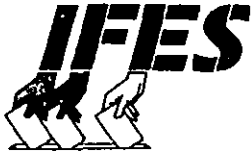


Date Printed: 04/23/2009

JTS Box Number: IFES_71
Tab Number: 123
Document Title: Election of the President of the Russian
President
Document Date: 1996
Document Country: Russia
Document Language: English
IFES ID: CE01670



* 7 B 9 0 3 D 9 A - 0 6 9 8 - 4 6 7 9 - 9 6 D B - 9 0 C C F 0 B B 1 C 4 6 *



International Foundation for Election Systems

1101 15th STREET, N.W. • THIRD FLOOR • WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005 • (202) 828-8507 • FAX (202) 452-0804

20 MOST ASKED QUESTIONS

Election of the President of the Russian Federation 16 June 1996

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. How many candidates were nominated and how many are on the ballot?	3
2. Who may nominate a candidate?	3
3. What are the steps in the nominating process?	4
4. Who are the candidates and by whom were they nominated?	4
5. What else will be voted on during these elections?	5
6. What are the electoral administrative units and how many polling stations will be established for the presidential election	5
7. How many voters will be eligible to vote in the election?	6
8. Who is responsible for the administration of the election?	6
9. Do candidates have any representation on the election commissions?	7
10. How are voter lists compiled?	7
11. What rules apply to the campaign activities of the candidates and how are their campaigns funded?	8
12. Who is allowed to be an observer and where may they observe?	9
13. What are the procedures at the polling stations?	9
14. Are there any special voter services outside regular voting at the polling site on election day?	10
15. When and where are the ballots counted?	11
16. How are results consolidated and reported?	12
17. What is the State Automated System? (SAS)	13
18. Is there a threshold turnout requirement for the election to be valid?	13
19. How is the winner of the election determined?	14
20. What happens if there is no winner declared based on the election returns?	14

1. How many candidates were nominated for the office of President and how many are on the ballot?

11 candidates were slated to appear on the ballot. However, a candidate may withdraw at any time before election day. As of 10 June 1996, one candidate (Aman Tuleyev) had withdrawn.

Should a candidate withdraw after the ballots are printed members of Polling Station Election Commissions will be instructed to mark through the name of the withdrawn candidate(s) on their ballots before voting begins on election day.

Originally, 78 applications were submitted but only 17 ultimately completed the process and submitted nominating petitions. Of the 17 candidates nominated, 8 were rejected by the Central Election Commission. In two of the cases brought before the Supreme Court the CEC ruling was overturned bringing the total number of successful candidates to 11.

2. Who may nominate a candidate?

Candidates may be nominated by electoral associations, electoral blocs and initiative voters' groups.

Electoral Association: A public association whose charter provides for participation in elections through the nomination of candidates and which was registered by the Ministry of Justice no less than 6 months prior to the announcement of the date of the election

Bloc: Formed by 2 or more electoral associations who join together to nominate a candidate for the election. Electoral blocs are registered by the Central Election Commission.

It is not required that a candidate nominated by an electoral association or bloc be a member of any association involved. An electoral association or bloc may only nominate one candidate.

Initiative Voters' Group: A citizen's groups of least 100 persons who applies to and is registered by the Central Election Commission. Once registered the initiative voters' group is eligible to nominate its candidate.

3. What are the steps in the nominating process?

- Electoral associations, blocs and initiative voters' groups initiate the process of nominating a candidate by holding their congresses or meetings at which they vote by secret ballot to select the candidate they choose to put forth.
- Each nominating group also appoints authorized representatives who will represent the group in all matters related to their participation in the election .
- The nominating organization submits appropriate documents to the Central Election Commission including information about its candidate, the list of their authorized representatives and their powers of attorney, and the minutes of the meeting at which they selected their candidates.
- Upon verification that the documents are in the proper order, the Central Election Commission registers the authorized representatives of the organization seeking to nominate a candidate.
- Immediately upon registration of the authorized representatives, a nominating organization may begin gathering signatures on a nominating petition. Each candidate must be supported by not less than 1,000,000 signatures of voters on officially authorized signature sheets. No more than 7% of the accepted signatures may come from a single Subject. Signatures must come from voters residing in at least 15 of the Russian Federation's 89 Subjects.
- Petitions must be submitted by 6 p.m. not later than 60 days before the election.
- The Central Election reviews each petition to ensure that it is in the proper order and that it contains the required number of valid signatures. When it is determined that the petition satisfies the legal requirements, the Central Election Commission registers the candidate and issues the appropriate certificate.
- Refusal of the Central Election Commission to register a candidate may be appealed to the Supreme Court. The case must be adjudicated within 3 days.

