



វិទ្យាស្ថានសភាកម្ពុជា
PARLIAMENTARY INSTITUTE OF CAMBODIA

Briefing Note

Senate Commission 2

Presidential Election of the Russian Federation in 2018

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1. Introduction

The election of the President of the Russian Federation takes place on 18 March 2018. In conjunction with this event, foreign (international) observers have been invited to participate in the election process. In particular, responding to an invitation from the Council of the Federation of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, delegates from the Cambodian Senate have been invited to observe the 2018 Russian presidential election.

This briefing note has been produced in response to a request from Senate Commission 2 regarding the presidential election in Russia 2018. Three research questions are set out for this paper:

- What are the procedures for organizing the presidential election in respect of the Russian Federation in March 2018?
- What are the legal provisions relating to foreign observation during the election process?
- What statistics are available relating to the political parties, candidates, polling stations, voters, opinion polls and predictability for this presidential election?

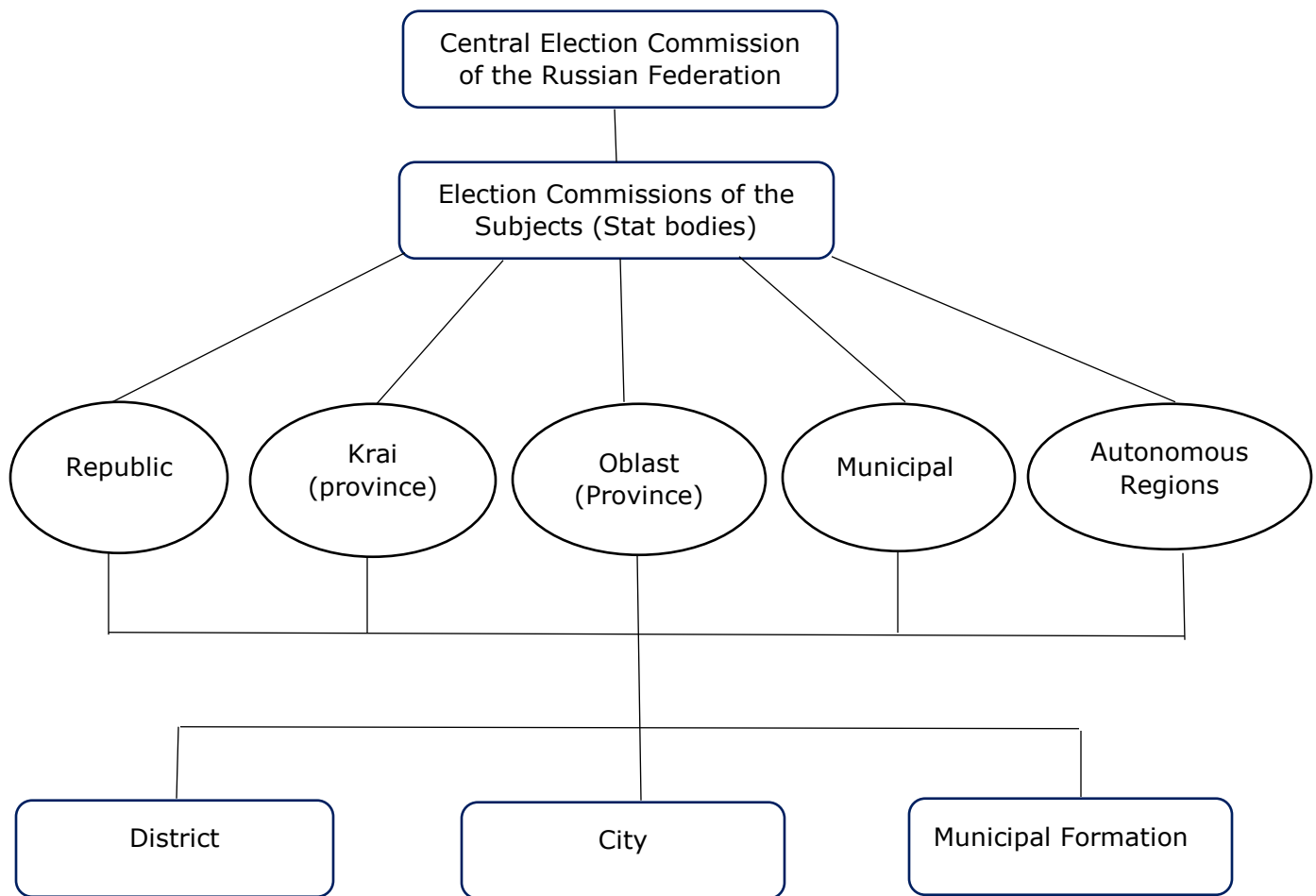
2. Procedure for organizing the Presidential Election in the Russian Federation in 2018

