



**OPEN RUSSIA**

**OPEN  
ELECTIONS**

**RUSSIAN ELECTIONS  
SEPTEMBER 18TH, 2016**

**CAMPAIGN SUMMARY**

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Open Russia Archive

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\* If you would like to download photographs in this campaign summary, please click [here](#). Please credit all photos "Open Russia Archive."







# Mikhail Khodorkovsky, founder of the Open Russia movement, talks about the Open Elections project and the September 18<sup>th</sup> parliamentary elections in Russia

## Why these elections are important

**“The upcoming Duma elections on September 18<sup>th</sup> are important for a number of reasons: they will show once again that Russia is a democracy in name only; that the Putin regime will do anything it can to obstruct the democratic process; and that the West should no longer accept such a situation where the possibility of serious conflict is daily increasing.”**

**“We know what instructions the Presidential Administration gave the governors all across Russia (it’s difficult to conceal something that has been sent to dozens of people). ‘No scandals, nothing that would render the elections unlawful – at the very least in the big cities.’”**

**“Putin has certainly not become a democrat. His new strategy of making these quasi-elections look like real ones is a deferred reaction to the 2011/12 protests, the result of a desire to avoid additional complications in relations with the West.”**

**“This is not yet a battle for power, nor any readiness on the part of Putin and the whole of the current elite to run free and fair elections and accept their results – it is merely a small tactical concession.”**

**“But even this gives us the chance to prepare ourselves for further steps: to offer society an alternative, in terms of both personnel and ideas, to give people a chance to engage in practical politics and a taste of success. Does the government understand this? Of course it does! It doesn’t have much wiggle room: either it has slowly to retreat under the pressure of non-violent protest, or it will have to instigate a crack-down, which will mean underground opposition, multiple casualties on both sides and the inevitable explosion.”**

**“The authoritarian regime will eventually fall because all such regimes do. But the longer it leads the country into a dead end, the longer and harder will it be for all of us to return from there, and the greater will be the cost for us and for our children.”**

## Why is Open Russia taking part in these quasi-elections?

**“Why then, if these elections are a fiction, is Open Russia taking part in them? For three reasons: we intend to demonstrate their fraudulence; we want to give young politicians a chance to present themselves to society, and to showcase alternative approaches to solving the country’s problems; finally, this will allow our members to gain political experience while waging a serious struggle against the regime.”**

**“The sensible way forward for the real opposition is to make use of all possible opportunities to demonstrate to society that there is an alternative – both human and ideological.”**

**“And, of course, to prepare this alternative using the young political activists whose age means that they will be ready to do battle for power when the regime falls, which it will – inevitably. They are not saddled with a trail of corruption scandals and dirty laundry leading back to their ‘Kremlin Daddies.’”**

**“From this point of view, we at Open Russia support all the democratic forces, which are putting their money on new faces, and their candidates. After all, the key question at the present stage is not who will get through (or rather, who will be allowed through, if anyone is), but how many new supporters we can gain.”**



“Training alternative personnel is now more important than anything else. This is true both from the point of view of professionalism and ideological robustness on key issues (including a willingness to compromise) and of being familiar to the voters.”

**“I see my personal role less as a fight for the presidency and more as the need to help a new generation of Russian democratic activists to enter the political limelight.”**

“At Open Russia we are embarking on this political season as a group of people who think alike. We know the risks and are under no illusion that we have any chance of gaining power after these ‘non-elections for a non-Duma.’”

“We are people whose views, age groups and biographies are very different, each bringing something of our own to the movement – reputation, hard work or resources. We are doing this because we realise that what unites us is much more substantial than our differences.”

“In any case, whether we win or lose, we will find new supporters and will help our fellow citizens in solving at least a tiny part of their pressing problems. People are already listening to us, to our team and our voters.”

**“Together, we can make democratic change happen.”**

## Looking ahead

**“We know this regime won’t last forever.** It’s even less stable than its Soviet predecessors, revolving as it does around an individual whose paranoia will only increase, and whose age is guaranteed to cause problems.”

“We all understand the possible mechanisms of regime change: the voluntary relinquishing of power (as in the case of Franco or after a palace coup); non-violent protests (colour revolutions); and armed uprisings (1917). Any evolutionary transformation of the regime is unlikely to be feasible for personal reasons (Putin doesn’t believe anyone any more).”

**“In any case, regime change, whenever and however it comes about, will necessitate a transition to fair elections; this transition must be preceded by the formation of independent political parties and the enabling of free election campaigning, which is impossible under current laws and enforcement practices. In other words, the reform of the political system must pave the way for free elections, rather than arise in consequence of the latter.”**

“Essentially, my colleagues and I are assembling a team in accordance with the goals of the transition period.”

**“Now we are setting ourselves a new goal, but this time we are doing it together.”**

## What next after the elections?

“Now we are setting ourselves a new goal, but this time we are doing it together. We want to help our fellow citizens answer the question “If not Putin, then who?” We are convinced that there is nothing worse than a government, which cannot be voted out. This kind of power is a synonym for corruption, bad governance, and a state, which, though cruel, is weak and has no basis in law. Russia in the 21<sup>st</sup> century deserves a different kind of destiny.”

“To make this change, we are announcing our new project “Вместо Путина (“After Putin”) which will introduce new political faces – potential candidates for the post of president of Russia. We are sick of our unchanging government and pseudo-opposition. We can already see that we are many, so we will be able to effect the necessary changes.”



“We still have time to find new people. I am not planning on putting myself forward, but am always willing to back democratic candidates in Russia when needed.”

“That’s our goal: we will introduce new people, so that, when the regime does change, which will happen sooner or later, there will be a choice: who can we trust to rule Russia; and stop the frantic attempts to solve the problem of who could rule Russia instead of Putin. I find this a very strange question in a country with 140 million people – I should think we could find a million people to replace him ...”

All quotations by Mikhail Khodorkovsky taken from the following:

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/replacing-putin/>

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/the-results-of-our-strategy-of-non-violent-protest/>

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/what-unites-us-is-much-more-substantial-than-our-differences/>







# Open Elections

The official presentation of the Open Elections project took place in Moscow on 1 June.

19 of the 24 original candidates chosen by Open Russia to support, have been officially registered; of which 18 are standing as candidates for the State Duma; and 1 for the St Petersburg Legislative Assembly. They come from 12 regions, all over Russia – from St Petersburg in the West, from Irkutsk in the East, and Dagestan in the South.

## Choosing the candidates

"It was quite simple [how we chose the candidates]. The contestants were asked to record a three-minute clip setting out their position for a notional TV channel. Elections are about communicating with the voters. If you can get your point of view over to the voter, you'll win," says Timur Valeyev, head of the Open Elections project.

The winners were selected on a vote from a jury made up of the founder of Open Russia, Mikhail Khodorkovsky, the Open Russia coordinator Vladimir Kara-Murza, businessman Yevgeny Chichvarkin, writer Lyudmila Ulitskaya, *Novaya Gazeta* editor-in-chief Dmitry Muratov, and Higher School of Economics professor Nikolai Petrov.

"Various criteria were used to select the candidates, most importantly age – under 45 –" says Valeyev. "Ours is first and foremost an educational project, so we operated on the principle that anyone who hadn't made a career for himself in politics by the age of 45 would be unlikely to be able to learn how to do so. The next criterion related to experience in the public and political arenas, and in standing up for the interests of Russian citizens. Our candidates can hold any political view – they can even oppose us, but they must agree with us on key points such as the supremacy of the law, free and fair elections and a regular change of government effected through elections."

## Real candidates, quasi-elections

On election day, the Open Elections team will send observers to polling stations where our candidates are registered; to guard against, and publicise any interference in the electoral process.

During the four months of the campaign, candidates being supported by Open Russia and the Open Elections project have been given strategic, information and legal support. Specialists have helped them build an effective campaign, collect necessary signatures, create a professional staff, and attract like-minded volunteers. This activity has helped to equalise the prospects of opposition candidates, who are up against the entrenched advantages of the ruling party.

The majority of our candidates have been registered. Does this mean that we can describe these elections as "free, and fair and transparent" as the Kremlin claims? Absolutely not. The Kremlin made a deliberate decision to make these elections as invisible as possible, and to show the public that they are "free and fair."

*"We know what instructions the Presidential Administration gave the governors all across Russia (it's difficult to conceal something that has been sent to dozens of people). 'No scandals, nothing that would render the elections unlawful – at the very least in the big cities.'" Mikhail Khodorkovsky*

The Kremlin, afraid of a repeat of the mass protests following the last elections, has deliberately allowed a limited number of Open Russia candidates to register, primarily for show, not as a sincere change of heart about the need for a functioning and responsible democracy. That said, we have achieved a lot – achievements we intend to build on – but many obstacles have been put in our way.



