

Omsk Voters Shun Mayoral Election

June 17, 2012

The  **Moscow Times**

Residents of the Siberian city of Omsk cast their votes in an early mayoral election Sunday that showed a remarkably low turnout.

As of 6 p.m., only 15.21 percent of registered voters had taken part in the election, United Russia said on its website. Turnout in the last election, in 2010, was 36.1 percent, and in 2005 — 33.57 percent.

No minimum turnout is required to validate the election, but a higher turnout would give legitimacy to the next mayor.

The low turnout can be partly explained by the summer season, when many residents of the resources-rich region's capital go to their dachas for the weekend.

Seven people were running for the post, including United Russia's Vyacheslav Dvorakovsky, Communist Party candidate Viktor Zharkov, Yan Zelinsky of the Liberal Democratic Party, Just Russia's Irina Averina and Alexander Korotkov, Yabloko's candidate and a former governor of the region.

The other two were independent candidates: Igor Antropov, director of the Mikroklimate servis enterprise, and Sergei Maslenkov, an unemployed man.

Omsk Mayor Viktor Shreider, a United Russia member, resigned earlier this year after he was elected to the State Duma in the December vote.

Moscow-based blogger and photographer Ilya Varlamov also considered campaigning but failed to get enough signatures to register.

United Russia collected less than 40 percent of the Omsk vote in December's Duma elections, one of the lowest among the regions, and less than the Communist Party.

The poor showing led to the ouster of Yeltsin-era Governor Leonid Polezhayev.

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