Since 2008, the term the President of Russia can remain in post has been changed to six years. [13] According to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, Article 7, elections in Russia are to be free.[12] The presidential election is conducted based on a universal, equal and direct election by secret ballot of the citizens. It is also stipulated in the Constitution, Article 81, *“One and the same person may not be elected President of the Russian Federation for more than two terms running.”* [12] Moreover, the election is based on popular vote, whereby a candidate needs to have a majority of over 50 percent of the votes to win the election. If no candidate attains more than 50 percent of the votes, a runoff will be held between the two top candidates. [13]

Presidential elections in Russia are called by the Federal Council of the Federal Assembly or the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation. [1] The Russian Election Commission is divided into the Central Election Commission and the Election Commissions of Subject.

The Central Election Commission plays the most important role in the preparation and conduct of the elections. Overall, it organizes elections for the federal state bodies, while the Election Commissions of Subject are responsible for the regional and local elections in the 85 legal entities of the Russian Federation.[19] The Election Commissions of Subject comprise territorial election commissions in districts, cities, and in municipal formations[1] (independent state bodies of local self-government) which are responsible for protecting the rights of the voters, controlling the observance [1] and dealing with relevant tasks during the election (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Structure of the Election Commission



3. Legal Provisions on Foreign Observation

To gain permission for entry into Russia, foreign international observers must be approved by the Central Election Commission to observe the election: observers are provided with a certificate. Foreign international observers are independent and act by themselves in their observation. They

may show their interest in the legislation relating to elections, the preparation and conduct of the election, participate in press conferences and address the mass media after the time for voting finishes.[1]

The Central Election Commission sends invitations to about 100 countries in Latin America, Europe, Asia and Africa to observe. [14] And, according to the head of the Russian Federal Civic Chamber's working group on monitoring the implementation of the voting rights of Russian nationals, more than 100,000 applications have been filed for permission to observe the election.[15] Additionally, international association observers will take part in witnessing the election process. The following are the most significant organizations to be allowed to observe during the election:

- The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) , an international governmental organization consisting of 57 states with the comprehensive purpose of security, will deploy 80 long-term and 420 short-term observers.[14] In cooperation with the OSCE, US observers will also be present during the election in large cities.[16]
- The Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE PA), consisting of 300 Parliamentarians from 57 countries, will send 111 observers from 30 countries.[17]
- The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), an international governmental organization consisting of 12 countries, have included 300 observers, 40 of whom are long-term.[18]

4. Statistics of the Presidential Election of the Russian Federation 2018

4.1. Candidates and Political Parties

In accordance with Clause 2, Article 3 of the ***Federal Law on the Election of the President of the Russian Federation***, a Russian citizen to be nominated as a candidate for the presidential election shall be at least 35 years old and have lived permanently in Russia for at least 10 years.[1] In this regard, candidates can be those appointed by each political party or self-nominated (Clause 1, Article 6).[1] Self-nominated candidates must be endorsed by a voter group of at least 500 Russian citizens (Clause 2, Article 34) and obtain at least 2 million signatures from voters inside and outside of Russia (Clause 1, Article 36) to be able to take part in the election.[1] Provided by Article 37 of the same law, these two types of candidates must register at the **Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation**

between 45 and 80 days before the election date by 6.00 pm (Moscow time).[1]

For the 2018 election, approximately 38 people have been registered as presidential candidates (22 from political parties and 15 self-nominations).[2] However, only eight people (seven males and one female) from seven political parties have been formally nominated as the final candidates (see Table 1 below).[2] The ruling party – United Russia – have not sent any candidates to register for the election in 2018 since the withdrawal of Mr Putin Vladimir Vladimirovich; nevertheless, as shown in the Table 1, Mr Putin Vladimir Vladimirovich, without any political party affiliation, has nominated himself for the 2018 election.

