

Putin Reshuffles Regional Governors Ahead of 2019 Vote

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President Vladimir Putin has replaced three more governors ahead of regional elections later this year as low ratings for the ruling United Russia party risk upsetting its hold on power.

Sixteen regions are scheduled to elect new governors on Sept. 8 this year. Putin [replaced](#) 10 leaders in Oct. 2018 after an unpopular government move to raise the pension age saw a wave of discontent across the country.

Related article: [10th Russian Governor Replaced Amid Falling Ratings for Ruling Party](#)

Over the past 24 hours, governors in [Chelyabinsk](#), the republic of [Altai](#), and the republic of [Kalmykia](#) have resigned in quick succession.

The RBC news website also [reported](#) the imminent departure of Murmansk governor Maria Kovtun on Wednesday.

According to Dmitry Badovsky, a political scientist and the head of the Institute of Socio-Economic and Political Research (ISEPR), the latest round of replacements did not catch anyone by surprise.

“Strategically, the entire governor’s corps should be revamped,” he told The Moscow Times.

Estimating that the reshuffles are halfway done, Badovsky predicted two to three more resignations this spring cycle.

“The reliance on new nominees, young technocrats, has already borne fruit,” he added.

Russian political scientist Mikhail Vinogradov has [said](#) April is the “latest possible” time for regional leaders to settle in ahead of the Sept. 8 vote.

Update: Two more governors, Maria Kovtun from the Murmansk region and Yury Berg from the Orenburg region announced their resignations on Thursday.

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