

Askar Akayevich Akayev



Passion or Profession: President

Period: 1944–

A physicist before entering politics, Akayev was a key reformist during the final years of the Soviet era. He was chosen as president by the Kyrgyz legislature in 1990 and ran unopposed in direct elections just prior to Kyrgyzstan's independence in 1991. Akayev was reelected in 1995 and 2000. In early 2005, independent and opposition candidates were prevented from running in parliamentary elections. Demonstrators demanded new elections and Akayev's resignation. When they took over government buildings, Akayev fled the country.