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1.6K Ukraine War Veterans Nominated for Russia's 2025 Regional Elections

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Dmitry Belitsky / Moskva News Agency

More than 1,600 Russian soldiers who fought in Ukraine have been nominated as candidates in the 2025 regional and local elections, the Central Election Commission (CEC) said on Wednesday.

Almost 1,400 of them have been officially registered so far, the CEC said, without specifying party affiliations. In the 2024 elections, nearly all of the more than 300 veterans elected to office ran under the banner of the ruling United Russia party.

Since 2022, authorities have sought to place veterans into political office, a move seen as aimed at boosting support for United Russia and the war effort while rewarding soldiers for their service. Veterans have also run as candidates from the Communist Party, the nationalist Liberal Democratic Party and A Just Russia.

President Vladimir Putin has hailed veterans as Russia's "new elite," and in 2024, he launched the "Time of Heroes" training program, which prepares former soldiers for careers

in government.

This year's regional and local elections are set for mid-September. The CEC said over 1,000 veterans are running for local office in 67 regions. Nearly 350 are seeking seats in regional legislatures and city councils, while two are running for governor.

Next year, the Kremlin reportedly plans to place 100 veterans in the State Duma, which would make them account for more than one-fifth of the 450-member lower house and one-third of United Russia's ranks.

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