the president of the Republic of Belarus with the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus, the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus, republican bodies of state administration, and local executive and administrative bodies in resolving issues of the republic's socio-economic development.
15. Legal support for the activities of the president of the Republic of Belarus, as well as for the exercise of his right of legislative initiative.
16. Preparation of draft legal acts of the president of the Republic of Belarus, as well as organisation of the conduct, or conduct, of mandatory legal examination of draft legal acts submitted for consideration by the president of the Republic of Belarus in accordance with the procedure established by legislative acts.

17. Approval, on behalf of the president of the Republic of Belarus, of draft laws in the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus in accordance with the procedure established by the president of the Republic of Belarus.
18. Submission for consideration by the president of the Republic of Belarus of draft legal acts, laws submitted to the head of state for signature, and analytical and other materials.
19. Organisation, on the instruction of the president of the Republic of Belarus or on its own initiative, of monitoring of the practice of applying legal acts of the president of the Republic of Belarus and the implementation of other decisions of the head of state; preparation and submission for consideration by the president of the Republic of Belarus, and forwarding to state bodies and other organisations, of proposals to eliminate identified shortcomings.
20. Coordination of the activities of state bodies and other organisations in the field of law, including matters relating to rule-making activity, the practice of applying the law, and the dissemination or provision of legal information.
21. Ensuring the interaction of the president of the Republic of Belarus with the All-Belarusian People's Assembly and its bodies.
22. Preparation for the president of the Republic of Belarus of materials on issues relating to the observance of human and civil rights and freedoms, as well as on issues of citizenship, pardons, and exemption from criminal liability in cases determined by legislative acts.
23. Analysis and preparation of materials for international events involving the president of the Republic of Belarus.
24. Participation in the development, and general coordination of the implementation, of the main directions of foreign policy; analysis and assessment of proposals submitted for consideration by the president of the Republic of Belarus concerning the development of relations between the Republic of Belarus and foreign countries and cooperation with international organisations.
25. Participation in the development, and general coordination of the implementation, of the main directions of state regional policy; preparation of reference and analytical materials on socio-political, economic and social processes in the regions.
26. Organisational support for events held with the participation of the president of the Republic of Belarus, and preparation of the working schedules of the president of the Republic of Belarus.
27. Consideration of appeals from citizens and legal entities on matters falling within the competence of the Administration of the president of the Republic of Belarus; organisation of personal receptions of citizens, their representatives, and representatives of legal entities.
28. Analysis of appeals from citizens and legal entities, the dynamics of the receipt of such appeals, the results of their consideration and the measures taken in response to them; identification of the most acute problems of concern to the population and legal entities;

and submission to the president of the Republic of Belarus of regular reports on the number and nature of appeals, the decisions taken in response to them, and proposals for eliminating the problems identified.

29. Oversight of the timely implementation of decisions taken in response to appeals from citizens and legal entities.
30. Analysis of the activities of state bodies and other organisations in relation to the debureaucratisation of the state apparatus, as well as their work with appeals from citizens and legal entities, and development of proposals for improving such activities.
31. Exercise of general oversight over the implementation of decisions and instructions of the president of the Republic of Belarus.
32. Ensuring compliance with the established procedure for the preparation and submission to the president of the Republic of Belarus of draft decisions and other materials.
33. Formalisation and communication of decrees, orders and other documents of the president of the Republic of Belarus to state bodies and other organisations.
34. Ensuring the preservation and organisation of the use of archival documents generated in the activities of the president of the Republic of Belarus and the Administration of the president of the Republic of Belarus.
35. General management of the activities of state organisations subordinate to the Administration of the president of the Republic of Belarus and coordination of their activities, and, in cases established by the president of the Republic of Belarus, also of organisations subordinate or accountable to the head of state.
36. Performance of other functions in accordance with the decisions and instructions of the president of the Republic of Belarus in order to support the exercise of his powers.

