

Prokhorov, Kudrin to Collaborate

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Former presidential candidate Mikhail Prokhorov's proposed political party gained support on Friday from former finance minister Alexei Kudrin, who wrote on Twitter that a previously announced think tank he will create will work together with Prokhorov's party on "concrete issues."

Both Prokhorov and Kudrin have said in the past that they would like to work on a political project together.

On his website, Prokhorov has opened voting to select a name for his party, whittling down a list of 45,000 possibilities to 86. Currently, "New Russia" and "Yo-Party," referring to his Yo-mobile electric car to be put into production this year, are the most popular choices with 11.8 and 13.5 percent of votes.

As a businessman new to politics, Prokhorov has had to grapple with his reputation as an oligarch and relative anonymity for many Russian voters. In a VTsIOM poll published Friday, 30 percent of those surveyed said they know Prokhorov's name but not his proposed policies. Thirty-three percent of Russians said they see Prokhorov first and foremost as an oligarch, and 11 percent think he secured third place in the presidential election thanks

to his large financial resources. But 18 percent said his presence as a fresh face in politics explains his relative success in the presidential election, making that the most popular explanation among respondents.

Meanwhile, even as Prokhorov gears up to create a political party, a new poll shows that his base of support within Russia could thin out.

Twenty-five percent of people who voted for Prokhorov would like to leave Russia, according to a survey by state pollster VTsIOM released Monday, compared to only 11 percent of all Russians who would like to emigrate, a sharp drop from June of last year when 22 percent said they would like to leave. Citizens who voted for president-elect Vladimir Putin were least likely to want to leave, at 6 percent.

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