

Nationalists Apply to Rally on Nov. 4

By [The Moscow Times](#)

October 21, 2013

The  Moscow Times

Russian nationalists filed a petition Monday to hold a rally in Moscow's southeastern Lyublino district Nov. 4, when the country marks National Unity Day.

Organizers hope to draw 30,000 people to their annual Russian March, the leader of the nationalist group "Russians," Dmitry Dyomushkin, told Interfax. They will also file separate petitions for smaller gatherings in the city center, he said.

Dyomushkin said that 89 organizing committees were already planning small-scale events and that he expected 11 more to form soon.

The rallies would come just under a month after an anti-migrant riot in southern Moscow that was fueled in part by nationalist sentiments.

The 2012 Russian March gathered 6,000 people, according to police estimates, for an anti-Kremlin rally downtown on the banks of the Moscow River.

President Vladimir Putin, labeled as an “enemy” by speakers at last year's event, created National Unity Day in 2005 to replace Soviet-era celebrations of the Bolshevik Revolution. The day now commemorates the expulsion of Polish forces from Moscow in 1612, which was celebrated until the end of the Romanov dynasty.

Opposition leader Alexei Navalny attended earlier rallies, including the one held in 2011, much to the dismay of his liberal supporters. He did not speak and was not seen at the event last year, saying he had the flu, Grani.ru reported.

He now faces a difficult political choice of whether to attend this year's Russian March. In the wake of an anti-migrant riot in southern Moscow earlier this month, Navalny has detailed proposals for how to tighten what he calls insufficiently strict immigration legislation — suggesting that he is not backing down from his nationalist-leaning views.

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