Table 1: Presidential Candidates 2018[2]

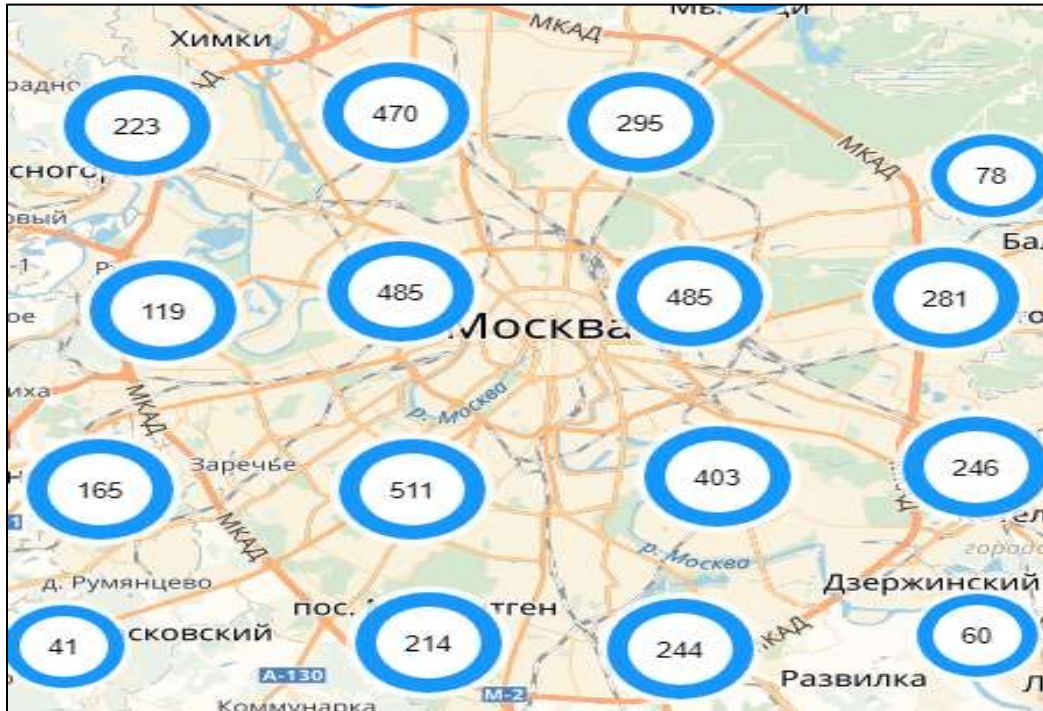
Nº	Name	Date of Birth	Sex	Date of Registration	Political Parties
1	Baburin Sergey Nikolaevich	31/01/1959	M	07/02/2018	Russian National Society
2	Grudin Pavel Nikolaevich	20/10/1960	M	12/01/2018	Communist Party of the Russian Federation
3	Zhirinovskiy Vladimir Volfovich	25/04/1946	M	29/12/2017	Liberal Democratic Party of Russia
4	Putin Vladimir Vladimirovich	07/10/1952	M	06/02/2018	(No Party)
5	Sobchak Ksenia Anatolyevna	05/11/1981	F	08/02/2018	Civil Initiative
6	Suraykin Maxim Alexandrovich	08/08/1978	M	08/02/2018	Communists of Russia
7	Titov Boris Yuryevich	24/12/1960	M	07/02/2018	Party Growth
8	Yavlinsky Grigory Alekseevich	10/04/1952	M	07/02/2018	Russian United Democratic Party "Yabloko"

