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Moscow's Army Recruitment Drive Hits 2023 Target Early, Mayor Says

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Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin. **Moskva News Agency**

Moscow has recruited its annual target number of contract soldiers into the military ahead of schedule, Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said Wednesday.

More than 22,000 people signed contracts with Russia's military, according to Sobyanin, as the country continues to wage its war against neighboring Ukraine.

"Thus, we've fulfilled the Defense Ministry's task ahead of schedule for this year," he wrote on the messaging app Telegram.

Since President Vladimir Putin ordered troops into Ukraine in early 2022, a total of 47,000 contract soldiers from the Russian capital have enlisted in the army, Sobyanin said.

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Russia’s Armed Forces have undertaken an unprecedented recruitment campaign in the months since Putin announced a “partial” mobilization of some 300,000 reserves last fall.

Experts describe the drive as an attempt to address the military's growing manpower shortage in Ukraine, while also trying to avoid public backlash that would likely arise from a new round of mobilization.

The Kremlin has reportedly sought to recruit 400,000 soldiers from across Russia this year.

During an October meeting with the Russian military's top brass, ex-President Dmitry Medvedev said that 305,000 men signed military contracts and 80,000 enlisted as volunteer fighters.

The pace of recruitment had “significantly increased” to 1,600 contracts being signed on a daily basis, Medvedev said at the time.

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