Appendix No. 2. Biographies of the heads of the Presidential Administration

Leanid Sinitsyn (July 1994 – October 1995)

Leanid Sinitsyn, born in 1954, was appointed head of the PA on 22 July 1994 and remained in this post until 10 October 1995. He was born on 28 July 1954 in Polatsk. After finishing school, he entered the Navapolatsk polytechnic institute and qualified as a civil engineer.

In 1977, after graduating from the institute, he was assigned to work in Mahiliou as a foreman at trust No. 17 Lausanstroi, from where he was called up for military service. After serving for two years, he returned to his previous place of work. Over the eight years from 1979 to 1987, he rose from foreman to chief engineer of a construction department.

In 1987, he moved to work at the Mahiliou regional committee of the communist party of Belarus, first as an instructor and later as head of a sector in the department of rural and road construction. In 1988, he was appointed chief engineer of trust No. 17 Lausanstroi. From this position, in September 1990, he was elected a deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the BSSR of the 12th convocation, where until 1994 he served as deputy chair of the Supreme Soviet's standing commission on architecture, construction, the production of construction materials, and housing and utilities.

In March 1994, at Aliaksandr Lukashenka's suggestion, he headed Lukashenka's election campaign headquarters. Following Lukashenka's election, Leanid Sinitsyn was appointed head of the PA by one of the first presidential decrees, on 22 July 1994.

From October 1995 to 6 August 1996, he served as deputy prime minister of the Republic of Belarus. As deputy prime minister, he was responsible for construction, communications, transport, housing and utilities, as well as cooperation with international financial organisations.

Following Lukashenka's criticism of the government's performance, he submitted his resignation on 31 July 1996.

He attempted to register as a candidate in the 2011 presidential election in Belarus, but failed to collect enough signatures. After leaving politics, he went into business.

Mikhail Miasnikovich (October 1995 – September 2001)

Mikhail Miasnikovich, born in 1950, was appointed head of the PA on 10 October 1995 and remained in this post until 12 September 2001. He was born on 6 May 1950 in the village of Novy Snou, in the Niasvizh district of Minsk region. In 1972, he graduated from the Brest civil engineering institute, and in 1989 from the Minsk higher party school.

In 1972, he began his career as an engineer at the state design institute Minskpraekt. Until 1983, he worked in engineering and managerial positions in the municipal services sector of the city of Minsk. From 1983 to 1986, he served as chair of the executive committee of the Savetski district council of people's deputies of the city of Minsk, deputy chair of the executive committee of the Minsk city council of people's deputies, and secretary of the Minsk city committee of the communist party of Belarus. From 1986 to 1990, he was minister of housing and municipal services of the BSSR.

From 1990 to 1994, he served as deputy chair of the Council of Ministers of the BSSR and chair of the BSSR state committee for economy and planning, and later as first deputy prime minister of the Republic of Belarus. In 1994, he headed the election campaign headquarters of Aliaksandr Lukashenka's rival in the presidential election, prime minister Viachaslau Kebich. After Lukashenka's victory, he was appointed deputy prime minister of the Republic of Belarus.

In October 2001, he was appointed president of the national academy of sciences of Belarus; from October 2004, he served as chair of the presidium of the national academy of sciences. From 2010 to 2014, he held the post of prime minister of Belarus. From January 2015 to December 2019, he was chair of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus. From 1 February 2020 to 1 February 2024, he served as chair of the board of the Eurasian economic commission.

Since 2024, he has been a member of the council of elders under the Minsk city executive committee. He continues to participate in public life as a lecturer and expert.

Ural Latypau (September 2001 – November 2004)

Ural Latypau, born in 1951, served as head of the PA from 12 September 2001 to 29 November 2004. He was born on 28 February 1951 in the village of Kataevo, in the Bakaly district of the Bashkir ASSR, now an autonomous republic within Russia.

He graduated with honours from the faculty of law of Kazan state university named after V. I. Ulyanov (Lenin), and from the higher courses of the KGB of the USSR in Minsk. From 1974 to 1989, he served in the territorial bodies of the KGB of the USSR in operational and managerial positions. From 1989 to 1994, he held the posts of head of the department of special disciplines and deputy head of the institute of national security of the Republic of Belarus for research. He is a reserve colonel.