Source: Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation, 2018

4.2. Polling Stations

The Russian Federation has 95,000 polling stations organized for the upcoming presidential election[3]: Moscow has around 2,100 of those (see Map 1 below).[4] In cooperation with foreign states, polling stations have also been organized abroad - with around 385 stations across 145 countries - to enable Russians living abroad to vote.[5]

Map 1: Polling Stations in Moscow City, Russia[4]



Source: Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation, 2018

4.3. Registered Voters

As in other countries, a Russian citizen aged 18 years of age by the election date has the right to vote (Clause 1, Article 3).[1] Unless they have obtained foreign citizenship, all Russian citizens outside of the Russian Federation also have the right to vote.[1] According to the Statistics Portal, the total population of Russia in 2018 is around 143.26 million.[6] By 1 January 2018, the number of registered voters was around 108.96 million of whom Moscow City has the most, with approximately 7.21 million, followed by Moscow Region with almost 5.58 million. Additionally, the number of those registered outside of Russia (abroad) reached 1.87 million (see Table 2).[7]

Table 2: Number of Population and Registered Voters of the Russian Federation 2018

Voter Population	Persons in Million
Number of voters of an eligible age (from 18)	114.73 [8]
Registered Voters in Russia	108.96
Registered Voters in Moscow City	7.21
Registered Voters in Moscow Region	5.58
Registered Voters Abroad	1.87

Despite the relatively high number of registered voters, not all people are actually able to vote on Election Day. Experience in 2012 showed that even though the total number of registered voters in the presidential election was approximately 110 million,[9] only 65.3 percent actually voted.[9] With regard to the election in 2018, it is expected that between 78.5 and 81.3 percent of the electorate will vote.[10]