4. Who are the candidates and by whom were they nominated?

Of the 11 candidates slated to appear on the ballot 8 were nominated by initiative voters' groups. Two candidates were nominated by electoral associations. One candidate was nominated by both an initiative group and an electoral association. The law does not limit the

number of groups which may nominate the same candidate. Several candidates were nominated by more than one initiative voters' group. No blocs were formed for the purposes of nominating a candidate for the presidential election.

Candidates Nominated by Initiative Voters' Groups	Candidates Initiated by Electoral Associations
Vladimir Brintsalov Svatoslav Fyodorov Mikhail Gorbachev Alexander Lebed* Martin Shakkum Aman Tuleyev (Withdrawn) Yury Vlasov Boris Yeltsin Gennadi Zyuganov	Vladimir Zhirinovskiy Liberal Democratic Party of Russia Grigory Yavlinsky Yabloko Electoral Association *Alexander Lebed was also nominated by the Congress of Russian Communities Electoral Association

5. What else will be voted on during these elections?

In a few areas, Subject and local elections may be held simultaneously with the presidential election. However, in these instances candidates to be elected for regional and local offices will be on a separate ballot. The results of these local elections will be counted and reported separately.

6. What are the electoral administrative units and how many polling stations will be established for the presidential election?

There are 89 Subjects corresponding to the regional administrative units into which the Russian Federation is divided.

The Subjects have been organized into approximately 2700 Territories encompassing the various cities and raions.

Approximately 93,300 polling stations will be established for the presidential elections, each serving up to 3,000 voters. Special polling stations may be established in rest homes,

sanitariums, spas and other places of temporary residence, as well as in military sites in remote areas, polar stations, on navigating vessels and at diplomatic missions and consular offices outside the Federation. There are approximately 400 remote voting sites outside the Russian Federation.

7. How many voters will be eligible to vote in the 16 June 1996 presidential election?

Approximately 106.3 million voters will be eligible to participate in the election.

8. Who is responsible for the administration of the election of President of the Russian Federation?

Elections are administered by a hierarchy of Election Commissions appointed at the Central, Subject, Territorial and Polling Station levels.

The Central Election Commission (CEC): Established on a permanent basis and comprised of 15 members with deciding vote. Five members are appointed by State Duma (the parliamentary body's lower house); five are appointed by the Federation Council (the upper house whose members are the heads of the elected and executive bodies of the Subjects); and, five are appointed by the President.

Subject Election Commissions (SEC) direct and coordinate the elections within their boundaries and are the liaisons between the CEC and bodies of the state power within the Subjects. Their members who serve 4 year terms, are appointed by the elected and executive bodies of power within the Subject, based on proposals from public organizations, elected bodies of local governments, and citizens through their places of employment, service or study. The SECs decide on the number and location of the polling stations, print and distribute the ballots and monetary resources to the Territorial Commission and summarize voting results for the Subject as a whole.

Territorial Election Commissions (TEC) are appointed by the elected bodies of local governments and serve only for the period of the election. The TECs supervise, coordinate and provide technical and resource support to the Polling Station Election Commissions. They facilitate equal opportunities for all candidates for their campaign activities within the territory. Based on the protocols of results provided by each precinct, the TECs summarize results for the territory as a whole.

Polling Station Election Commissions compile the voters lists for their polling site based on information provided by the heads of local administrations, prepare the polling stations, process the voters, and count the votes on election day.

The actions or decisions of any commission may be appealed to a higher commission or to a court. Each superior commission is authorized to overturn the actions or decisions of a lower commission.