From 1994 to December 1998, he served as head of the presidential secretariat and first assistant to the president of the Republic of Belarus. In December 1998, he was appointed minister of foreign affairs and deputy prime minister. After being relieved of his post as foreign minister on 27 November 2000, he was appointed on the same day as state secretary of the Security Council and assistant to the president for national security.

After being relieved of his post as head of the PA 'in connection with his retirement', he chaired the advisory council of the LUKOIL-Belarus branch, headed Direct management, a company managing real estate assets in Moscow, and served as an independent director on the supervisory board of Alfa-Bank (Belarus).

Viktar Sheiman (November 2004 – January 2006)

Viktar Sheiman, born in 1958, served as head of the PA from 29 November 2004 to 4 January 2006. He was born on 26 May 1958 in the village of Soltanishki, in the Voranava district of Hrodna region. He graduated from the Blagoveshchensk higher tank command school and the Academy of the ministry of internal affairs of the Republic of Belarus.

From 1975 to 1992, he served in the armed forces in command, political, and command-and-staff positions, including in the Republic of Afghanistan. He holds the rank of colonel general. From 1990 to 1994, he was a deputy of the Supreme Soviet and secretary of the Supreme Soviet's commission on national security, defence and the fight against crime.

During the 1994 presidential campaign, he was part of Aliaksandr Lukashenka's inner circle and was responsible for ensuring his security. On 5 August 1994, the Security Council of the Republic of Belarus was established by Decree No. 24. On the same day, by presidential decree No. 25, Sheiman was appointed state secretary of the Security Council of the Republic of Belarus. Until 2000, he held the posts of state secretary of the Security Council and assistant to the president for national security, and state secretary of the Security Council and minister of internal affairs. From 2000 to 2004, he served as prosecutor general.

While serving as head of the PA, in December 2005 he headed the initiative group for nominating Lukashenka as a presidential candidate and led his election campaign headquarters during the 2006 presidential election.

From 2006 to 2008, he served as state secretary of the Security Council of the Republic of Belarus. From 2009 to 2013, he was assistant to the president for special assignments within the state secretariat of the Security Council. In January 2013, Sheiman was appointed head of the presidential Property Management Directorate and remained in this post until June 2021. He currently serves as Lukashenka's special envoy and is responsible, in particular, for overseeing the development of relations with African countries.

Hienadz Nievychlas (January 2006 – July 2008)

Hienadz Nievychlas, born in 1954, served as head of the PA from 4 January 2006 to 8 July 2008. He was born on 11 February 1954 in Parakhonsk, in the Pinsk district of Brest region. In 1975, he graduated with honours from the Moscow higher border command school of the committee for state security, and in 1989 from the border faculty of the higher school of the KGB of the USSR.

From 1975, he served in various command and staff positions in the eastern border district. In 1988, he took part in combat operations in Afghanistan. From 1992 to 1997, he served in operational and senior positions in the main directorate of the border troops of the Republic of Belarus.

From 1997 to 2000, he was deputy chair of the state committee of border troops. From this post, he was appointed head of the presidential security service, a position he held for nine months until 2001. From 2001 to 2006, he served as state secretary of the Security Council. He holds the rank of lieutenant general.

After being relieved of his post as head of the PA and until 2011, Nievychlas's main activity was leading Belarusian football as chair of the Belarusian football federation association. In November 2011, Lukashenka approved his appointment as deputy secretary general of the Collective security treaty organisation (CSTO). He worked in this position until 2017, overseeing issues related to countering contemporary challenges and threats, including terrorism and drug trafficking.

After completing his work in the CSTO Secretariat, Nievyhlas ended his state career. He is retired and is honorary chair of the Belarusian football federation association.