*Open Russia candidates in Moscow on June 1*

## Democracy in action

*"The aim of the Open Elections project is to help a new generation of Russian democratic activists to enter the political limelight." Mikhail Khodorkovsky*

The Open Elections project is primarily a capacity building exercise. It is about finding, educating and preparing our candidates for a career that will change Russia's future. It is about education, showing that the European path of development is the right way forward for the country; and that it really is possible.

In only 4 months of campaigning:

***Open Russia candidates have printed and distributed more than 6.5 million newspapers***

Open Elections currently has six media outlets officially registered, including the journal *VVP [Putin]* and the *Alternative*, and five newspapers, which will continue working with us after the elections.

In some regions the Open Russia candidates' newspapers were the only independent media, as most of the local press usually belongs to the regional government. The feedback was good: readers have been writing to candidates and ringing them up with requests for help dealing with one or other problem in their homes, apartment blocks or cities. This has meant that often the newspapers grew in size with every issue.

***Open Russia volunteers have made more than 400,000 telephone calls***



We have made telephone calls and run surveys to establish the main problems in a given district, thus gaining a better and more precise idea of what is important to people and what is bothering them. The candidates' election programmes were based on data derived from these phone calls and surveys.

### ***Open Russia candidates have held over 8000 events with voters***

Our candidates have done something that in Russia is nothing less than extraordinary: they have actively engaged in grass roots democracy – going out to meet the voters, to listen to them, to do what they can to sort out their problems, to present their vision of an alternative Russia.

These meetings have usually taken the form of small gatherings, with volunteers positioned in the information kiosks nearby, and handing out newspapers. Candidates have held meetings with voters in parks and the courtyards of apartment buildings.



*Open Russia candidates take a boat trip down the Moscow River, before the announcement of their candidacy*

### ***Open Russia candidates gained thousands of signatures from voters***

Collecting signatures is an established way of demonstrating that a prospective candidate has a minimum threshold of support. But in Russia, collecting signatures is used as a pretext for denying registration to opposition candidates. Many procedural obstacles have been put in the way of our candidates.

Our five candidates for the St Petersburg Legislative Assembly all needed a required number of signatures to be registered, and indeed they collected the number that was required, but sometimes even this was not enough to get them on the ballot paper – only 1 of the 5 candidates made it.

Due to electoral rules, it was generally thought not possible for an Open Russia candidate to gain the needed number of approved signatures. But, against the odds, Maria Baronova, an independent candidate standing for the State Duma, was registered when, in just one month, she collected over 15,000 signatures in her support, which passed the requirements of the Electoral Commission. Moscow's central administrative district (CAD) is considered one of the most difficult in which to run a campaign to collect signatures, and no one before Baronova had managed to collect so many signatures in the city, and certainly not in the CAD.

Mikhail Khodorkovsky said of this achievement: "In a constituency with 500,000 residents, it might seem no big deal to collect 15,000 signatures. But it should not be forgotten that at the outset, very few people would have been able to tell you who the candidate was, her clear stance as an opponent of the regime and representative of Khodorkovsky (the bete noire of the propaganda machine), add in the fact that it was summer, and that Muscovites have an inbuilt unwillingness to hand over personal details from their passports to unknown people."

### *Open Russia candidates became increasingly visible*

One of the goals of the campaign was to raise public awareness of the candidates. When they started, they were not known in their respective regions.

Throughout the campaign, media monitoring has shown that the candidates' visibility and the number of times they were quoted in the press increased by a factor of approximately 2-3 over the eight months of work. The latest survey, commissioned from Levada Center, revealed that Maria Baronova, for example, had increased her recognition factor among the electorate from 7% to 26%.

### *Open Russia candidates have produced 15 draft laws*

These draft laws relate to Russia's current most pressing problems – health, education, housing and utilities and prices in the sector, roads etc.

### *A great deal of work was done to respond to voters' needs in the constituencies*

**Olga Zhakova** in Irkutsk managed to get a family who had completely lost hope, moved from a condemned local authority dwelling into a new flat

**Marina Belova** is restoring a village in the Tver region as part of the "Russian Renaissance" project

**Ilya Novikov** from Kazan and **Aleksandr Kunilovsky** from Tyumen are doing battle with the lawlessness in the housing and utilities sector

**Kirill Nikolenko** from Vladimir is working for the dismissal of corrupt local officials

**Andrei Lukin** from Almetyevsk (Tatarstan), **Egor Savin** from Novosibirsk and **Vladislav Khodakovsky** from Voronezh are demanding that the local authorities repair the roads

**Mikhail Vasilyev** from Irkutsk is working energetically for improvements in local transport.

### *Open Russia University launched an online elections course*

In support of our candidates, and to educate the public at large, Open Russia's educational project Open Russia University launched a special [online course](#) dedicated to the parliamentary elections in Russia. The aim of the course was to educate its students about the main problems of today's civic awareness, and to provide a practical guidance for those who decided to participate in the elections as activists or observers.



## Bureaucracy in action

*“Things are so tightly controlled that even a mouse couldn’t sneak past. So there’s plenty of scope [for the Kremlin] to find a middle path between free and fair elections and totally rigged ones.”*  
*Mikhail Khodorkovsky*

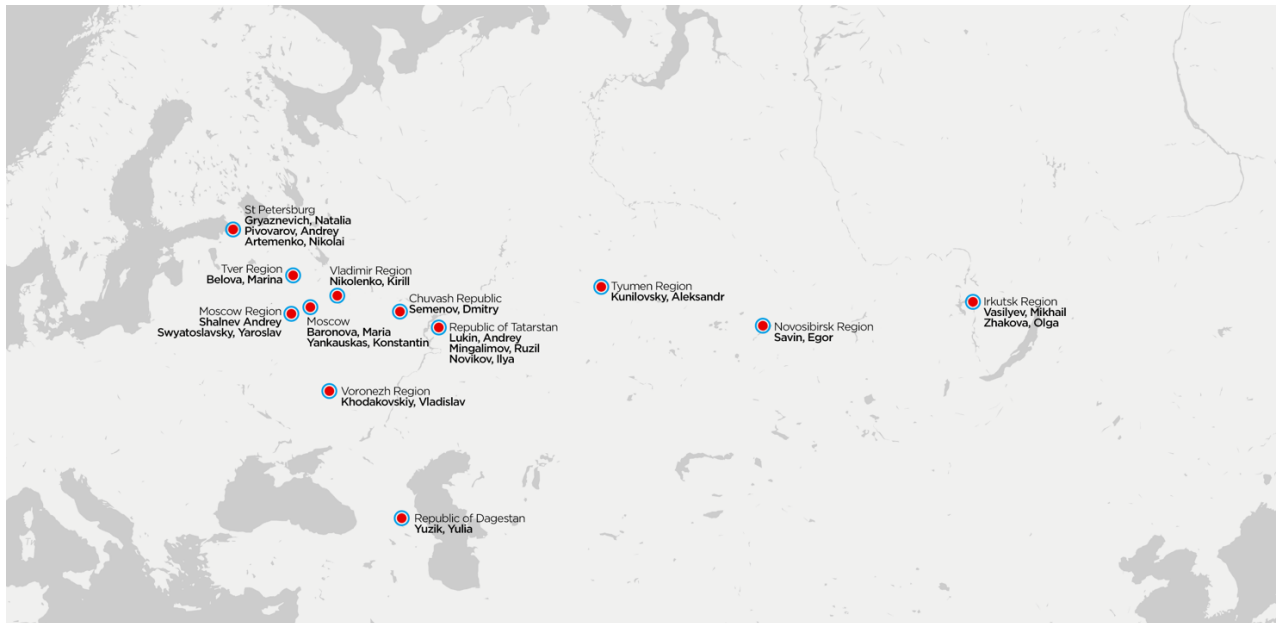
Throughout this campaign, candidates being supported by Open Russia have been harried and hassled by central and local authority bureaucracy, police and security services. It is as if the Kremlin gave democracy with one hand, and then - frightened at what it had done - took it away with the other.

Please see the candidates’ pages for details of the obstacles they have faced.

# OUR CANDIDATES



*Open Russia candidates standing inside the building of the State Duma*



*Map shows the location of Open Russia's registered candidates, spread across 12 regions*

If you would like to find out more about our candidates' campaigns, or if you would like to speak to any of the candidates, please contact [pr-ov@openrussia.org](mailto:pr-ov@openrussia.org)



# Maria Baronova

<https://baronova2016.ru/>

32 years old

Living in Moscow

Coordinator for Open Russia's human rights division

**Standing in:** Single-member constituency No. 208 (Moscow Central Administrative District and Lefortovo region).

*"I am standing for election because we need new politicians who are independent of the political elite to tackle the issues confronting our country. The State Duma needs people who can represent the interests of the voters, and not those of top officials."*

**Education:** Moscow State University, Faculty of Chemistry.

Born in Moscow. 2004-201: Junior research assistant at the Institute of New Carbon Materials and Technologies (INUMiT), conducting carbon fibre research; subsequently worked for chemical distributors supplying laboratory equipment and materials.