9. Do candidates have any representation on the election commissions?

Yes. Each registered candidate is entitled to appoint a representative to serve on each and every commission at every level. The candidate's representatives serve as "members with deliberative vote." That means that although they may participate at every session of the commission, raise issues and engage in debates and discussion, they are not entitled to a vote when decisions are formally adopted. However, their presence ensures that candidates may stay informed about the activities and decisions of election commissions at all levels.

10. How are the voter lists compiled?

Voter lists are compiled by Polling Station Election Commissions based on information provided to them by the heads of local administrative authorities. Every citizen over the age of 18 is automatically added to the voter list. The only citizens who are not eligible to vote are those who have been ruled incompetent by a court, or those who have been imprisoned by court order.

Not later than 30 days prior to the election the voter lists are available to the public so that any errors or omissions may be corrected.

Where special polling stations are established in sanitariums, rest homes, spas, hospitals or military or other installations in remote areas, the voters lists for these sites are compiled by their commanders or chiefs.

11. What rules apply to the campaign activities of the candidates and how are their campaigns funded?

Citizens, candidates, electoral associations, blocs and initiative voters groups are entitled to freely campaign for or against candidates. It is against the law to spread anonymous or counterfeited printed materials.

Candidates are guaranteed equal conditions for their pre-election campaigns including use of the mass media and is provided an equal amount of time on state media at no charge. The conduct of a campaign may not involve free or preferential offerings of goods or services, securities or payments of any kind. Information contained in campaign propaganda may not contain appeals to violent change in the principles of the constitutional system or breach of integrity of the Russian Federation, or promote social, racial, national religious superiority or hatreds.

In financing their campaigns, each candidate is allotted an equal amount of funding by the Central Election Commission from state budget sources and may solicit and use contributions from other sources.

Donations from foreign states or organizations, non-citizens, Russian legal entities with foreign investments or share of foreign capital exceeding 30%, bodies of state and local government agencies, enterprises and organizations, military units or installations or religious or charitable organizations is not allowed.

The savings banks holding a candidate's electoral funds are required to report information about the crediting of funds and spending of monetary resources from the special account to the CEC. In addition candidates must submit a financial report to the CEC not later than 30 days after publication of the election results. Copies of their reports are provided to the mass media.

All campaigning is to end at midnight local time prior to the day preceding the day of election.

12.

Who is allowed to be an observer and where may they observe?

OBSERVER	WHERE THEY MAY OBSERVE
<u>Observers Designated by:</u> Candidates Electoral Associations Blocs Foreign States and Intn'l Organizations Representatives of Mass Media	At Polling Stations from Beginning of work of Polling Station Election Commission until completion of report of results. At Territorial Commission Levels during the summarization of territory-wide results. At Subject Commission Levels during summarization of subject-wide results.
Observers designated by Public Associations (Domestic NGO's) which have been registered by the Ministry of Justice	At Polling Stations from beginning of work of Polling Station Election Commissions until completion of report of results.
Candidates, Attorneys of the Candidates and Authorized Representatives of Electoral Associations, Blocs and Initiative Voters' Groups	At Sessions of Election Committees

Foreign observers are credentialed by the Central Election Commission, while all other observers are certified by entity they represent. No advance notice must be submitted to the site where the observer intends to be present. Each observer must be able to present identification as well as his or her credential to be validated.

13.

What are the procedures at the polling stations?

Polling hours are 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m..

Before the first voter votes the Chairman of the Polling Station Commission is required to display the empty ballot boxes and seal them in the presence of the members of the commission, representatives of the candidates and electoral associations, blocs and initiative voters groups, observers and voters who may be present.

Each voter must vote personally. Upon presentation of a passport or alternative identification document, a member of the Polling Station Election Commission finds the

voter's name on the voter list. The voter is asked to sign the list acknowledging receipt of the ballot. Each ballot must be certified with the signatures of at least two commission members and stamped with the official seal of the polling station.