Uladzimir Makei (July 2008 – August 2012)

Uladzimir Makei, born in 1958, served as head of the PA from 15 July 2008 to 20 August 2012. He was born on 5 August 1958 in the village of Nekrashevichy, in the Karelitchy district of Hrodna region. In 1980, he graduated from the Minsk state pedagogical institute of foreign languages, and from 1980 to 1992 he served in the Soviet army. He was a reserve colonel. From 1992 to 1993, he studied at the Diplomatic academy of the Austrian ministry of foreign affairs.

From 1993 to 2000, he served in the diplomatic service. He worked as third secretary in the department of information and humanitarian cooperation, second secretary in the analysis and forecasting division, second secretary in the secretariat of the ministry of foreign affairs (1993-1995), and deputy head of the state protocol service of the ministry of foreign affairs (1995-1996). From 1996 to 1999, he was Belarus's representative to the Council of Europe and counsellor at the embassy of the Republic of Belarus in France. After returning from Strasbourg, he worked as head of the department of pan-european cooperation at the ministry of foreign affairs (1999-2000). From 2000 to 2008, he was assistant to the president. He was appointed head of the PA from the post of assistant.

As head of the Administration, he met with representatives of the opposition and western politicians, and oversaw Minsk's contacts with the British pr firm Bell Pottinger, which worked on reshaping Lukashenka's image. After the presidential election in December 2010, the subsequent dispersal of protesters and the arrest of presidential candidates, he was placed under western personal sanctions.

From August 2012 to November 2022, he served as minister of foreign affairs. He died suddenly on 26 November 2022 in Minsk at the age of 64.

Andrei Kabiakou (August 2012 – December 2014)

Andrei Kabiakou, born in 1960, served as head of the PA from 27 August 2012 to 27 December 2014. He was born on 21 November 1960 in Moscow. From the age of three, he lived in Belarus. He graduated from the Moscow aviation institute in 1983, and from the Belarusian state institute of national economy and the Institute of political science and social management of the communist party of Belarus in 1991.

From 1983 to 1995, he worked at the S. I. Vavilov Minsk mechanical plant, in the Rahachou city committee of the communist party of Belarus, and at the Diaproektor plant in Rahachou, Homel region.

From 1995 to 2000, he held the posts of deputy head of the presidential control service, deputy chair of the state control committee, president of the Bellegprom state industrial group, and chair of the state control committee. Between 2000 and 2010, he served as first deputy prime minister, deputy prime minister, and deputy prime minister and minister of economy. In 2010, he moved

from the government to the post of deputy head of the PA. From this post, he was appointed ambassador to Russia. After serving as ambassador for around ten months, he was appointed head of the PA.

As head of the PA, he oversaw a large-scale reduction of the state apparatus by 25 per cent. The funds released as a result were directed towards raising the salaries of civil servants. He personally oversaw the modernisation of problem sectors of industry, including woodworking and the cement industry.

From December 2014 to August 2018, he served as prime minister. After being relieved of his post, he was an independent director and chair of the audit committee of the board of directors of Belgazprombank. Since 2020, he has worked in Russia as chair of the board of directors of the management company holding Sibuglemt, which is engaged in coal mining.

Aliaksandr Kosiniec (December 2014 – December 2016)

Aliaksandr Kosiniec, born in 1959, served as head of the PA from 28 December 2014 to 5 December 2016. He was born on 27 May 1959 in the village of Roski Sielec, in the Orsha district of Vitsebsk region. He graduated from the faculty of medicine, completed his clinical residency and postgraduate studies, and graduated from the faculty of pedagogy and psychology at Vitsebsk state medical university. He also completed a master's degree at the faculty of economics of Belarusian state university. He holds a doctor of medical sciences degree and is a professor.

He worked as deputy secretary and then secretary of the komsomol committee of Vitsebsk state medical institute. He was an assistant lecturer, associate professor and professor in the department of hospital surgery, and professor in the department of surgery of the faculty for advanced training of specialists at Vitsebsk state medical university. He also headed the republican research and practical centre 'Infection in surgery', served as rector of the educational institution Vitsebsk medical university from 1997 to 2005, and was deputy prime minister of the Republic of Belarus from 2005 to 2008. From November 2008 to December 2014, he served as chair of the Vitsebsk regional executive committee.