2011: Assistant to State Duma deputy Ilya Ponomaryov, and soon afterwards started to work in journalism, contributing to *Afisha*, *Novoe Vremya* (*The New Times*), and other publications. Co-presented a science show on the TV channel Dozhd ('Rain').

2014: Joined Mikhail Khodorkovsky's Open Russia movement. As head of the movement's human rights division, was instrumental in providing legal support in the Svetlana Davydova case, as well as that of Andrey Pivovarov, and the *Tannhäuser* case, amongst others.

Has a son.

**Languages:** English (fluent)

**Political Views:** Liberal

**Platform:**

1. Health
2. Free-market economics
3. Security
4. Urban life - regulation of properties and the provision of housing and public utilities

**Campaign History:**

13 August 2016: Registered as an official candidate after collecting 15,000 signatures, notwithstanding many bureaucratic obstacles.

For more on Maria Baronova and her campaign, please see:

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/who-will-muscovites-be-voting-for/>

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/the-results-of-our-strategy-of-non-violent-protest/>

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/sign-here-please/>



# Marina Belova

<https://belova2016.ru/>

44 years old

Living in Tver

Entrepreneur, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the "MAMA" Tver Regional Charitable Foundation for the Protection of Motherhood and Childhood

**Standing in:** Trans-Volga voting district, Tver

*"I want every father to have a job and a decent wage in his home country, every mother to have the opportunity to devote herself fully to her family and children, every child to have timely access to decent health care and education, and for all mother-and-child social safety nets to exist not only in word, but in deed!"*

**Education:** Tomsk Polytechnical Institute, department of Transport and Oil and Gas Storage; law faculty of Natalya Nesterova University (unfinished higher degree)



Born in Torzhok, Tver Region. Secretary of the Komsomol Committee at school, for two years. Goes to work as a clerk at the Torzhok City People's Court, where she continues her Komsomol work, becoming Secretary of the Court Komsomol Committee. At the same time she does public work for the City Komsomol Committee. In the 90s she starts a business, which she is running to this day.

Since her law student days, has worked(s) as a defence lawyer in civil law cases. For many years she does charity and political work. In 2015, she works for an NGO addressing problems caused by substandard work in the public housing sector.

Has two sons.

**Political views:** Supports the idea of a strong state governed by the rule of law.

## **Platform:**

1. Mother-and-child protection
2. Healthcare
3. Development of surrounding areas

## **Campaign history:**

1 July: Launched a project to restore a village in Tver Region as part of the "Russian Renaissance" project.

4 August: Registered as an official candidate

As part of the "Renaissance in Russia" project, a roundtable discussion was planned, for heads of districts and villages in the Tver region, as well as for Tver journalists. The local authority issued a boycott, as a result of which, no one came to the roundtable, neither district heads nor journalists, although many of them confirmed. Marina signed a distribution agreement with the Russian Post Office to distribute a campaign newspaper called "Perspective" throughout the region, with a circulation of 130,000 copies. On the 4th day of distribution, Belova was told that at a local post office all copies of her newspaper were being collected and recounted, for them to be sent back to the main post office, as ordered by the chief of the district post office. Soon, all local post offices had been ordered to do the same. Only after Marina's representative told them that a court action would be launched, did the central office of the Russian Post say that the situation was a misunderstanding, and distributed the newspapers. It is impossible to check whether all the copies have been distributed.

Marina Belova's street posters have been often damaged, while posters of the candidates from the parties in power, which are hanging next to hers, have been untouched.



# Natalia Gryaznevich

<https://nataliagraz.ru>

27 years old

Living in St Petersburg

Teacher

**Standing in:** Northern voting district No. 213, St Petersburg

*"I'm standing in the State Duma elections so I can help build the Russia we all want to live in – an open Russia, and a prosperous one! A Russia where everyone will have the opportunity to fulfil themselves."*

**Education:** St Petersburg State University, Faculty of Philology.

Born in 1989 into a Leningrad family of teachers. Graduates with honours from the Philological Faculty of SPSU (Scandinavian Studies). Works in the Danish General Consulate in St Peterburg.

In 2014, elected co-chair and executive director of the St Petersburg branch of PARNAS.

Natalia has overseen the writing by an expert panel of a report entitled "7 Questions for the Governor of St Petersburg," an investigation of keys areas of the life of the city, and an appraisal of the work of Governor Georgy Poltavchenko. She heads the "Stop Tariff!" campaign for transparent fares on public transport and has co-authored a fare transparency bill. She is nationally ranked in orienteering (Candidate for Master of Sport).

**Languages:** English (fluent), Danish (fluent)

**Political views:** Liberal

**Platform:**

1. Education
2. Healthcare
3. Transparent and controllable fares

**Campaign history:**

29 July: Registered as an official candidate

Throughout the campaign, the administration of the Vyborg district of St Petersburg has repeatedly refused Natalia Gryaznevich's requests to put up campaign stands, and hold campaign events on the streets of the district, for which Natalia is standing. In total, Natalia submitted over 70 requests for campaign activities to the administration, all of which have been refused.

There has been a wide variety of reasons that were given: at the exact requested time and place, another event has already been agreed (after checking at the appointed hour, it turned out that no such events took place); another reason for refusal was that placement of campaign stands would be interfering with pedestrians passing, but at the same time, the stands of United Russia, positioned in the same place, have not been refused.

Many of Natalia Gryaznevich's campaign posters and billboards have been defaced.

To find out more about Natalia Gryaznevich and her campaign, please see:

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/state-duma-elections-2016-the-open-russia-candidates/>

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/a-stress-test-in-st-petersburg/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-37351481>



# Vladislav Khodakovsky

<https://Khodakovsky.ru>

32 years old

Living in Voronezh

Software consultant at Atos. Co-chairman of the Voronezh branch of the Solidarity movement. Member of the regional council of the Democratic Choice party. Member of the movement Against Nickel Mining in Chernozemye.

**Standing in:** Anninsky voting district No.89, Voronezh

*"I'm standing for election to change the world that surrounds us."*

**Education:** Voronezh State Pedagogical University, Faculty of History.

Worked as a volunteer at the Ravensbrück National Memorial (Germany) on several occasions.

In his fifth year of university, he embarked upon a training programme at Siemens Training Centre, on completion of which, in 2007, he became a software consultant in the company's IT department.

He has been an active participant in the region's political life since 2010 – the year he joined the Solidarity movement. In 2011, he co-organised the anti-government protests in Voronezh.

Between 2012 and 2015, he served as co-chair of the Voronezh regional branch of Democratic Choice, and is currently a member of the party's Regional Council.

Since 2012, he has taken an active part in protests and signature collections aimed at preventing the production and refining of nickel in Voronezh Oblast.

In 2015, he ran for the Voronezh City Duma in a single-mandate constituency, garnering 3.11% of the vote.

Vladislav is currently involved in a "Roads Survey" project, its primary objective being to monitor the quality of road repairs.

**Languages:** German (fluent)

**Political views:** Liberal

**Platform:**

1. Education
2. Ecology
3. Healthcare

**Campaign history:**

July 27: Registered as an official candidate.

To find out more about Vladislav Khodakovsky and his campaign, please see:

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/over-50-small-farming-enterprises-have-recently-gone-bankrupt/>

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/the-campaign-trail/>





# Aleksandr Kunilovsky

<https://kunilovsky.ru/>

35 years old

Living in Tyumen

Economist, Chairman of Tyumen regional division of Progress Party

**Standing in:** Single-mandate voting district, Tyumen

*"I am standing for election to the State Duma because I believe that a system which allows a government to be voted out of power will lead to the well-being of our country and will bring down the level of corruption."*

**Education:** Tyumen University, Faculty of Economics

Born and brought up in Tyumen. At school interested in economics, and receives a professional education. Initially works with bank credits, then concentrates on business consultancy. Works with public housing sector management companies, which gives him an insight into housing problems. In his spare time he translates articles by Adam Hartung on successful corporate strategies. Active in the democratic movement from his student days. During the presidential election of 2012 he coordinates the volunteers of the Citizen Observer project in Tyumen.

He works with the public pressure group "New Tyumen," to address the problems of improvements to city streets and parks, to correct the shoddy work of contractors working on local authority contracts. "New Tyumen" has managed to get a city portal set up so that people can get in touch with the authorities.

Since 2014, chair of the Progress Party regional branch.

Married, three children

**Languages:** English (good)

**Political views:** Liberal

**Platform:**

1. Economic growth
2. Tackling corruption
3. Urban environment

**Campaign history:**

26 July: Registered as an official candidate

9 August: Filed a complaint with the Tyumen Electoral Commission after accusations that his leaflets contained commercial advertising and images of persons not participating in the election campaign.

30 August: Denied access to a recording of a debate, when live on air he mentioned a question put by voters about the partiality of the governor.

31 August: An attempt is made to seize copies of his campaign newspaper with no explanation.

Aleksandr prepared 80,000 copies, which detailed local corruption schemes. The police have also banned the second issue of the newspaper.

