

Navalny Appeal in KirovLes Case Postponed to Oct. 16

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The opposition leader was found guilty of embezzlement but was allowed to run in the 2013 Moscow mayoral election. **A. Astahova**

A Kirov court has postponed until Oct. 16 the appeal by opposition leader Alexei Navalny of his conviction on charges that he and a co-defendant embezzled about \$500,000 from a state-owned timber company.

The court decision comes as a new poll indicates that awareness has grown among Russians about who Navalny is, following his strong showing in the Moscow mayoral vote last month.

Navalny's appeal of his conviction and five-year prison sentence was initially set for Oct. 9 but was postponed by the Kirov Region Court because of a request from the defense, an official statement from the court said Friday. Navalny had requested the delay because he is supposed to appear at a hearing in Moscow regarding a separate criminal case against him involving cosmetics maker Yves Rocher.

In July, Navalny and co-defendant Pyotr Ofitserov were found guilty of embezzling 16 million rubles (\$490,000) from the KirovLes timber company. Navalny was sentenced to five years in prison, while Ofitserov received a four-year sentence, and both were immediately remanded into custody.

But their detention was immediately appealed by defense lawyers, and they were released, allowing Navalny to take part in the Moscow mayoral elections Sept. 8, when he placed second with 27 percent of the vote.

That election showing may have helped increase Russians' familiarity with the anti-corruption campaigner. According to a new Levada Center poll, more than 50 percent of Russians now know who Navalny is.

Out of those who are aware of the opposition leader, 49 percent know about the case and 6 percent follow it closely, according to the survey, which was carried out in September among 1,600 Russians.

Seventy-nine percent of respondents knew about Navalny's election results in the Moscow mayoral race, while only 22 percent had heard of opposition politician Yevgeny Roizman, who won the mayoral vote in Yekaterinburg.

In March, only 35 percent of Russians knew who Navalny was, while a poll by the Russian Public Opinion Research Center in April showed that only 14 percent knew that he was a member of the opposition.

"Over 50 percent recognition is a fantastic success, bearing in mind that Navalny has become famous without having constant access to the television or large financial resources," said Leonid Gozman, head of the Perspektiva charity fund, Vedomosti reported.

No margin of error was given for the poll.

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