The voter is directed to a secrecy cabin to mark the ballot in private. Only one person may be in the secrecy cabin at a time. The voter makes his or her choice by placing a mark in the box to the right of the candidate's name. The ballot also offers the voters the opportunity to mark a box "Against All Candidates."

After marking the ballot, the voter deposits the ballot into the ballot box personally before leaving the polling site. The ballot box is to remain in full view of those present and is not to be opened until the polls have closed and counting takes place.

If a voter is unable to sign the voter list or needs assistance in marking the ballot, any person except a member of the commission, an observer or an attorney of the candidate may assist the voter. In these instances the assistant must also sign the voter list.

If a voter inadvertently mismarks or spoils the ballot he or she may return to the member of the commission and request a new ballot. A notation is made in the voter list and the spoiled ballot is rendered void and retained by commission.

14. Are there any special voter services outside regular voting at the polling site on election day?

Voting Outside Polling Station:

A voter who is unable to come to the polling station because of ill health or any other good reason is entitled to apply to have a ballot delivered to him. Each polling station is equipped with mobile ballot boxes for this purpose. After signing a receipt for a number of ballots equal to the number of applications officials will take the ballots and the mobile ballot boxes to the voters.

Upon delivery of the ballot, the voter must certify the application acknowledging that the ballot was delivered. After marking the ballot in secret, the voter deposits the ballot into the mobile ballot box.

When the members of the commission return to the polling station, they must account for the number of used and unused ballots on a statement which will be retained with other voting documents at the end of the day.

Observers are entitled to accompany the mobile ballot boxes and observe the procedures being followed during the voting outside the polling station.

Voters Who Will Be Away:

Voters may apply to the PSEC at their normal polling place to receive a Certificate of the Right to Participate which will entitle them to vote at another polling station on election day. When the Certificate is issued, a notation is made on the voter list of the voter's regular polling station. Upon presentation of the Certificate at another polling site, the voter's name will be added to the list for that station and the voter will be allowed to vote.

Voters Omitted from Voters List:

Any voter who may have been omitted from the voter list in error may be added on election day upon presentation of appropriate identification that establishes the voter's residence in the area served by the polling station.

Advance Voting:

Under special circumstances early voting may be authorized by Subject Election Commissions at remote sites such as polar stations, on navigating vessels and at other locations where conditions will not make it possible for voting to be accomplished on election day. Where authorized, early voting may occur only during the 15 days preceding the election.

15. When and where are the ballots counted?

Ballots are counted at the polling stations immediately upon closing of the polls by the members of the commission with deciding vote. Observers and authorized representatives may be present for the entire counting process and through the completion of the documents reporting the results. Unused ballots are then counted and rendered void.

The mobile ballot boxes are opened first and counted. If it is discovered that the number of ballots inside exceeds the number of applications, the ballots will be declared null and void and will not be included in the count for the polling station.

The stationary ballot box is opened and the total number of ballots inside are counted without regard to the individual votes cast. Any ballots found in the ballot box which are not in the official format are excluded. Ultimately ballots from the mobile ballot boxes are commingled with those from the stationary boxes for counting the votes.

Ballots are sorted by candidate, with separate stacks maintained for votes cast “Against All Candidates” and invalid ballots. A ballot is invalid if has not been certified by the signatures of members of the commission and the official stamp, contains more than one mark, contains no marks, or if the intention of the voter cannot be determined. The number of ballots contained in each stack are counted and the results are entered onto the protocol of results along with the detail accounting for the number of voters and the number of ballots issued to the polling site.

A member of the commission who does not agree with the information contained in the protocol may attach a written statement of his or her dissenting opinion which shall accompany the protocol to the superior commission. Protocols which are produced in triplicate may not be produced in pencil or contain any corrections or erasures, are signed by all members of the commission with deciding vote

First Copy:	Submitted to Territorial Commission
2nd Copy:	Retained with ballots and other documents by PSEC
3rd Copy:	Available for scrutiny by observers, representatives, mass media, etc.

Upon request, a certified copy of the protocol must be provided. The requester may make up the copy and have it certified by the Chairman, Vice-Chairman or Secretary of the Commission.

