

# Russian General Elections: Political Parties Overview

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March 15, 2018

Even if the election of Vladimir Putin is almost assured, it is important for Putin and Russia to have this several parties emerging and opposing in order to run for the Kremlin.

## The Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR)

Born just at the end of the USSR, the Liberal Democratic Party of Soviet Union had important internal conflict in order to designate the leader, at the end it was Jirinovski who won the game and he is still the chief of this movement. The modern LDPR, has been registered at the ministry of justice in 1992. Thanks to the participation of their leader at the first Russian election in 1991, the party had already a popularity, popularity that has been confirmed during votes at the Duma (national assembly) where the party in 1993, had 64 deputies and in 1995 he received 11.18% of votes. Permitting to appear to be one of the major party of modern Russia, close to communist parties. Unfortunately for the party, such dynamics on the legislative side has not be followed on presidential elections. Even today, according to last polls, the party is around 6% of intentions of vote.

The party has an ideology of empire, it wants the return of borders of 1977 in order to avoid an complete encirclement and to be enough powerful against any threats, considering that United States are the main enemy and be careful about China and the lack of population at the Far-East which could be a problem<sup>1</sup>.

Russia is here at the centre of their program, partisans of this party argue for the protection of Russian and the population. In order to do that, reinforcements of borders are a necessity, banning immigration for a moment (excepted for specialists) in order to protect Russians and their jobs. To protect Russia, the protection of Russia within its borders is an obligation, the Constitution and the administrative division of the country need to be change in order to avoid any thought of separatism. We have an important centralism of the policy,

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<sup>1</sup> <https://lenta.ru/lib/14160696/>

for the party, the Kremlin should have more power but with better elections, with the authorization of observers at each election. Of course, the reinforcement of the country pass by a better policy against the corruption at all level<sup>2</sup>.

On the social side, we have an important conservatism, the protection of the family, is central with the necessity to have a planification to avoid a demographic collapse, by reinforcing the State help toward family. It is follow by the protection of young people, helping them to found a job and the installation particularly at the far-east.

The economic program could be considered as liberalism without inequality, the goal is to avoid and limit the differences of income, with a minimum of 20 000 rubles per month and maximum 200 000 rubles. The first rule on the economy for the party is to protect the Russian economy and to decrease the level of poverty. For that, the party propose a stimulation of the economy through small firms and liberal professions. It advocates for the regulation of finance and bank in order to avoid future crisis. Also, the stop of privatization and the beginning of a new nationalization of industries is also important. The party wants to invest on sciences and industries rather than investments from abroad to help the country<sup>3</sup>

This party is a mix between socialism and the economic side and the conservatism on the social side.

#### All-Russia People.

It is the second national, populist party of this election. This party is also born during the 90's, promoted the necessity to have a reborn of the Russian nation. For the upcoming elections, the candidate is Sergey Baburin. The party argues for the cooperation and the unification of major ethnics groups of Russia in order to face threat, the Orthodox religion needs to be taken as a moral reference, the social justice will be implemented. On the economic side, projects are to have a minimum budget for arts, cultures, education, science, wealth; increasing the minimum income level. The party understands that they cannot be linked toward gas and oil production, the development of energy industry, aero spatial, armaments, raw industries is vital for the country. The party divides industrial properties, those with a strategic importance should be public when goods productions could be privatized. The agricultural sector should be protected and developed for the food security of the country.

The social program argues for a traditional family, where the woman is seen more as mother than a worker, and with a father," father, husband and master" who will control the

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<sup>2</sup> [https://ldpr.ru/party/Program\\_LDPR/](https://ldpr.ru/party/Program_LDPR/)

<sup>3</sup> [https://ldpr.ru/party/offer\\_ldpr/economy/](https://ldpr.ru/party/offer_ldpr/economy/)

family but with the obligation to protect the family. For young people, the principle of free education is an important in order to promote equality among people<sup>45</sup>

This part could be considered as the most nationalist and conservative among parties but it did not have a lot of support credited of only 0.4% of intentions of vote in February 2018<sup>6</sup>

### The Communist Parties.

For the election in 2018, we have two main parties, the communist party of communists of Russia and the communist party of the Russian federation.

The first one has been created in 2009, after the fusion of Communist Youth Union of Russia and All Russian Communist party of future joined. In 2016, they received 1.2% of votes at the Duma election and 3% at the regional election which is quite important for a new party.

The program follows more or less the Marxist doctrine, the removal of the State bourgeoisie is a necessity in order to protect the working class. The social revolution is a part of their program, which will be followed by a massive nationalization and collectivization of all Russian industries. The socialism will promote after sciences, education and equality which is the best way for the Humanity. The first goal, particularly with the election is to regroup all communist of Russia, in order to not be divided anymore<sup>7</sup>.

The second communist party, seems to be more pragmatic, started to have program according to national problem. The first goal of this party, if he had the Kremlin, is to fight the mafia-corruption system of Russia. The second will be establish again free education and hospitals in order to enhance the quality of life of their citizens, and reduce the taxation slowly, to exempt low classes to have taxes. They are not for the revolution, they ask for multiple reforms in order to transform this capitalist Russia toward a communist system. Nationalization and collectivization will be a slow process, an immediate shift could bring troubles within the country and destroyed the economy<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> <http://partiya-ros.ru/about-us.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://partiya-ros.ru/docs/programma.html>

<sup>6</sup> According to a poll for Arguementi I Fakti in February 2018 by BSOM-Sputnik

<sup>7</sup> <http://komros.info/english/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://kprf.ru/party/program>

## labloko

This party could be considered as a social-liberalist party. Created in 1993, just after the Coup d'Etat. He took the idea that the classical liberalism was not good for the country and advocates for Social liberalism, which will permit to have growth and wealth without a hard fracture on the social side. The main ideology is here to protect the citizen and to give liberty toward entrepreneurs without forgetting that Russia needs to have free education and hospitals. From 1993 to 2001, labloko was more a movement, a lobby, than a party but in 2001 he registered as a party in order to be a part of the presidential elections, considering that it is the only way to effectively fight corruption within the country. The party is not congealed on its position, leaders understands that their policy will depend on the context, Russian population can accept social cost at one moment but not at the other moment.