Aleksandr has also instigated a case against the governor of the region, which the Investigation Committee must verify, but is then likely to initiate a criminal case against Kunilovsky, if they find the allegations not to their liking. Kunilovsky is under constant surveillance.

To find out more about Aleksandr Kunilovsky and his campaign, please see:

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/where-does-the-money-go/>

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/open-russia-candidate-in-tyumen-arrested-has-newspapers-confiscated/>



# Andrey Lukin

<https://komandart.ru/andrey-lukin/>

41 years old

Living in Almetyevsk, Tatarstan

Entrepreneur. Member of the coordinating council of the Truckers Association

**Standing in:** Almetyevsky voting district No.30, Aznakaevsky, Almetyevsky, Bavlinsky, Bugulminsky, Leninogorsky, Muslymovsky, Sarmanovsky, Utazinsky municipal areas of Tatarstan

*"I am standing for election because I am concerned about the country in which my children will live, and what we will leave behind for our grandchildren."*

**Education:** Kazan Federal University, Faculty of Ecology.

After eight years of schooling in Almetyevsk, in 1989 he joined Almetyevneft [oil company] as an operator, repairing underground wells. At the same time he continued to study, and having graduated from evening school, enrolled at the extramural faculty of Kazan Federal University, specialising in Ecology.

Since 2011, a private entrepreneur working in cargo transportation. He is a member of the coordinating council of the Truckers Association, playing an active part in the recent truckers' protests against the introduction of toll roads in Russia. At present he is taking the government to task over the quality of road surfaces.

**Political views:** Social democrat

**Platform:**

1. Taxes
2. Social policy
3. Reform of the road sector

**Campaign history:**

29 July: Registered as an official candidate.





# Ruzil Mingalimov

<https://komandart.ru/mingalimov/>

31 years old,

Living in Naberezhnye Chelny, Tatarstan

United Russia council deputy in Naberezhnye Chelny

**Standing in:** Naberezhnochelninsky voting district No. 29, Tatarstan

*"I'm standing in the elections because I want to inspire confidence in the younger generation. Everyone should believe in themselves and in their own aptitudes, and everyone must assume the mantle of responsibility."*

**Education:** Ulyanov-Lenin Kazan State University, Faculty of Journalism; and in law from Kazan Federal University.

Born 1985 in Naberezhnye Chelny. Aged 18, begins presenting a youth show on Kunel, a Tatar-language radio station. Spends five years working as a technician while completing his course of studies; subsequently becomes an engineer at the KSU IT centre in Naberezhnye Chelny.

2009, becomes manager of KSU Journalism Faculty's radio studio.

2011, becomes a news presenter on Chelny TV station.

2013 becomes head of the television and radio studio within the Department of Mass Communications of Kazan Federal University.

2015, elected to the city council in Naberezhnye Chelny (representing United Russia), where he focuses on ethnic issues, education and culture; engages with young people and promotes amateur sport.

2016, expelled from United Russia for working with Open Russia.

Married, one son, one daughter.

**Languages:** English (good)

**Political views:** Social democrat

**Platform:**

1. Transparent government
2. Environment and health
3. Sport

**Campaign history:**

25 July: Registered as an official candidate

City council member Ruzil Mingalimov is the only representative of United Russia to take part in the Open Elections project. On learning that Mingalimov was going to the polls with the support of Open Russia, the United Russia Federal Council expelled him for "discrediting" the party, which led to the television and radio company Chelny TV declining to extend his contract, despite his many years there as a presenter. He was also threatened with dismissal from his teaching post at the Naberezhnye Chelny Institute at Kazan Federal University.

To find out more about Ruzil Mingalimov and his campaign, please see:

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/and-so-were-off/>



# Kirill Nikolenko

27 years old

Born in Moscow, living in Vladimir since 2006

Historian, political analyst

**Standing in:** Suzdalsky single voting district No.80 (Vladimir Region)

*"I'm standing for election because, not being an outsider bureaucrat, I have experience of defending the interests of the people living in the Vladimir region."*

**Education:** Graduated in 2006 from the history faculty of Vladimir State University for the Humanities, and has a research degree from the Institute of Russian History of the Russian Academy of Sciences in 2014.

Kirill is the author of two monographs and twelve scholarly publications on the ideology and practice of the Communist Party, modern Russian parliamentarianism, and the Kuril Islands dispute. He is a member of the Russian Political Science Association and the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences.

Socio-politically active since he was a schoolboy. At 17, became assistant to a State Duma deputy, before taking on the role of deputy chair of the Vladimir Region Youth Parliament the following year. He was also involved in the administration of the regional branch of the Communist Party.

Together with a group of fellow-thinkers, he organised the mass community campaign A Centre for All, as well as the Vladimir Public Assembly, both of which have been working to defend Vladimirites' interests, endeavouring, for example, to prevent Vladimir's Bolshaya Moskovskaya Street from being closed to transport (2014), and campaigning to preserve a large green space next to the regional administration building (2015).

**Languages:** English (good)

**Political views:** Socialist.

**Platform:**

1. Transparent administration of the region, without outsider bureaucrats
2. A debt-free region
3. Local autonomy
4. A variety of quality tertiary education options

**Campaign history:**

July 29: Registered as an official candidate

August 20: Detained at Vladimir train station due to a BOLO alert.

Printing works and campaign materials distribution companies refused to print Nikolenko's banners, which proclaimed that the region's governor must be a local politician, and that uncomfortable gas engine buses must leave Vladimir's streets. Banners have not only been tampered with but stolen.

A company that placed candidate ads on the sides of buses during previous election campaigns has refused to do so for Nikolenko.

To find out more about Kirill Nikolenko and his campaign, please see:

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/bathroom-accessories/>





# Ilya Novikov

<https://komandart.ru/novikov/>

42 years old

Living in Kazan

Businessman, PARNAS member, chairman of the board of the public organisation “Public Housing Monitor” in Tatarstan

**Standing in:** Volga single-mandate voting district No.26, Republic of Tatarstan

*“I went into politics, and am standing for the State Duma because I want to stop officials stealing. The taxes I pay should be put to good use, rather than for war or for buying foreign property. I want the president and the government to listen to citizens’ opinions, the country’s laws to be enforced and everyone to be equal before the law.”*

**Education:** Tupolev Aviation Institute, Faculty of Construction Engineering; “Link” International Business School.



2011: Observer at State Duma election. After the 2012 presidential election, together with the coalition “For honest elections,” succeeds in bringing charges of vote rigging against 18 electoral commissioners, who are subsequently removed from their posts.

As chair of “Public Housing Monitor” and director of an independent management organisation, knows what legal initiatives are needed to reform public services to bring them up to date and ensure they are not corrupt.

2012: At a by-election for deputies to the State Council of Tatarstan, stands for the Kukumorsk single-mandate voting district as a member of PARNAS. He does not have time or enough resources to prepare properly for the campaign, but is still able to win a good level of support for a liberal party candidate standing in a rural area.

2014: Stands in the Gorkinsky single-mandate voting district in Kazan as a Yabloko candidate in the regular election to the State Council. During the campaign he puts together a strong group of supporters, visits the whole constituency on foot, holding meetings with voters in the courtyards of their apartment buildings. He comes second to the United Russia candidate.

This year he plans to build on his success and to win at the State Duma election.

**Languages:** German (basic)

**Political views:** Liberal democrat

## **Platform:**

1. Housing and communal services
2. Inter-budget relations
3. Green Kazan

## **Campaign history:**

July 26: Registered as an official candidate

August 18: Filed a complaint with the Central Electoral Commission of Russia seeking to bring back TV debates for State Duma candidates from single-mandate voting districts, after they were barred from taking part in them.

# Andrey Pivovarov

<https://andrey-pivovarov.ru>

34 years old

Living in St Petersburg

Politician, economist

**Standing in:** Constituency No. 214 (Krasnogvardeisky and Kalininsky districts of St Petersburg).

*"I am running as a candidate because there have to be independent politicians with their own opinions and positions in government. People capable of putting forward their own ideas, rather than just pushing buttons."*

**Education:** Graduated from Faculty of Economics, St Petersburg State University. Special subject, "Mathematical methods in economics."

Born in Leningrad. Active in Russia's political life from the age of 15. One of the founders and coordinators of the Petersburg movement Oborona [Rn Defence], known for the use of political satire at its rallies.

In 2007, becomes head of the St Petersburg branch of the Russian Popular Democratic Union Party.

In 2010, takes part in setting up PARNAS and becomes the co-chair of the Petersburg branch. In 2012 elected to the Coordinating Council of the opposition.

Wide-ranging experience of working in business, finance and management. In 2010 sets up his own brewing company.

Married, becomes a father two weeks before the election.

**Languages:** English (basic)

**Political views:** Liberal democrat

## **Platform:**

1. Economics, and support for business
2. Medicine
3. Complex approach to urban development

## **Campaign history:**

June 28: Registered as an official candidate

April 19: Accused of hacking a closed database, denies any wrongdoing. His supporters are sure that the case is entirely politically motivated and aimed at preventing our candidate from taking part in the election.

