

Who will be Russia's next president?

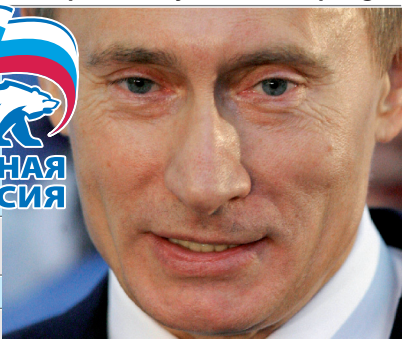
President Vladimir Putin's massive election victory – in which his *United Russia* party won 315 seats in the 450-seat State Duma – raises the question: who will run Russia after his presidency ends next spring?

■ **December 17:** United Russia will pick its candidate to replace Putin as president. **Putin could endorse multiple candidates – forcing vote to second round – to ensure successor remains dependent on his patronage**

■ **December 23:** Deadline for all parties to nominate candidates

■ **March 2:** Presidential election

■ **May 7:** New president inaugurated



Viktor Zubkov: Prime Minister, 66. Little-known associate from 1990s when he worked with Putin in St Petersburg mayor's office. Prime minister since September



Dmitry Medvedev: First Deputy Prime Minister, 41. Liberal-technocrat and Putin loyalist, chairman of Russian natural gas monopoly **Gazprom**



Sergei Ivanov: First Deputy Prime Minister, 54. Served with Putin in Soviet-era **KGB**. Former hawkish defence minister is potential presidential frontrunner