

# Russian Government Bucks Putin's Call to Forgo Foreign Cars – Agentstvo

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Cars of Russian officials. **Kristina Kormilitsyna / Kommersant**

Russia's government has continued to buy foreign-made cars despite calls by President Vladimir Putin last month for officials to start using domestic-made vehicles, the investigative news outlet Agentstvo [reported](#) Monday.

Overall, Russian government bodies, agencies and state-affiliated companies purchased 151 foreign-made cars worth 566 million rubles (\$5.9 million) in August, according to state procurement data cited by Agentstvo.

Chinese brands accounted for 114 of the vehicle purchases, while the remaining 37 were cars made in Japan, South Korea and the Czech Republic. China's Great Wall Motor, South Korea's Hyundai Motor and Japan's Toyota were among the most sought-after carmakers, the outlet said.

Russia's General Prosecutor's Office and a Defense Ministry engineer center are reportedly among the buyers, which also included customs, security and emergency agencies at the

regional level.

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On Aug. 3, Putin demanded that officials stop purchasing foreign-made cars and called on them to use domestic-made vehicles for their transportation needs.

“[Government] ministries, departments and agencies have asked to continue purchasing... foreign-made cars. It’s out of the question,” he said at a Kremlin meeting with Russian industry executives, noting that officials may have to get used to vehicles that are “more modest.”

Russia’s car manufacturing industry has been one of the hardest-hit sectors by sanctions and the mass exodus of foreign companies from the country.

Amid the departure of foreign automakers — including Renault, Toyota and Volkswagen — from the country, Moscow has sought to bolster domestic car manufacturing.

Russia’s lower-house State Duma [pledged](#) to switch to domestic car brands by September.

In 2018, Putin [swapped](#) his usual Mercedes with the Russian-made Aurus limousine for the presidential state vehicle.

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