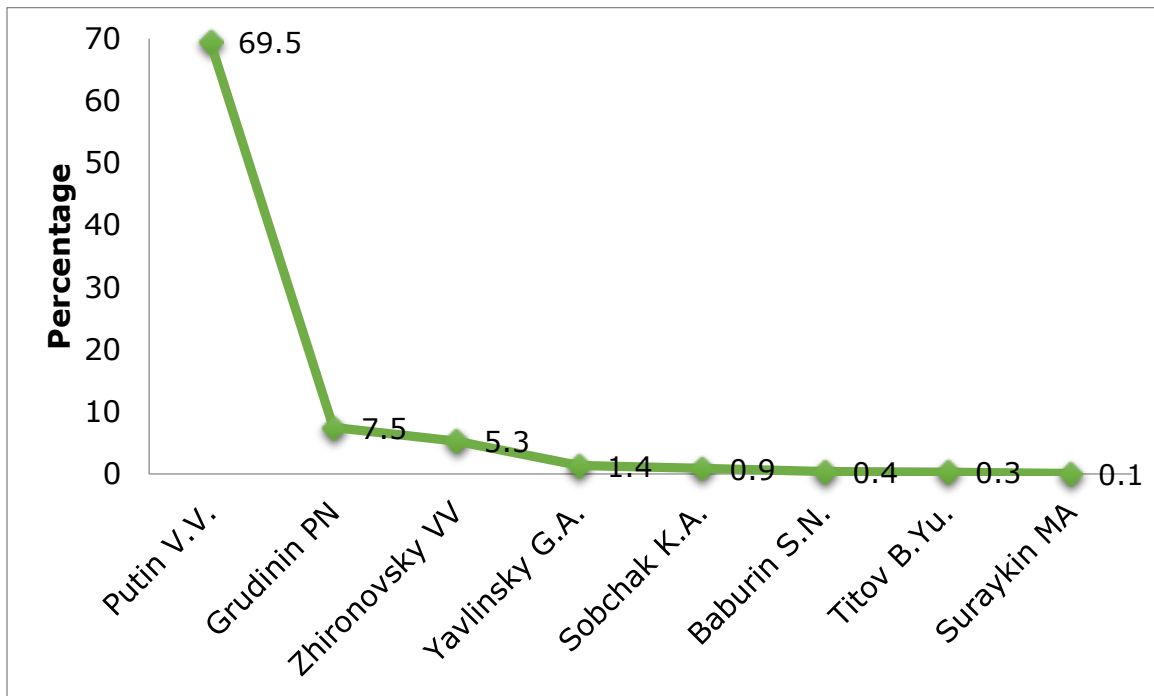
4.4. Opinion Polls and Predictability

The 2018 presidential election has attracted much attention from Russian citizens, and especially from domestic and foreign scholars and organizations.[11] President Putin, the country's incumbent president, has been predicted to win and to undertake a second term of presidential duties (2018-2024).[11] This may be due to the fact that Alexei Navalny¹, one of his strongest opponents, was arrested and forbidden to take part in the election.[11]

In addition to this prediction, a recent opinion poll conducted in February 2018 by **the All-Russian Center for the Study of Public Opinion (VCIOM)** showed that the percentage of people supporting Mr Putin Vladimir Vladimirovich for president is approximately 70 percent whereas the other candidates enjoy support from only around 8 percent (see Figure 2 below).[12] It was estimated that in 2018 Mr Putin Vladimir Vladimirovich would receive approximately 30 million votes more than in 2012 (see Figure 2 below and the Annex).[9]

¹ Alexei Navalny announced his candidacy as an independent politician in December 2016. He was accused of attacking an official in a demonstration conducted in Moscow.

Figure 2: Rating of Candidates: Poll February 12-18, 2018[12]



Source: The All-Russian Center for the Study of Public Opinion (VCIOM), 2018

5. Conclusion

The presidential election of the Russian Federation is based on a two-round system in which the Central Election Commission is the main body, cooperating with the Election Commissions of the Subjects and territorial election commissions - districts, cities, and in municipal formations. The number of eligible voters in 2018 is 114 million of whom approximately 95 percent have registered. It is expected that around 80 percent will vote. In addition to this organizational and procedural system, the presidential election of the Russian Federation shows a positive image by having foreign observers from international organizations and countries around the world to be present during the election process. These international organizations will conduct both short and long-term observations of the election and the election process. As discussed earlier, Mr. Putin is still the most popular candidate based on the observations of scholars, experts and opinion polls.

Annex

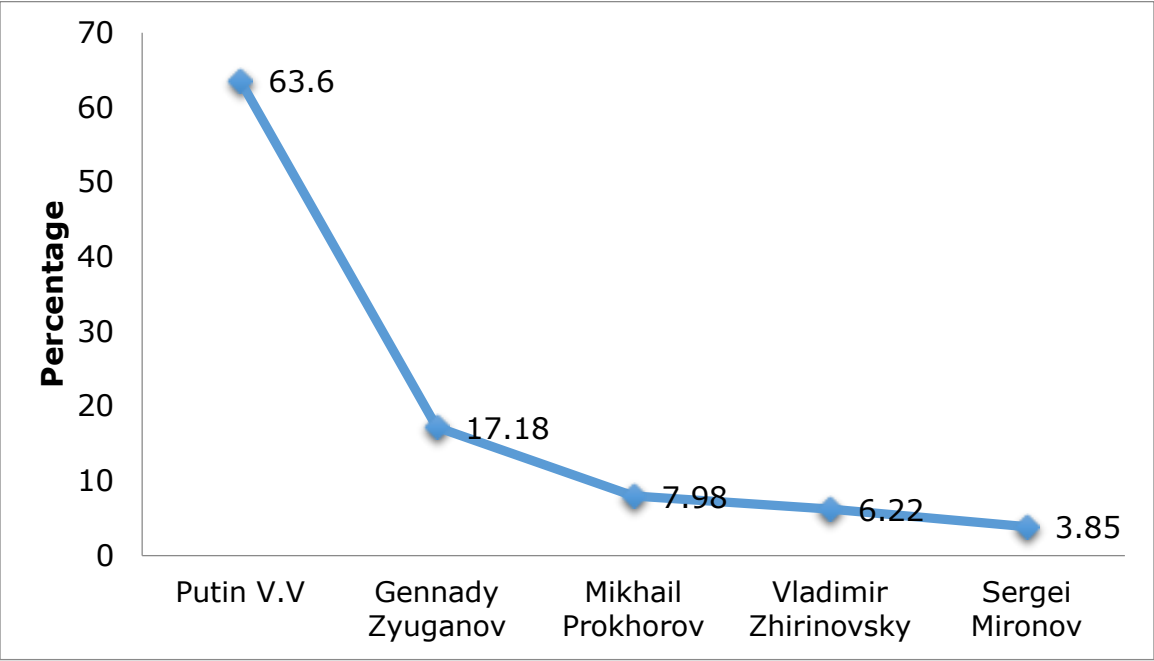
Table 1: Voters Registered in the Russian Federation 2018

