

Muscovites Rally Against Demolition of Post-War Apartments

May 15, 2017



Pavel Golovkin / AP

More than 8,000 marched in the streets of Moscow Sunday to protest the demolition of the capital's four and five-story residential buildings.

Crowds gathered on Academic Sakharov Prospect to rally against the Moscow Mayor's flagship project, which would see more than 4,500 low-rise apartment blocks destroyed.

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pic.twitter.com/JP0RmVs2gG

— Grace Cuddihy (@GraceCuddihy) [May 14, 2017](#)

Officials estimated between 5,000 and 8,000 demonstrators participated in the rally, while activist group Beliy Schyotchik put the number at 20,000.

The protest was not linked to any political movement or party, despite that Russian presidential hopeful Alexei Navalny appeared in the crowds alongside his family. Navalny was later escorted away from the rally by the police, [the Meduza news site reported](#).

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at the anti-demolition rally yesterday. pic.twitter.com/YGzFpd8zaG

— Dasha Litvinova (@dashalitvinovv) [May 15, 2017](#)

Residents affected by the plans will be able to voice their opinions on the plans using the Moscow government's online web portal from May 15.

Moscow City Hall has pledged that buildings currently listed for demolition will only be destroyed if at least two-thirds of residents agree with the plans. Those who do not vote will automatically count as being in favor of demolition.

Residents who wish to vote will need to provide their passport data, SNILS number and utility bill information. The data will be verified online in a process lasting up to four days before the vote is formally registered.

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Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin announced in February that Moscow's remaining post-war, pre-fabricated apartments — affectionately known as *Khrushchevki* — would be demolished over the coming years.

He said that 1.6 million Muscovites lived in the low-rise buildings, which he described as "uncomfortable, largely dilapidated housing."

City Hall has pledged to rehouse residents affected by the plans, providing them with a new apartment "equal in size" to their former home. Sobyanin also announced on Friday that residents could opt for a [cash payment instead](#).

Many Muscovites have been quick to rally against plans, with some concerned that replacement apartments could be worth less than their original property.

Others are worried that developers will replace the buildings with high-rise apartment blocks in order to increase profits, overwhelming local infrastructure.

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