The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Leader of Yabloko's Sverdlovsk Region Branch Left Russia, Reports Say

September 09, 2026

Maxim Petlin. **@yabloko_press / Telegram**

The head of the Sverdlovsk regional chapter of the liberal Yabloko party has left Russia amid a growing number of arrests of other party members, local media reported Wednesday, just weeks before parliamentary elections are scheduled to be held.

Regional party chairman Maxim Petlin has not been seen in the capital city Yekaterinburg for "several months," anonymous sources told the news outlet 66.ru. It was not immediately clear when he left Russia or where he is currently located.

Petlin later told the newspaper Kommersant that his lawyer advised him not to comment on reports of his departure "for the safety of my family and myself."

In June, the politician withdrew his candidacy in this month's State Duma elections due to reported pressure from law enforcement authorities, including short-term detentions and police searches at his home.

Related article: Moscow Police Detain Yabloko Candidates Running in State Duma Elections

Yabloko is Russia's oldest liberal party and is the only registered party campaigning on a pro-peace platform. Several of its candidates have been disqualified from running in next week's elections over various violations.

On Monday, Sverdlovsk region police arrested at least six Yabloko members running for federal or regional office in connection with public displays of "extremist" symbols. The charges disqualify them from the upcoming elections.

Yabloko's Sverdlovsk regional chapter said Wednesday that Petlin was in communication with one of its arrested members.

Candidates of the party campaigning in single-member districts are still allowed to run for office after Russia's Supreme Court last month ruled to cancel the registration of Yabloko's federal slate of candidates for the State Duma.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2026/09/09/leader-of-yablokos-sverdlovsk-region-branch-left-russia-reports-say-a93670