16. How are results consolidated and reported?

Based on the results reported by the individual precincts, Territorial Election Commissions summarize the results for the Territory as a whole. Observers are allowed to be present during the estimation of the results by the TEC.

A cumulative protocol containing the same categories of information reported by precincts is prepared as is a table which reflects the specific information provided by each polling station. The procedures for preparation and distribution of the three copies of Territorial protocols are the same as those for the precincts.

The law allows Territorial Election Commission 3 days to complete their official protocols of summarized results, however, through an automated system, results reported by precincts will be data entered by computer on election night to speed up the reporting of preliminary results. Territorial Commissions are also required to publish results contained in their protocol no later than 5 days after the election and precinct by precinct results no later than 15 days after the election.

Upon receipt of the first copy of the Territorial protocols, Subject Election Commissions summarize results reported by the Territories into Subject-wide results. The consolidated

results formalized by each Subject are forwarded to the Central Election where Federation-wide results will be summarized and reported.

At all levels observers and authorized representatives may request to receive certified copies of the protocols. A copy made by the requester will be certified by the Chairman, Vice-Chairman or Secretary of the Commission.

17. What is the State Automated System? (SAS)

The Central Election Commission has installed a system of computers linked together to transmit cumulative election results up through the Election Commission hierarchy. Called the State Automated System (SAS) this computerized election information system has been established in compliance with the Decree of the President dated August 23, 1994 to increase both the speed, accuracy and transparency of reporting of election returns. Although ballots are still counted manually, as soon as they are received by the Territorial Election Commission, the results reported on the precinct protocols will be entered into the computerized data system.

It is estimated that initial computerized reports of “unofficial” preliminary results should be available at about 11:00 p.m. in Moscow after the polls in the farthest western area of Kaliningrad close. Most likely, the earliest initial returns will be those coming from parts of the Federation in the eastern time zones where polls close first.

While “unofficial” preliminary returns will be generated beginning soon after the polls close, the law requires that final official results be announced no later than 15 days after election day.

18. Is there a threshold turnout requirement for the elections to be considered valid?

In order for the election to be considered valid, not less than 50% of the voters on the voters' lists took part in the election. Voter participation is calculated by determining the number of voters who signed the voter lists and received ballots. If it is determined that fewer than 50% of the voters on the voters lists took part in the election, the Central Election Commission declares the election as one that did not take place. In this event, the election process starts

over again and a repeat election is called. The same laws governing the original election apply except that any terms or conditions required are reduced by 1/3.

An election may also be declared void if the Central Election Commission determines that violations occurred during the conduct of the election that have impeded the reliable calculation of results. Under these circumstances a repeated election will also be called for. If it is determined that a candidate, by his action or inaction, participated in the violation that caused the election to be invalidated, that candidate is precluded from being nominated for the repeat election.

19. **How is the winner of the election determined?**

A candidate is elected if the 50% voter participation threshold has been met, and the candidate received more than half of the votes cast on official ballot papers. Ballot papers found in the ballot box of a "non-standard form" are excluded.

20. **What happens if there is no winner declared based on the election results?**

If the election is considered valid but no candidate receives a sufficient number of votes to be declared the winner, repeat voting (a run-off election or second round) is to be held no later than 15 days after the official results were announced. The two candidates who received the greatest number of votes will be included on the ballot for the repeat voting. In the event that due to withdrawal or other circumstance only one candidate remains prior to the date scheduled for the repeat voting, the candidate who received the next highest number of votes in the initial election advances to the second round.

There is no voter participation threshold requirement in the repeat voting. However, the ballot in the second round retains the "Against All Candidates" option. The candidate receiving the greatest number of votes is declared the winner, as long as the number of votes he or she receives is greater than the votes cast "Against All Candidates."

In the event no candidate is elected in the repeat voting, a new election is called under the same conditions as when an election has been declared invalid due to failure to meet threshold requirement or because violations have impeded the reliable calculation of results.

ID #: _____
Country Russia
Year 1996 Language English
Copyright (IFES/Other) _____ Intended Audience (Adult/YA) _____
Election type Presidential
Material type Adult Voter Information
Notes Explains Presidential election rules and procedures.