

Groundwork being laid for Vladimir Putin to run for his fourth term (out of a maximum of two)

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The Russian constitution limits the president to two consecutive four-year terms, and Vladimir Putin is coming up on the end of his third. When he ran for his third term, he explained that his first term didn't count since it was served under the old constitution. This explanation appears to have been widely accepted because everybody reports that he is coming up on the end of his second term, not his third. (But I think it's funnier if you think of it as his third.) Now it appears that the groundwork is being laid for Putin to run for his fourth term. Out of a maximum of two. I'm not saying he does or doesn't deserve to be president for another term. (And he does say that he plans to step down, though he doesn't rule out the possibility of running again.) I'm just amused by the machinations involved in keeping him there.

Former Moscow bureau chief for the *Globe and Mail* Marc MacKinnon chimes in with his thoughts (much better informed than mine).

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