July 22: Problems with the administrations of the Vyborg and Kirov districts of the city arise from the very the outset of the campaign. Small gatherings are banned; the candidate is prevented in every possible way from collecting necessary signatures; threats made to hand volunteers over to police.

August 24: Andrey Pivovarov and Vladimir Kara-Murza, federal coordinator of the Open Russia, deputy chair of PARNAS and assistant to a State Duma deputy, detained and taken to police station No. 66, accused of holding an unsanctioned meeting, though some hours before the meeting Andrey Pivovarov had received oral consent from the district administration. Andrey a registered candidate, and his detention without the agreement of the public prosecutor is unlawful.

For more on Andrey Pivovarov and his campaign, please see:

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/in-support-of-andrei-pivovarov/>

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/andrey-pivovarov-released-on-bail/>

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/hassle-on-the-hustings-in-st-petersburg/>

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/free-and-fair-elections-so-they-said/>



# Egor Savin

<https://egorsavin.ru>

35 years old

Living in Novosibirsk

Leader of the Novosibirsk branch of RPR-PARNAS, entrepreneur

**Standing in:** Iskitimsky voting district No. 137 (Pervomaysky and Soviet Districts of Novosibirsk; Berdsk; Iskitim; Bagansky, Iskitimsky, Karasuksy, Kochkovsky, Krasnozersky, Novosibirsky, Ordynsky and Suzunsky Districts, Novosibirsk Region).

*"I'm standing for election because I have kids, and it matters to me what sort of Russia they'll be living in."*

**Education:** Graduated in biomedical physics and administration from Novosibirsk State University.

In 2007, worked as an observer in the State Duma elections, marking the beginning of his social activism. In 2008, became head of Solidarity's Novosibirsk branch. Egor is father to three children; when he discovered that there was a catastrophic shortage of places in kindergartens, he successfully campaigned for the construction of new kindergartens in Berdsk and Novosibirsk Region. In 2010-2011, helped the residents of Berd village in Iskitimsky District to hold on to pastureland that the administration had been trying to sell off. Joined forces with Berdsk residents to campaign (successfully) for the repair of the town's road surfaces.

In 2013, opened a citizens' rights office to help Berdsk residents deal with the inertia of the authorities. In 2015, stood as a PARNAS candidate in the Novosibirsk Region Legislative Assembly elections, and performed well, securing 20% of the vote – which, however, proved insufficient for a seat in the Regional Duma.

Married with three children.

**Languages:** English (fluent)

**Political views:** Liberal

**Platform:**

1. Roads
2. War on corruption
3. Taxes to the regions

**Campaign history:**

February 8: Registered as an official candidate

In April, police, working in conjunction with TV channel LifeNews, searched Egor Savin's office in Berdsk and found leaflets featuring images of swastikas which, according to Savin, had been planted there in advance.

August 1: Novosibirsk Region police initiated administrative proceedings against Savin.

Unidentified individuals created a fake account in his support and populated it with illegal images. A criminal case was launched under Article 20.3 of the Code of Administrative Violations of Law (propaganda or public display of Nazi paraphernalia or symbols).

To find out more about Egor Savin and his campaign, please see:

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/the-kremlin-really-doesnt-like-democracy/>





# Dmitry Semenov

<https://semenov2016.ru>

26 years old

Living in Cheboksary

Journalist, leader of the Solidarity movement in Chuvashia

Standing in: Kanashsky single-member constituency No. 37 (Kalininsky area of Cheboksary, Kanash, Novocheboksarsk, east Chuvashia).

*"I am standing for election because it pains me to see what those crooks have done to my country."*

**Education:** Graduated from the History and Geography Faculty of Chuvashia State University.

Born in Cheboksary, Chuvash Republic. After university, called up for national service, which he spent in the internal security forces. After military discharge, started working as a correspondent for the Cheboksary office of local online newspaper *Pravda PFO*.

First took an interest in politics at high school. Aged 21, was one of the founders of the Chuvashia branch of the Solidarity social movement and is now on the movement's national political council. Involved in municipal issues for the Tsivilsk region of Chuvashia, such as improving infrastructure, renovating the hospital, and systematizing household waste removal.

**Political Views:** Liberal

**Platform:**

1. Education
2. Public health
3. Road maintenance

**Campaign History:**

July 29: Registered as an official candidate

August 2016: prevented by Novocheboksarsk police from staging a legal campaign activity, pre-agreed with all the relevant authorities – setting up a stand to display printed campaign material.

August 13: At a public demonstration against the illegal alcohol trade, a cameraman and one campaigner received head injuries, while Semenov had a bottle filled with liquid thrown at him.

August 30: A female campaigner in Semenov's team was attacked with a knife. The attacker said that he didn't like the campaigner eliciting complaints since this was disrespectful to the leader of Tsivilsk's municipal authorities.

For more on Dmitry Semenov and his campaign, please see:

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/the-big-pension-freeze/>



# Andrey Shalnev

<http://shalnev.org>

28 years old

Living in Pushkino, Moscow Region  
Economist, Pushkino City Council Deputy  
**Standing in:** Sergiev-Posad voting district No. 125 (Korolyov, Krasnoarmeysk, Pushkino, Sergiev-Posad, Moscow Region northeast).

*"I'm standing for election because this is an opportunity to offer society alternative ways of solving problems, and to propose a new and constructive agenda."*

**Education:** Faculty of Economics and Foreign Relations at Moscow State Forestry University.

Andrey was born in Pushkino, Moscow Region. After completing his studies, he worked as a researcher at the Forestry Research Institute's Laboratory for Economic Research.

In 2009, he joined the Libertarian Party of Russia and was elected chairman of its Federal Committee two years later. He also coordinates the so-called "Free People's Forums" –educational and outreach events held throughout Russia.

Andrey developed an interest in public life while still at school, and, aged 16, helped to distribute newspapers during the election campaign of a Pushkino District Council candidate. Ten years later, in September 2014, he himself was elected to the city's Council of Deputies. He plays an active role in the work of the Budget Committee and the Social Affairs Committee.

**Political views:** Libertarian

**Platform:**

1. Housing. Housing services.
2. Local self-government.
3. Taxes

**Campaign history:**

July 29: Registered as an official candidate

July 29: Despite having no formal grounds to do so, the administration refused to greenlight three "cubes" (campaign stands), with a Mr A.V. Suvorov, responsible for civil defence and emergency situations in Sergiev Posad, hinting that the OMON riot police would get involved if the stands went up.

Personnel from United Russia's campaign HQ in Korolyov have been trying to disrupt Andrey Shalnev's campaign, enlisting the help of National Liberation activists. They began blocking Shalnev's "cubes" and intimidating members of his campaign team.

August 8: Members of the campaign team were approached by four young men who proceeded to tear down their banners, demanding that they surrender their campaign materials and threatening them with violence. They refused to comply, triggering a violent altercation; one member of the campaign team had his mobile phone camera smashed during the fight, while another suffered a broken tooth. 400 campaign leaflets and four banners were stolen, the assailants fleeing the scene in a car.

August 11: Further violence ensued when two campaign team members were insulted and physically attacked by four assailants, who seized their campaign materials.

To find out more about Andrey Shalnev and his campaign, please see:

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/standing-up-to-the-bureaucrats/>



# Yaroslav Swyatoslavsky

23 years old

Living in Moscow

Athlete, editor of Forbes Journal, marketing consultant

**Standing in:** 122nd Odintsovo single-mandate voting district (Vlasikha, Zvenigorod, Krasnoznamensk, Molodyozhni urban district; Mozhaiski, Naro-Fominski, Odintsovo, Ruzski municipal districts).

*"I'm standing for election to fight for the rights of citizens with impaired mobility, to make sport accessible for all, and to set up institutions and organisations for the integration of people with disabilities into society and sport, both amateur and professional."*

**Education:** In 2011, Yaroslav enrolled in a distance-learning management programme at the National Technological Research University (MISIS).

Has been working as news editor at Forbes Russia since March 2012.

Yaroslav completed the half-iron distance event of the IronStar 113

triathlon in 2015. He is the Russian cycling champion among athletes

with impaired mobility; in 2016, he won the individual time trial at the Russian Cycling Championships.

He's also a motivational speaker, a social activist, a Wings for Life ambassador, and an organiser of socio-educational initiatives.

**Languages:** English (basic)

**Political views:** Democratic

**Platform:**

1. Quality of life – Integrated development of population centres
2. Ecology
3. Science

**Campaign history:**

July 29: Registered as an official candidate.





# Mikhail Vasilyev

<https://vasiliev2016.ru/>

40 years old

Living in Irkutsk

Researcher at the Siberian department of the Energy Systems Institute (Russian Academy of Sciences)

**Standing in:** Shelekhovskiy constituency No. 95 (Sverdlovsk district of Irkutsk, Tulun, Cheremkhovo, western part of Irkutsk Region).

