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Governor's elections in Russia 2015: results and lessons

On September 13, 2015 the Uniform voting day in 84 subjects of the Russian Federation took place and 10,7 thousand elections of different level, local referenda and votes on change of borders and transformation of municipalities were appointed. Voters of 21 Russian regions elected governors. According to the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation, on direct elections of heads of subjects of 27 political parties proposed 142 candidates from whom 98 people were registered. Competition on governor's elections averaged 4,5 candidates for one mandate.

Preparation for elections of 2015 wasn't followed by essential changes in electoral laws. Five times were brought in the basic law "About the Main Guarantees Selective Right of the Right for Participation in a Referendum of Citizens of the Russian Federation" of the amendment (and before elections of 2014 of 11 times). Amendments concerned toughening of rules (foreign citizens and stateless persons, and also NPO – "foreign agents" have no right to participate in any form in election campaigns and to influence them) and reductions of platforms of electoral fight (cancellation of direct governor's elections in three subjects and elections of heads of municipalities, mayors of the cities).

On July 17, 2015 at Corporate Moscow region university of "Sberbank" the first Deputy of the Chief of the Presidential Administration V. Volodin said in the speech interest of the Kremlin in honesty of regional elections-2015, supported the unlimited competition of candidates to unpredictable result not to allow desacralization of the power.

Decrease in level of a conflictness in political system, decrease in heat of political opposition, prevalence consensus the practician in party system, growth of loyalty of voters became one of characteristic features of last campaign. Here a certain correlation dependence with data of sociological polls on support by most of the population of the country leaders after carrying out the Winter Olympic Games in Sochi, returns of the Crimea to structure of Russia, and also in the conditions of external threats is observed (sanctions, the conflict in the southeast of Ukraine, etc.).

At the same time, it is possible to speak about existence of a problem of a latent protestnost of the Russian electorate which is capable to have an effect at adverse change of alignment of forces on elections and unsuccessful campaign of the authorities. It it is more or less expected it was shown in the Amur, Arkhangelsk and Irkutsk areas, and also in "silent" Mari El which was included quite unexpectedly into group of problem regions.

The cumulative appearance on governor's elections from the formal point of view was high – 51,2% that considerably surpasses an appearance indicator for 2012-14 (43,3%).

During governor's elections two noticeable poles - successful and unsuccessful governors were allocated. In general last elections became the important test of the governor's case for its popularity and administrative efficiency, and for the federal center – on productivity of its efforts on partial replacement of regional leaders.

Supporters of "United Russia" won elections in 20 regions of Russia and 3 members of this party were elected governors deputies of parliaments (in North Ossetia, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area – Yugra and the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Area).

The CPRF on governor's elections showed that it remains chief "supplier" of competitors to the acting heads that conducts to reproduction of the typical scenario of opposition of "party in power" and "the left opposition" and consolidation of electorate round these two poles. Results of two rounds of elections in the Irkutsk region where the communist S. Levchenko in the second round of vote received 56,39% of votes, and at S. Eroshchenko's ednorossovets - 41,46% were sensational. But the cumulative result of candidates of the CPRF still didn't exceed 10% (having made 9,7% that completely corresponds to result of 2012-14).

The LDPR and "Just Russia" could propose noticeable candidates in few places. It is interesting that by cumulative result Social Revolutionaries (3,7%) even bypassed LDPR (3,4%), but all the same these results are little significant. Moreover, they even fell in comparison with elections of 2012-14 (except a victory of the member of LDPR A. Ostrovsky in the Smolensk region), and it aggravated a problem of sense and nature of participation of these parties in governor's campaigns.

Thus, results of governor's elections of 2015 are ambiguous. If to speak about the Duma prospect, partly they can be extrapolated on elections in one-mandatory districts. Election campaign of 2015 ended, and it means that campaign for State Duma elections of 2016 already began.