During his tenure as head of the PA, the October 2015 presidential election was held under the slogan of stability against the backdrop of events in Ukraine. He is known for his tough management style.

From May 2017 to April 2024, he served as assistant to the president. Since April 2024, he has been deputy chair of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly.

Natallia Kachanova (December 2016 – December 2019)

Natallia Kachanova, born in 1960, served as head of the PA from 5 December 2016 to 5 December 2019. She was born on 25 September 1960 in the city of Polatsk, Vitsebsk region. She graduated from the Navapolatsk polytechnic institute and the Academy of public administration under the aegis of the president of the Republic of Belarus.

She worked in various positions at the Navapolatsk water supply and sewage enterprise. She was head of the housing and utilities department and deputy chair for capital construction and housing and utilities at the Polatsk city executive committee. From 2007 to 2014, she served as chair of the Navapolatsk city executive committee. From 2014 to 2016, she held the post of deputy prime minister of the Republic of Belarus.

As head of the presidential administration, she oversaw the draft law on the so-called ‘social parasites’. She implemented the pension reform, as a result of which women now retire at 58 and men at 63. She opposed salary increases for doctors and sports coaches. She actively supported Lukashenka’s Covid-19 policy. She insisted that, in the August 2020 presidential election, Lukashenka should be ‘given 80 per cent’. She supported the initiative to introduce administrative fines for the use of any symbols other than state symbols. She referred to Belarusians who had left the country as ‘fugitive hangers-on’ and traitors to the motherland.

Since December 2019, she has served as chair of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly. Under the constitution amended in 2022, ‘in the event of a vacancy in the office of the president, or the impossibility of the president performing his duties, his powers shall pass to the Chair of the Council of the Republic until the newly elected president takes the oath’.

Ihar Siarhieienka (December 2019 – March 2024)

Ihar Siarhieienka, born in 1963, served as head of the PA from 6 December 2019 to 29 March 2024. He was born on 14 January 1963 in the village of Stalitsa, in the Sharkoushchyna district of Vitsebsk region. In 1984, he graduated with honours from Belarusian state university with a degree in history. In 2006, he graduated with honours from the Academy of public administration under the aegis of the president of the Republic of Belarus with a degree in public administration and ideology.

From 1984 to 1986, he served in the armed forces of the USSR. He began his career in 1986, working as head of the teaching and methodology office of the department of the history of the CPSU and political economy at Vitsebsk state medical institute.

From 1988, he served in operational and senior positions in the state security bodies. From 2002, he worked as deputy head of the KGB directorate for Vitsebsk region. From 2005 to 2013, he headed the KGB directorates for Hrodna and Mahiliou regions. He then served until 2019 as first deputy chair of the KGB of the Republic of Belarus.

The appointment of the KGB’s first deputy chair as head of the PA six months before the August 2020 presidential election signalled the priority given to security and control in the country’s domestic policy. He was responsible for keeping the state apparatus under control during the mass protests. Under him, extensive work was carried out to review personnel in state bodies for loyalty after the events of 2020. He was one of the main organisers of the preparation of the amended 2022 Constitution and the holding of the referendum.

Since March 2024, Ihar Siarhieienka has served as chair of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly.

Dzmitry Krutoi (June 2024 – present)

Dzmitry Krutoi, born in 1981, has served as head of the PA since 27 June 2024. He was born on 10 January 1981 in Bialynichy, Mahiliou region. In 2003, he graduated from Belarusian state technological university, and in 2010 from the Academy of public administration under the aegis of the president of the Republic of Belarus.

