Kadyrov Gets 100% of Votes in Primary

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Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov scooped 100 percent of the vote during United Russia primaries in the region, the republic's government [said](#) on its web site Wednesday.

With 8,556 votes in favor and zero against, Kadyrov led a list of 56 candidates, including nonparty members, vying for a spot on United Russia's party list in State Duma elections in December, the statement said.

Top vote getters also included the Chechen prime minister, the parliamentary speaker, two current Duma deputies and Kadyrov's chief of staff.

Elections in North Caucasus republics are routinely fraught with accusations of rigging. Matters are not helped by statements like last year's comment by the Chechen legislature's speaker, Dukuvakha Abdurakhmanov, that United Russia could score 120 percent of the vote at the next regional elections.

The results of the primaries are symbolic because United Russia is not obliged to select winners for its party list.

In fact, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin — who leads United Russia without being a member — said Wednesday that as many as two-thirds of the candidates on the final 600-person party list will not have participated in the primaries.

The primaries are needed to bring in specialists and "new mind-sets," Putin said at a meeting with participants, Interfax reported.

United Russia will determine its party list at an election convention on Sept. 23 and 24.

Of the 4,700 candidates in the United Russia primaries, only 38 percent were party members, Putin said. Fifty-eight percent ran through the All-Russia People's Front, an informal group headed by Putin, and 5 percent ran independently.

The party shakeup will not end on election day, Putin said, promising that "major changes" awaited United Russia after the elections. "It's a normal, natural process," he said, without elaborating.