

Opposition Columnist Joins List of Self-Exiled Russians

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Facebook

Prominent Russian opposition-leaning columnist Fyodor Krasheninnikov has joined a growing list of activists and political figures to leave the country in recent months amid what Kremlin critics call an intensifying crackdown on dissent.

Krasheninnikov [fled](#) Russia for neighboring Lithuania last August after being fined and then jailed for “disrespecting authorities” in his online posts criticizing the judicial system. He spent seven days under “administrative arrest” in July 2020 over his criticism of Russia’s constitutional changes that paved the way for President Vladimir Putin to stay in power until 2036.

Related article: [Kremlin Critic Dmitry Gudkov Flees to Ukraine](#)

“People close to me know and attentive observers have guessed that I’m not in Yekaterinburg,” Krasheninnikov [wrote](#) on Facebook, referring to his native city in Russia's

Urals region.

“The initial plan was a short-term departure to wait out increased interest in me from the police. Unfortunately, the situation developing in Russia in recent months hints that it’s not worth rushing home.”

Kremlin critics and rights activists say the authorities have been stifling dissent ahead of this September's parliamentary elections with raids and arrests of opposition politicians and activists.

Several opposition candidates have been forced off the ballot after Russia banned the jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny’s political and activist networks last month.

Russia has in recent weeks [blacklisted](#) other groups linked to exiled former tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky as “undesirable,” placing members at risk of up to six years in prison.

And a number of prominent opposition figures — including former lawmaker Dmitry Gudkov and close Navalny ally and former deputy minister [Vladimir Milov](#) — have left Russia for European cities this year due to pressure from authorities.

Krasheninnikov, who is a former columnist for the Vedomosti business daily and whose work has been published in The Moscow Times, said he plans to remain a Russian citizen and does not intend to apply for political asylum despite not planning to return anytime soon.

“To avoid ambiguity, I report that I currently live in Vilnius and I plan to stay here in the foreseeable future,” Krasheninnikov wrote.

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