In 2003, he began working as an engineer in the department of economics and management of chemical and forestry enterprises at the educational institution Belarusian state technological university, and in the same year enrolled in postgraduate studies. From 2004 to 2006, he worked as a lead economist and then chief economist in the department of economics and investment at the ministry of forestry. From 2006 to 2010, he worked at the ministry of economy as deputy head of the forestry department of the main department for agro-industrial and forestry complexes.

From 2010 to 2014, he was deputy head of the main department for agro-industrial and forestry complexes and head of the forestry department at the ministry of economy. From 2014 to 2017, he served as deputy minister of economy, and from 2017 to 2018 as first deputy minister of economy. From 2018 to 2019, he held the post of minister of economy. From 2019 to 2020, he was first deputy prime minister. From 2020 to 2022, he served as deputy head of the PA. From 1 August 2022 to 27 June 2024, he served as Belarus's ambassador to Russia. He was appointed head of the PA from this post.

Appendix No. 3. Biographies of the current deputy heads of the Presidential Administration

First deputy head, Uladzimir Pertsou (since 22 May 2025)

Uladzimir Pertsou was born in Vitsebsk in 1974. In 1996, he graduated from Vitsebsk state university. In 2007, he graduated from the Academy of public administration under the aegis of the president of the Republic of Belarus. From 1995 to 1999, he worked as an editor at the Vitsebsk regional television and radio association.

From 1999 to 2002, he was editor-in-chief of regional radio at the Vitsebsk regional television and radio association. From 2002 to 2003, he served as head of the Hrodna regional television and radio association of the national state television and radio company.

From 2003 to 2008, he was director of the republican unitary enterprise radio and television centre 'Hrodna Television and Radio Company'. From 2008 to 2010, he served as director of the broadcasting directorate of the RTR-Belarus television channel at the closed joint-stock company Stolichnoe Televidenie. From 2010 to 2021, he worked as director of the national branch, or representative office, of the interstate television and radio company Mir in Belarus.

From 2021 to 2024, he served as minister of information of Belarus. In April 2024, Uladzimir Pertsou was appointed deputy head of the PA. Since 22 May 2025, he has served as first deputy head of the PA.

Deputy head, Volha Chuprys (since 6 December 2019)

Volha Chuprys was born in Minsk in 1969. In 1992, she graduated from Belarusian state university with a degree in law. She holds a doctor of legal sciences degree and is a professor.

In 1992, she worked as a state notary at the state notary office of the Maskouski district of the city of Minsk, under the justice department of the executive committee of the Minsk city council of people's deputies. From 1992 to 1997, she was a postgraduate student at Belarusian state university.

From 1997 to 2004, she worked as a lecturer, senior lecturer and associate professor in the department of constitutional law at the faculty of law of Belarusian state university. From 2004 to 2005, she was deputy director for academic affairs at the law college of Belarusian state university.

From 2005 to 2010, she was an associate professor in the department of constitutional law at the faculty of law of Belarusian state university. From 2010 to 2015, she served as deputy dean of the faculty of law of Belarusian state university. From 2015 to 2018, she was head of the department of public administration at Belarusian state university. From 2018 to 2019, she served as vice-rector for academic affairs and educational innovation at Belarusian state university.

Since 6 December 2019, she has served as deputy head of the PA.

Deputy head, Dzmitry Matusevich (since 27 March 2025)

Dzmitry Matusevich was born in 1978 in Maladzechna, Minsk region. He graduated from Belarusian state technological university in 2001, Belarusian state economic university in 2004, and the Academy of public administration under the aegis of the president of the Republic of Belarus in 2010.

From 2001 to 2007, he was a postgraduate student and assistant lecturer in the department of economic theory and marketing at Belarusian state technological university.

He has been in public service since 2007. He held various posts in the ministry of forestry, the ministry of economy, and the office of the Council of Ministers.

From 2014, he served as deputy head, and from 2015 as head, of a directorate general at the ministry of economy. From 2017 to 2020, he worked as deputy minister of economy. From 2020 to 2025, he served as chair of the state property committee of the Republic of Belarus.

Since 27 March 2025, he has served as deputy head of the PA.