*"I am standing because I want politics to turn towards the people."*

**Education:** Graduated in 1997 from Irkutsk State Technical University as an electrical engineer.

Born in Irkutsk. Has worked for 20 years in the Melentyev Institute of Energy Systems (Russian Academy of Sciences). In 2002, gained his PhD in Technical Sciences. Author and co-author of 38 scientific works. He is interested in the results and side effects of state regulation in the power industry.

Since 2009 has been organising protests against increases in duty on foreign cars. Co-chair and council member, subsequently chair, of the Irkutsk regional branch of PARNAS. In 2014, took second place in a single mandate constituency in elections to the Irkutsk Duma. He is actively engaged in territorial self-governance initiatives, and is working to improve local transport.

Married, with a daughter

**Political views:** Liberal

**Platform:**

1. Regions
2. Economy
3. Public transport

**Campaign history:**

29 June: Registered as an official candidate

19 August: A [spurious] claim lodged against Vasilyev relating to his alleged ownership of a flat in Moscow.



# Konstantin Yankauskas

<https://yankauskas.ru>

29 years old

Living in Moscow

Municipal deputy for the Moscow district of Zyuzino, researcher at the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow State University

**Standing in:** Cheryomushkinsky single-mandate voting district No. 290, Moscow (Akademichesky, Lomonosovsky, Gagarinsky, Obruchevsky districts of Moscow, Tyoply Stan, Konkovo, Zyuzino, Cheryomushky).

*"I'm standing for election because I love my city and my country. I think we need new leaders – leaders who'll make Moscow a more liveable city, and the country more prosperous."*

**Education:** Graduated in 2008 from Moscow State University.

Born 1986 in Moscow. 2008, started work at the Institute of Market Problems (Russian Academy of Sciences). He is the author and co-author of fifteen academic papers on the problems of state corporations, and the development of integration processes across post-Soviet space.

Aged 21, he became a city activist, taking part in campaigns against the destruction of the Bitsevsky forest, and for the protection of the historical centre of Moscow. When regional council elections were announced in 2012, he decided to take part, and was elected to Zyuzino council.

Konstantin is the co-founder of the district organisation HQ Zyuzino, whose objective is to unite the region's non-apathetic citizens. As part of his work for HQ Zyuzino, he has contributed to the development of alternative projects for the provision of public amenities in the district, and is also involved with the publication of independent district newspaper I live in Zyuzino.

Konstantin is married.

**Languages:** English (good)

**Political views:** Liberal

**Platform:**

1. Healthcare
2. Housing
3. Education and science

**Campaign history:**

July 29: Registered as an official candidate

August 13: Arrested together with six other people during a meeting with hunger-strikers on a state housing waiting list outside a United Russia office, despite the fact that State Duma candidates can be detained only with the permission of the Prosecutor General.

September 1: Clean City [Chisty Gorod] personnel ripped down an ad for Yankauskas and replaced it with United Russia campaign material featuring the party's candidate Dr Morozov (incidents of this kind have occurred in several districts).

To find out more about Konstantin Yankauskas and his campaign, please see:

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/an-unsanctioned-protest-action/>

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/pre-election-rigging/>

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/yankauskas-the-kind-of-parliamentary-representative-we-need/>



# Yulia Yuzik

<https://juliayuzik.ru>

35 years old

Living in Moscow

Writer, journalist

**Standing in:** Southern single-member constituency No. 12 (Buynaksk and south-west region of the Republic of Dagestan).

*"I am standing for election because I want to be part of the changes that will soon take place in Russia. I want to be one of those who helps to bring reforms and prosperity to the Caucasus."*

**Education:** Enrolled in the Faculty of Journalism at Rostov State University, but soon left for Moscow on the invitation of *Komsomolskaya Pravda's* head office.

Born in Donetsk, Rostov Region. At the age of 17, was already being published in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*. Has devoted entire career to the study of the Caucasus region. In 2001, at the height of the Second Chechen War, went on her first assignment to Chechnya. From 2004, worked for *Russkii Newsweek*. Her work has been published in *Time*, *Foreign Policy*, *GQ*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and other publications. Currently works as an analyst on the Caspian and Caucasus regions. Her first book, *Nevesty Allakha (Brides of Allah)*, was published in 2003 and has appeared in 10 countries. Her second, *Beslanskii slovar (Beslan Dictionary)* was based on her experiences in Ossetia following the hostage crisis in the school at Beslan, and was published in four countries. Has recently completed work on her third book.

Is involved with several social projects in the Caucasus. In November 2013 she organised a series of Iranian cultural events in Dagestan, in collaboration with the Iranian embassy. Has four children.

**Political Views:** Supports the idea of a strong state governed by the rule of law.

## Platform:

1. Investment and infrastructure
2. Enforcement of competition law; democratization of institutions of power
3. Agriculture

## Campaign History:

August 1: Registered as an official candidate.

To find out more about Yulia Yuzik and her campaign, please see:

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/administrative-resources-conquer-all/>





# Olga Zhakova

<https://zhakova.ru>

32 years old

Living in Irkutsk  
Lawyer, publisher

**Standing in:** Angarsk single mandate constituency no. 94 (Leninsky district of Irkutsk, Angarsk, Usolye-Sibirskyoe, northern part of Irkutsk Region).

*"I am putting myself forward as a candidate because I am sure that the Irkutsk regions deserves better: a clean Lake Baikal, forests out of danger, a diversified economy and fair payment for our natural resources."*

**Education:** Irkutsk State University where she graduated from the law faculty and, subsequently, the faculty of consumer services and advertising, specialising in tourism.

Born in Angarsk (Irkutsk Region) in 1983. Started working at 13, washing floors after school, and then working in a shop, and as an administrator and office manager. In 2007, invited to work for a charitable fund in Irkutsk's Leninsky district, and ends up chairing it. Currently preparing patents for engineering projects.

In 2009, becomes an Irkutsk Duma deputy for the party A Just Russia. Her work is mainly concerned with helping the socially disadvantaged, developing education and sport infrastructure. Her struggle against corruption gets her blacklisted by the regional governor and prevents her from being elected to the next Duma session.

Married, with a son

**Languages:** English (good)

**Political views:** Social democrat

**Platform:**

1. Ecology
2. Education
3. Social policy

**Campaign history:**

August 29: Registered as an official candidate

Olga Zhakova was the first Open Russia candidate who belonged to a parliamentary party, "A Just Russia," but as soon as they found out that she would be running with support from Mikhail Khodorkovsky, she was retroactively expelled from the party. Police, investigators and prosecutors regularly bombard her office with administrative holdups, and staff are struggling to find time to fend them off. Cars of the State Department Ministry of Internal Affairs are often shadowing Zhakova, which her office recorded, and sent the complaint to the FSB. There have been outgoing nuisance calls made to residents supposedly on Zhakova's behalf, and information published alleging bribery and so forth.

To find out more about Olga Zhakova and her campaign, please see:

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/100000-for-every-russian-and-a-share-of-oil-revenues/>



# Nikolai Artemenko

<https://artemenko2016.ru/>

26 years old

Living in St Petersburg

History teacher, member of the Federal Council of the Vesna [Spring] movement

**Standing in:** 7th voting district, Krasnogvardeysky District, St Petersburg

*"I'm standing for election because Petersburg needs change, new ideas and new solutions to old problems. I don't want to entrust our city to people for whom winning seats in parliament is more important than finding answers to problems that could well be resolved. I have the support of Open Russia because our views coincide."*

**Education:** Masters in philology from St Petersburg State University.

Born 1989 in Novokuznetsk (Kemerovo Region) into a family of engineers, moved to St Petersburg at 17. In 2010, successfully agitated against a hike in canteen prices at St Petersburg State University. He subsequently established and chaired the St Petersburg branch of the Russian Students Union, securing free student entry to the city's museums, and preventing some 300 expulsion attempts.

In 2011, stood as a Yabloko candidate in the Petersburg Legislative Assembly elections, coming sixth overall. However, failed to gain a seat following a vote recount, the latter provoking accusations of electoral fraud from independent observers.

In 2012, dismissed from Yabloko for non-agreement with the leadership, before co-founding Vesna [Spring] the following year together with former Yabloko members. A youth democratic movement, Vesna combats corruption, coordinates educational forums and defends students' rights.

In 2014, Nikolai stood for the council of St Petersburg's Dekabristov Island voting district, representing the Civic Platform party, then headed by Mikhail Prokhorov. 20 candidates were competing for five seats. On election day he was initially in the top three, until a recount of early votes, which relegated him into sixth place.



**Languages:** English (fluent), French (fluent)

**Political views:** liberal

**Platform:**

1. Genuine representation
2. Infrastructure
3. Transport

**Campaign history:**

August 10: Registered as an official candidate

Throughout Artemenko's campaign, the administration of Krasnogvardeysky District has refused to greenlight meetings between his team and local residents, concocting false pretexts for not doing so (it has claimed, for example, that it lacks information on whether the meetings' organisers are Russian citizens).