On elections, results of the party are mitigated, the beginning corroborated with the time of reforms in 1993 they obtained 7.86% for the Duma, important score for a period with a lack a mediatisation and finances. But the party has been also impacted by the ineffective Boris Eltsine reforms, and the fear of the word “liberal” by the Russian population. Also, the party faced Vladimir Putin, the president who stabilized the country where liberals’ ideas cannot. The party is very dependant of the context, we can maybe suppose if we have a real liberalization, maybe too violent of the economic side after 2018, the party might emerge again as an opponent of a massive liberalization<sup>9 10</sup>

For 2018, the founder Yavlinsky run for the presidency with a program centred on the fight against corruption and the necessity to protect individuals’ properties and initiatives. He particularly advocates for a better management of the Federal budget, the party highlighted that 32% of the budget is for security reasons (defence, police, justice), it could be better to reduce the size of this budget toward education, sciences and so on in order to improve the quality of life of Russians.

The goal of this party is to create a modern state. They do not argue for a democratic revolution, the party advocates for a pacific removal of the authoritarian regime by elections and the role of the party is to appear as a credible opponent. The creation of a modern Russia will be the creation of a democratic system that will permit to reinforce the country. Following this will of democracy, the development of human capital is also important for the country. First through health, the priority of Russia is to establish an important prevention programme in order to avoid people to be sick or too sick, by the development of medical exams for the population, by a better distribution of pharmaceuticals and better policy of prevention against the AIDS. Education is also important for the party; a massive privatization is not good and Russia needs to keep its level of alphabetization. On the economical side, as we said first, a better management of the budget will improve the quality of life of Russians, particularly if the budget focuses on education, sciences, wealth.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.yabloko.ru/about>

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.yabloko.ru/Elections/2003/History\\_Yabloko/index.html](http://www.yabloko.ru/Elections/2003/History_Yabloko/index.html)

The property and private initiatives need to be protected by the State. Such protections will permit to create a business-friendly environment for entrepreneurs and investors, which will permit for Russia to have a diversification of income which is a necessity for the country.[11]

On international affairs, the country claims for a decrease of tensions with European Union and United States but the country needs to appear as a protector of the sovereignty of Central Asian countries. The country needs also a better cooperation at the international level, and also with Europe. On the East of the country, Russia needs to balance the position of China which will come if Russia invests in Far-East territories and take care of ecological problems<sup>11</sup>.

As we said, it is very difficult for this party to appear as a credible opposition because of the lack of mediatisation and the fragmentation of the opposition for more populist opponent such as Navalny.

#### The Civic Initiative.

The surprise of this year came from Ksenia Sobchak, the candidate against all, who announced in October 2017 on Youtube platform, that she is a candidate for the Russian election of 2018. She is a TV star, daughter of the first elected mayor of Saint-Petersburg (mentor of Vladimir Putin).

The first will of Sobchak is to reform Russia in order to have a real separation of power, a real limitation of mandates, a legislation on security agencies. On the national elections, the goal is to simplify the process in order to be a candidate for an election, on the regional level, the parliament should have power to remove a governor. The main idea on the political sphere is to have efficient power and avoid corruptions, elected or nominated people might face the judgement of an assembly or the population. On the economic side the main idea is to have a better regulation, mainly on the protection of private properties and the necessity of the privatization of the country. The candidate also argued for a better transition of the economy for a green economy or at least more respectful of the environment. On the social side, education is a for the so-called Russian Paris Hilton, an important program too. Even if she argues to keep the tradition of Russian primary schools, some reforms in order to be in accordance with European level might be introduced and the limitation of universities is also a necessity in order to have a better quality of education<sup>12</sup>.

Most of the ideas could be welcome by some part of the society, this Russian upper middle-class from big cities could vote for Ksenia Sobchak, but because of her past, the rumour which says she is just a puppet of the Kremlin, could undermined the score at the election.

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<sup>11</sup> [https://www.yabloko.ru/program#\\_Toc459908182](https://www.yabloko.ru/program#_Toc459908182)

<sup>12</sup> <http://ksenia-sobchak.com/>



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### Party of Growth (ROCT)

The party is born in 2008, with three co-vice presidents with Boris Titov, Leonid Gosman and Georgy Bovt. Boris Titov is the candidate of 2018. The party considered itself right liberalism, which promotes competition, private properties and development. This political party, focuses his program on the liberalization and the modernization of the country by a needed competition, economically and politically. For him a political competition will bring better interests for the population. He wants a privatization of firms, an effective decentralization and does not focus on oil and gas. It is not a competition against Putin as he said but a competition against the economic policy of the Kremlin. He is the candidate of the business, as an evidence of this statute, he will be the mediator between Putin and some businessmen abroad. In fact, he argues that several businessmen want to come back in Russia but they fear sanctions. Titov tried to find a solution on it. He wants to create a dialogue between authorities and industrials. The logic is to decrease every tax, for consumptions and constructions which will permit for Russia people to invest. The goal of the State is not to have a competitive advantage but to manage everything in order for the people and firms to have a political advantage<sup>1314</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> <https://rost.ru/page/party-history>

<sup>14</sup> <http://roststrategy.ru/>