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Putin Approves Murmansk Governor's Resignation in Lead Up to Early Elections

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Vladimir Putin has accepted the resignation of Murmansk regional governor Marina Kovtun.

President Vladimir Putin has accepted Murmansk Governor Marina Kovtun's resignation, the most recent in a string of regional departures that have paved the way to early elections.

During a meeting with the president, Kovtun asked to be relieved of her official duties in order to participate in an early gubernatorial vote, the Kremlin Press Service reported Monday. The elections are expected to take place in September.

Kovtun, a member of the ruling United Russia party, had been set to remain at the helm of Murmansk region until 2017.

The governor said during the meeting that 20 municipalities, including the city of Murmansk, are set to hold elections in the fall. In her view, conducting gubernatorial elections at the same time will help to "effectively carry out a combined election campaign and save budget funds," according to a transcript of the conversation released by the Kremlin.

Putin accepted Kovtun's request, and appointed her acting governor of the region pending the upcoming elections.

Kovtun's is the sixth such departure this year that will give rise to early regional elections. News of the shakeup in the Murmansk region follows on the heels of similar dismissals and early governor elections in the Sakha republic, as well as the Volgograd, Novosibirsk, Chelyabinsk, and Kurgan regions.

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