The Subject of Russian Federation	Registered Voters	The Subject of Russian Federation	Registered Voters
The Republic of Adygea	336,053	Kaluga Region	801,385
Altai Republic	159,195	Kemerovo Region	2,030,704
Republic of Bashkortostan	3,059,787	Kirov Region	1,067,638
The Republic of Buryatia	715,139	Kostroma Region	535,772
The Republic of Dagestan	1,677,969	Kurgan Region	714,973
The Republic of Ingushetia	222,189	Kursk Region	934,260
Kabardino-Balkaria Republic	536,343	Leningrad Region	1,314,567
Republic of Kalmykia	210,911	Lipetsk Region	937,740
Karachay-Cherkess Republic	301,131	Magadan Region	105,468
The Republic of Karelia	527,885	Moscow Region	5,587,565
Komi Republic	677,765	Murmansk Region	599,628
Republic of Crimea	1,483,136	Nizhny Novgorod Region	2,603,915
Mari El Republic	545,605	Novgorod Region	503,253
The Republic of Mordovia	627,271	Novosibirsk Region	2,130,973
The Republic of Sakha	633,598	Omsk Region	1,547,017
Republic of North Ossetia-Alania	512,629	Orenburg Region	1,582,885
The Republic of Tatarstan	2,935,867	Oryol Region	636,266
Tyva Republic	192,234	Penza Region	1,083,179
Udmurt Republic	1,191,734	Pskov Region	539,703
The Republic of Khakassia	401,347	Postov Region	3,239,319
Chechen Republic	699,331	Rayazan Oblast	922,571

Chuvash Republic- Chuvashia	934,135	Samara Region	2,442,330
Altai Region	1,860,508	Saratov Region	1,941,916
Transbaikal Region	806,797	Sakhalin Oblast	369,978
Kamchatka Krai	238,938	Sverdlovsk Region	3,386,595
Krasnodar Region	4,070,887	Smolensk Region	777,257
Krasnoyarsk Region	2,118,896	Tambov Region	846,346
Perm Region	2,009,561	Tver Region	1,073,363
Primorsky Krai	1,466,599	Tomsk Region	769,925
Stavropol Region	1,943,263	Tula Region	1,193,907
Khabarovsk Region	1,003,142	Tyumen region	1,090,360
Amur Region	625,533	Ulyanovsk Region	1,013,966
Arhangelsk Region	916,711	Chelyabinsk Region	2,692,732
Astrakhan Region	738,742	Yaroslavl Region	1,020,605
Belgorod Region	1,232,757	Moscow City	7,216,076
Bryansk Region	1,003,447	Saint-Petersburg	3,817,377
Vladimir Region	1,140,816	Sevastopol	311,168
Volgograd Region	1,875,473	Jewish Autonomous Region	130,599
Vologda Region	948,327	Nenets Autonomous Okrug	34,004
Voronezh Region	1,866,410	Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area – Yugra	1,113,896
Ivanovo Region	815,617	Chukotka Autonomous District	33,208
Irkutsk Region	1,865,247	The Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District	355,935
Kaliningrad Region	789,620	Total	108,968,869

Source: Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation, 2018

Figure 1: Final Result of the Presidential Election 2012



Source: Russia Votes Organization, 2015

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