

Governor of Russia's Oil-Rich Khanty-Mansi Region Resigns Ahead of Elections

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Natalya Komarova. **Vladimir Gerdo / TASS**

Natalya Komarova [announced](#) Thursday that she was stepping down after serving 14 years as governor of western Siberia's oil-rich Khanty-Mansi autonomous district, making her resignation the first in what are seen as regular cadre changes ahead of regional elections.

"I'm completing my work," Komarova, 68, said in a video address to residents of the region, which lies around 2,000 kilometers northeast of Moscow. "I made this decision, I'm moving to another job."

Later on Thursday, President Vladimir Putin [tapped](#) the mayor of Tyumen, Ruslan Kukharuk, to replace Komarova. Putin named five new acting governors this month to [replace](#) those he had promoted to federal office after assuming his fifth term in the Kremlin.

Khanty-Mansi is among dozens of Russian regions, as well as annexed Crimea, that will hold

gubernatorial elections in September.

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A former lower-house State Duma lawmaker for the ruling United Russia party, Komarova was [appointed](#) Khanty-Mansi governor in 2010 and re-appointed twice in 2015 and 2020. She was the third-ever woman to govern a federal subject in modern Russia.

During a meeting with constituents last fall, Komarova was [accused](#) by pro-war activists of “discrediting” the Russian military for saying “we didn’t need” to invade Ukraine in 2022.

In January 2023, Komarova was caught on a hot mic [boasting](#) about an alleged corruption scheme involving state contracts. The regional administration [denounced](#) the widely circulated leaked video as an attempt to “damage the governor’s image.”

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