

# Nabiullina Counts Payoff of Campaign Promises

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Economic Development Minister Elvira Nabiullina said Thursday that the proposals that Prime Minister Vladimir Putin made during his presidential campaign will annually spur economic growth by up to 0.4 percent over the next three years.

Nabiullina made the statement at a meeting that Putin held to discuss measures to put his proposals — laid out in a series of newspaper articles in January and February — into practice.

Next year alone, Nabiullina said, the economy could gain at least 660 billion rubles (\$22.6 billion) as a result of the proposals, which include creating more jobs and encouraging competition. A third of the money would end up in state coffers as taxes, she said.

Putin said earlier this month that the implementation of his campaign ideas would take up to 1.5 percent of gross domestic product every year. He reiterated Thursday that some of the money would be rerouted from spending deemed ineffective.

Elaborating on some of the proposals, Nabiullina said the cost of many construction projects is higher than it could be because of antiquated standards — a problem that has been cropping up throughout the past decade.

State supervision of construction focuses on safety and doesn't demand the use of new technology, she complained.

The government needs to update the standards, Nabiullina said. One way to improve the situation could be to allow evaluation of state-funded projects by large international companies, she said. The government has hired Sberbank to evaluate road construction costs in some cases and the results were positive, she said.

The government also needs to encourage creation of up-to-date design institutions, she said.

The Economic Development Ministry will submit proposals for the required legal amendments and changes to state procedures by July 1, Nabiullina said.

In the area of state procurement, Nabiullina said the ministry had placed all the procurement contracts that are worth more than 1 billion rubles prominently on the government's procurement website. They include 41 contracts that cost more than 100 billion rubles, including construction projects, research-and-development work and purchases of high-tech equipment. The goal is to make sure that the government doesn't set excessively high prices or limit competition. A system for reacting to public suspicions and complaints is in the works, she said.

The tax changes, for which Putin called as part of his "tax maneuver," will be ready before the government compiles a draft budget for next year, Nabiullina said, without being more specific. The Cabinet normally turns the budget over to the State Duma by Oct. 1. The trend being discussed is to ease the burden on production and investment and increase the burden on consumption and natural resources industries, she said.

Acting Industry and Trade Minister Denis Manturov said the ministry was wrapping up work to begin a program that would focus on the production of airplane engines. When up and running, the program would allow production of as many as 50 jets per year.

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