For more on Nikolai Artemenko and his campaign, see:

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/putins-take-on-russian-history/>

# Lev Dmitriev

Unregistered Candidate.

33 years old

Living in St Petersburg

Project leader in a construction company, member of the political council of the Petersburg division of PARNAS

**Standing in:** 17<sup>th</sup> voting district, St Petersburg

*"I am standing for election to the St Petersburg Legislative Assembly as candidate for the 17<sup>th</sup> district, where Vitaly Milonov was elected in 2011, and is standing again. I want to solve the problems of people living in this district and in the city of St Petersburg. I want to see enshrined in law the right of the city's inhabitants to influence management companies and tariffs in the public housing sector. I want to give people a chance to control the development of the transport infrastructure and to see local control over the spending of the councils."*

**Education:** St Petersburg State University, faculty of philosophy and political science.



Born in 1982 in Leningrad. After school and university works in project billing and sales, gives training and management advice in construction and medicine. Currently project manager in road construction.

2010: Becomes a campaigner for the Petersburg Democratic Movement and a coordinator for "Strategy 31" in St Petersburg.

2011: Joins PARNAS, and organises public meetings, education and cultural events. Volunteers to collect humanitarian aid for victims of the Krymsk flood. Campaigns on ecological issues.

2014: Elected member of the political committee of PARNAS (St Petersburg branch).

At the municipal elections in the Krasnenkaya Rechka district defeats the United Russia candidate but the final result is affected by early voting, so the United Russia team wins.

**Political Views:** Liberal

The Territorial Electoral Commission made a decision not to accept signatures collected by Lev Dmitriev, and thus did not register his candidacy for the Legislative Assembly of St Petersburg.

We deny that the signatures were not valid, and have lodged an appeal.



# Daniil Ken

Unregistered Candidate.

27 years old

Living in St Petersburg

Psychologist, lecturer in social studies

**Standing in:** 5th voting district, Vyborg District, St Petersburg

*"I am standing for election because Petersburg needs politicians who will represent the interests of the people, rather than of the officials or their hangers-on. I know the problems of the local authorities, of schools and education, so I have something I can offer voters to solve these problems."*

**Education:** St Petersburg University, faculty of psychology.

Born and lives in St Petersburg. In 2010, after university starts work as a teacher and psychologist in School No. 344 of Nevsky District, St Petersburg.

2012: Starts taking an active part in the public and political life of the city.

2013: Joins PARNAS. Takes part in several electoral campaigns, supporting the democratic opposition, is an election observer and a member of the electoral commission. Stands as a candidate for the Svetlanovskoye council, is unlawfully refused registration and takes the electoral commission to court. He also represents other candidates in court, winning some of the trials in district and city courts.

2014: Is selected as independent candidate for the Morskoye Vorota council (Kirov District) in St Petersburg. He has a special interest in monitoring local authority state procurement, unmasking corruption in the municipality, and supporting citizen activists. As part of a pressure group manages to get the law on green spaces changed, and the dams of Kanonersky Island included in the list of green spaces.

2015: Co-authors paper "7 Questions for the Governor of St Petersburg" dealing with the city's most acute problems.

**Political Views:** Liberal

On August 9<sup>th</sup> Daniil Ken received a statement, with the results of the verification of voters' signatures, from the Electoral Commission. 216 signatures were deemed invalid (the maximum number of invalid signatures allowed is 119), and therefore Daniil was denied registration.

We deny that the signatures were not valid, and have lodged an appeal.



# Sergei Kuzin

Unregistered Candidate.

37 years old

Living in St Petersburg  
Economist

**Standing in:** Municipal district No.15, Shuvalov Ponds, for PARNAS, in single- mandate voting district No. 11, St Petersburg

*"I am standing for election because it's my country, my city. We have to live here and we should be able to decide what happens in our city."*

**Education:** St Petersburg University of Low Temperature and Food Technology.

After university serves in the army, in the Presidential Guard of Honour. Has worked successfully as an economist for more than ten years. Currently studying for a law degree.

2007: Starts working in politics as an active member of the protest movement. Takes part in public campaigns for the protection of green spaces, for the conservation of St Petersburg's historic centre.

His interest in civic affairs helps him to work successfully in monitoring the public housing service offered to inhabitants of some of the city's districts. Works closely with deputies to the St Petersburg Legislative Assembly, who help him to realise his civic initiatives.

Plans to continue looking after the interests of the city's inhabitants in any way possible. At the moment his main aim is to improve life in his constituency.

**Political Views:** Democrat

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of August, the Territorial Electoral Commission informed Sergei that they did not accept the signatures collected by him, and therefore declined his registration.

We deny that the signatures were not valid, and have lodged an appeal.



# Aleksandr Shurshev

Unregistered Candidate.

34 years old

Living in St Petersburg

Former deputy for Yekateringofsky District, member of the St Petersburg Public Monitoring Commission

**Standing in:** Voting Precinct No. 1, Admiralteisky District, St Petersburg

*"I'm standing for election because I want to make our power structures and decision-making mechanisms more transparent and open"*

**Education:** State University of Engineering and Economics (ENGECON), graduating in State and Municipal Government; currently studying Law at the Russian Legal Academy of the Ministry of Justice.

Born in Leningrad. His passion for politics began at school and determined his choice of university degree. "I wanted to understand how decisions are made in this country," he recalls.

2001: Joins Yabloko, heading the party's St Petersburg youth wing and serving as co-chairman of its regional branch.

2009: Elected to the municipal council of the Admiralteisky District, becoming the council's only independent deputy, and also its youngest. Areas of responsibility include housing and communal services, road safety and local area studies. On his initiative, District No. 6 is renamed Yekateringofsky, after one of the city's oldest parks.

2012: Asked to leave Yabloko, having said that he was unhappy with a number of decisions made by the party leadership.

2014: Stands in the municipal elections, loses to self-nominated candidates who do not conduct their own campaigns, and subsequently join United Russia. Secures evidence of vote-count fraud and files a lawsuit, together with local residents. The lawsuit is ongoing.

**Political views:** Social liberal

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of August, the Territorial Electoral Commission No.1 rejected all of the signatures collected on behalf of Shurshev, required for registration to run as a candidate for the Legislative Assembly of St Petersburg.

We deny that the signatures were not valid, and have lodged an appeal.

To find out more about Aleksandr Shurshev and his candidacy, please see:

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/honest-and-open-elections-in-st-petersburg/>

<http://www.khodorkovsky.com/dirty-tricks-in-st-petersburg/>



# Vladimir Zhilkin

Unregistered Candidate.

41 years old

Living in Tambov  
Lecturer, PhD candidate

**Standing in:** Rasskazov single-mandate voting district No. 178,  
Tambov

*"I am standing for election to the State Duma because I think that all people in my country should have equality of freedoms and rights. I support equality of opportunity and social support for those in need. I support the preservation of unique cultures and the idea of a state, which protects the interests of each of its citizens. People are tired of virtual reality and double standards. I should like to see a State Duma which represents the real interests of all citizens."*

**Education:** Tambov State University.

Born in 1974 in Tambov. Graduated from Derzhavin State University, Tambov, in socio-cultural studies. For twenty years teaches the humanities, and is director of the laboratory of applied cultural and media studies. Author and co-author of more than 150 scientific and academic publications, including six monographs and five textbooks.

Organiser of Tambov-Inform, the first news agency in the Tambov region.

2012: Becomes involved in ecological issues: giving citizens information on their rights, organising conferences with representatives of the regional and city councils. He considers that the active interest of the people in the city has forced the regional authorities to enter into negotiations with Gazprom to ensure that a dangerous gas pipe is taken outside the city of Tambov.

2015: Stands as a Just Russia candidate for the Tambov City Council, receiving 10.7% of the vote.

Married with two daughters.

**Political Views:** Social-Liberal

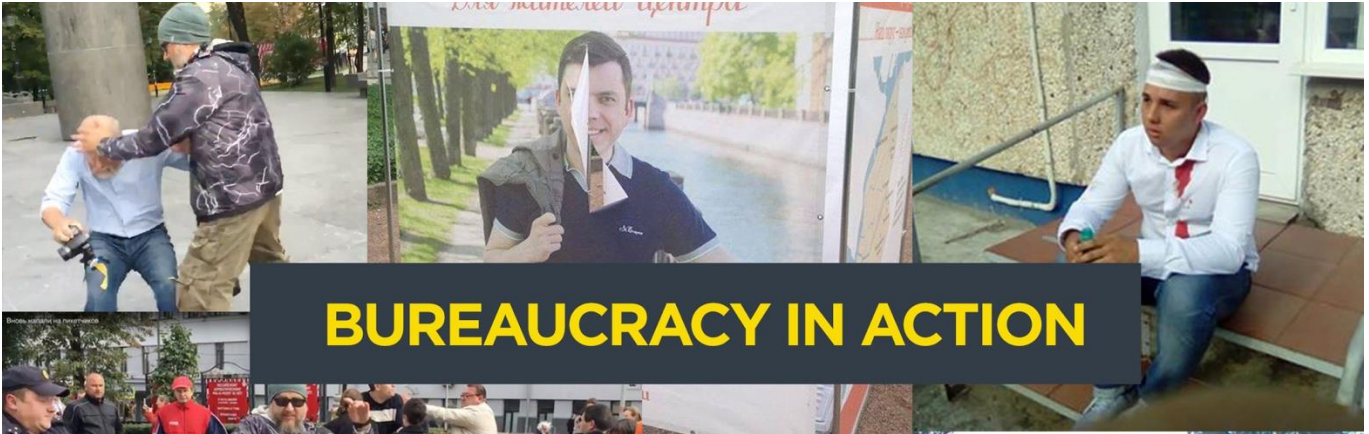
Usually, in politics, a political party member might be expelled for some misdemeanour or other. But in Tambov the situation is quite the opposite. Determined to stop Vladimir from campaigning as an Open Russia-supported candidate, the local branch of A Just Russia has been arguing that Vladimir Zhilkin had joined their party.

