The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Over 1,000 Election Candidates Have Criminal Records, Media Reports

September 04, 2018



Sergei Kiselyov / Moskva News Agency

Nearly 1 out of every 50 candidates running in Russia's regional elections this weekend reportedly has a criminal record for theft, assault or hooliganism, according to an investigation by the RBC news website ahead of upcoming elections.

Voters go to the polls on Sept. 9 to vote for more than 3,700 regional and municipal representative positions. Observers expect a low turnout against a backdrop of unpopular government plans to raise the population's retirement age.

Almost 1,200 of the 52,200 candidates who filed paperwork to run in the election have a criminal record, the RBC news website reported Monday, citing election data.

Of the candidates with convictions, one in five were convicted for theft, and about one in 10 for various types of assault and hooliganism.

Some 62 percent of the candidates indicated in their filing forms that their records have been

expunged, while 17 percent said they have either been amnestied, pardoned or appealed their conviction. One in five did not indicate if their records were removed, RBC said.

Related article: Beaten Russian Election Observer Gets Political Asylum in U.S.

Russian law allows candidates with criminal convictions who have had their records expunged to run for office.

Of the political parties, 3.3 percent of the candidates put forward by the Communist Party and liberal Yabloko had past convictions, while 1.5 percent of the 27,000 candidates fielded by the ruling United Russia party have criminal convictions.

At least two candidates from the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) have 14 expunged convictions between them.

Independent candidates had the highest rate of past criminal records, at 4.6 percent.

Regional and municipal elections in 2017 showed a similar rate of candidate convictions, with 1.9 percent of the 55,300 people running having a record, RBC reported.

"If the conviction is expunged, I don't think that should be grounds for not being nominated," said Mikhail Yemelyanov, a senior member of A Just Russia member, to RBC.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/09/04/over-1000-elction-candidates-have-criminal-records-media-reports-a62761