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of August, a city court sided with the Territorial Electoral Commission, to deny Vladimir registration as a candidate for the State Duma. The situation appears to be quite strange: documents were provided stating that Zhilkin joined the party on January 14, 2015, when in fact his registration card was actually established in 2012!

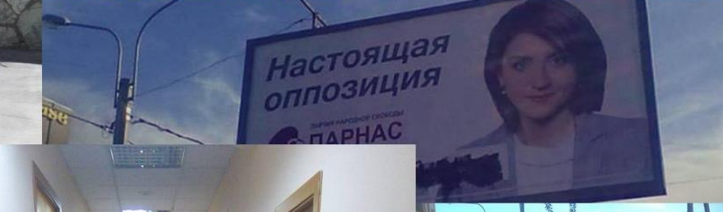
The court, for some reason, was not troubled by these contradictions; and has denied an examination of the clearly falsified documents.







# BUREAUCRACY IN ACTION



Open Russia Archive



# A Candidate's Story

## Standing up to the bureaucrats

*No matter what obstacles the Kremlin puts in our way, we can make change happen. Here's how.*



Andrey Shalnev

The problem of upgrading communal areas in Moscow Region is acute. Things are often so bad that locals have to hot-foot it through the yard to take refuge inside their flats. The notion of a livable urban environment is a dreamland for many. To tackle the problem, in 2015, Governor of Moscow Region Andrei Vorobyov adopted a law to give communal areas around Moscow a facelift. The “all-round urban improvement” plan comprises six main elements:

1. Children's soft-surface play areas
2. Asphalted passageways between apartment blocks
3. More parking spaces (if necessary)
4. On-site skips
5. Landscape gardening
6. And, last but not least, publicity stands for the governor's “Our Moscow Region!” programme.

Although decisions like this should not be top-down, the idea is commendable. Before, it was a case of “Let's build a playground, never mind the puddles and parked cars.” No one needs or wants a yard like that. All-round urban improvement aims to solve the problems of individual yards without padding out the budget, delivering a livable space as the end product. Unfortunately, the programme is not up to scratch at the local level.

***The first problem, as ever, is that those who belong to the old system don't grasp the concept of “all-round” improvement***

The first problem, as ever, is that those who belong to the old system don't grasp the concept of “all-round” improvement. Revamped communal yards are still a jumble of disparate elements. Forethought is an afterthought, so to speak. Officials focus on tapping the allocated funds, not on delivering comfort and convenience. They don't produce blueprints, don't plan ahead and, crucially, don't ask residents what they would like to see.

### On the fly

The construction team is basically handed a clean slate. They come, they see, and they pull out a list of works to be done. The layout is pretty much designed on the fly. And the inevitable result is a mass of iron atop a rubbery surface, totally missing the point of the makeover: to create a space that attracts people.



*Standing up to the bureaucrats*

It's a common problem for the region. In Korolyov, for instance, money is thrown at urban improvement, although you wouldn't know it. At local meetings I've been told of cases where people asked for a sports area, and were given a children's playground. In Sergiev Posad the problems run deeper. Only the centre of town offers a glimpse of any improvement; a short distance away from Red Army Avenue, the central thoroughfare, you won't see anything. Despite the tourist value of the centre, the city looks decidedly neglected.

***I've yet to encounter a strategic approach; instead, it's all about budget allocation.***

I've yet to encounter a strategic approach; instead, it's all about budget allocation. Every day I meet with residents in Korolyov and the districts of Pushkino and Sergiev Posad, where the communal yards are clearly divided into those that haven't had a makeover (which people want to see done) and those that have - which people want to see *undone*, citing noise and the risk of getting smacked in the face by a ball. It's no surprise that people become disillusioned and cynical after such "improvements."

That's the crux of the matter: taxpayers' money is allocated, but people end up dissatisfied. A different approach is needed. First, public meetings should be held for people to voice their opinions, followed by planning and approval of the project. And architects should be involved to make sure people get what they want.



## Maintenance

Once a new site is laid out, the local council basically forgets about it. Instead of ongoing maintenance, we get a complaints system.

The following is all too common: someone calls to report a broken slide; it can't be repaired so it's taken away and, hey presto, there's no slide. No one knows when it will be replaced because that requires money and budget adjustments. At best, a new slide might arrive the following year.

Issues like this also need a bit of forward planning. Experts and local residents need to be involved. And funds for basic repairs should be earmarked in advance.



*Talking with the community*

## Regional issues

These are not the only problems. All-round urban improvement assumes additional financing from the city budget and the Moscow Region budget. Pushkino's local council, including myself, thought long and hard about how best to allocate resources and decided to use city funds to pay for surfacing communal areas; and ask the regional authority to finance the paving of roads, driveway repairs and the construction of new parking spaces.

***The procedure for obtaining money from the regional authorities is quite opaque***

The procedure for obtaining money from the regional authorities is quite opaque. If a district has poor relations with the regional authority, the approval process can drag on for months. Sometimes a local paper might announce a new improvement project, but report in the same breath that the region is refusing to stump up the cash to lay asphalt. Often it's a fundamental issue. For example, at one particular yard in Pushkino the main



job was to install a storm-water drain. The city allocated money for the urban facelift, but the regional authority refused to pay for a drain, so the result will be an underwater yard.

## Daring to be different

Another problem is that yards and playgrounds tend to be bog-standard and rather boring. Why do they all have to look the same when in fact they are not?

In 2016, every local Pushkino deputy was allocated a million roubles to implement voters' requests. Our administrative unit is home to five deputies, and we decided to spend the money in a coordinated fashion. One-and-a-half million were to be allocated to the improvement of two communal areas outside the programme. I involved architects in the planning stage, and instead of standard plastic, we wanted the playgrounds, benches, etc. to be made of solid wood, like in Scandinavia – something that would transform the urban landscape. Naturally we discussed everything with the locals. They gave the thumbs-up, but didn't believe it would go ahead.

### *The bureaucrats are trying to get us to scrap the idea and go for a standard design*

The district administration said the project should be up and running by the end of September, but the bureaucrats are trying to get us to scrap the idea and go for a standard design, inventing a raft of pretexts as to why it can't be done. They want to put it all out to tender as a single lot, because a clause of the federal law on public procurements states that for children's playgrounds procurements should not be divided into multiple lots. This plays into the hands of large firms that mass-produce playground and communal area facilities. It is well known what people think of them and how long they tend to last.

My team and I were able to talk the pen-pushers round, and the plans we sketched out with local residents have been given the all-clear. My goal now is to launch two pilot projects in Pushkino to showcase different types of communal area. It will jolt people out of their slumber and encourage them to participate in improving their residential yards and amenities.

## Changes at the top

The first thing I intend to do at the federal level is propose changes to the above-mentioned law on public procurements. Second, I want to involve the architectural and town-planning community, and develop guidelines that could be applied to all municipalities in Moscow Region. "How can we solve the problem of children's playgrounds in the State Duma?" you might ask, but children's playgrounds are where the country's future engineers, doctors and teachers grow up. If the problem cannot be solved at the local and regional levels, we have to go federal.

Sure, people won't change overnight, but you have to start somewhere. I don't believe that officials want to do evil; it's just they've never been taught to do anything else. There needs to be a system for training specialists, as well as new laws to unlock people's creative potential.

*Andrey Shalnev is standing as a candidate for the Duma, in Sergiev Posad, Moscow Region; his candidacy is being supported by Open Russia.*

## Open Elections in the media

01.06.2016 - [Khodorkovsky submits candidates for elections to the state Duma](#)

25.07.2016 - [Finnish TV channel on Open Elections project](#)

23.08.2016 - [Putin's Election Grip Is So Tight Even His Nemesis Can Take Part](#)

07.09.2016 - [Russian Parliamentary Election: What to Expect](#)

13.09.2016 - [Russia opposition recalls protests before parliamentary vote](#)

14.09.2016 - [Natalia's struggle to be heard in Russian election](#)