



Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

## **RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

### **PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION**

**14 March 2004**

**OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Report**



**Warsaw  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I.</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>POLITICAL BACKGROUND.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>V.</b>	<b>ELECTION ADMINISTRATION .....</b>	<b>5</b>
A.	ELECTION COMMISSIONS .....	5
B.	ADMINISTRATION OF THE ELECTIONS .....	6
C.	VOTER LISTS.....	7
<b>VI.</b>	<b>REGISTRATION OF CANDIDATES .....</b>	<b>8</b>
A.	NOMINATION .....	8
B.	SIGNATURE COLLECTION .....	9
C.	REGISTERED CANDIDATES .....	11
D.	“AGAINST ALL” .....	11
<b>VII.</b>	<b>THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>VIII.</b>	<b>THE MEDIA .....</b>	<b>14</b>
A.	BACKGROUND TO THE MEDIA IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION.....	14
B.	LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE MEDIA .....	14
C.	MEDIA MONITORING .....	15
<b>IX.</b>	<b>COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS.....</b>	<b>17</b>
A.	MEDIA-RELATED COMPLAINTS .....	17
B.	OTHER COMPLAINTS AND INVESTIGATIONS.....	19
<b>X.</b>	<b>PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>XI.</b>	<b>ISSUES RELATING TO MINORITIES IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>XII.</b>	<b>DOMESTIC OBSERVERS .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>XIII.</b>	<b>OBSERVATION OF VOTING AND COUNTING.....</b>	<b>21</b>
A.	VOTING.....	21
B.	COUNTING .....	23
C.	TABULATION OF RESULTS.....	24
<b>XIV.</b>	<b>ELECTION RESULTS .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>XV.</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>27</b>
	<b>APPENDIX 1 - SAMPLE OF IMPLAUSIBLE TURNOUT AND RESULT FIGURES .....</b>	<b>31</b>
	<b>ABOUT THE OSCE/ODIHR.....</b>	<b>36</b>

**RUSSIAN FEDERATION  
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION  
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**OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission  
Final Report<sup>1</sup>**

**I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In response to an invitation from the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) observed the 14 March 2004 Presidential Election in the Russian Federation. The OSCE/ODIHR assessed the Presidential election in terms of its compliance with the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document and other election related commitments.

While on a technical level the election was organized with professionalism, particularly on the part of the Central Election Commission (CEC), the process overall did not adequately reflect principles necessary for a healthy democratic election. The election process failed to meet important commitments concerning treatment of candidates by the State-controlled media on a non-discriminatory basis, equal opportunities for all candidates and secrecy of the ballot.

Essential elements of the OSCE commitments for democratic elections, such as a vibrant political discourse and meaningful pluralism, were lacking. The possibilities to draw conclusions about the robustness of the framework for democratic elections, when tested in a more competitive environment, were therefore limited.

The Presidential election came barely three months after elections to the State Duma. Those elections had produced a significant shift in the configuration of Russian parliamentary politics, and had left a number of political parties preoccupied with the consequences of a loss of a federal parliamentary presence or a weakened party machinery. In this setting, the majority of presidential candidates entered the race without party backing or with fragmented political support.

The nature of the election process, whereby the incumbent refrained in most respects from conventional campaign discourse, including non-participation in public debates, narrowed the voters' possibilities to assess the candidates. The incumbent, however, maintained a high measure of public approval ratings throughout the presidential contest, as reflected in the 14 March election result. He faced a field of opponents who commanded little apparent public support.

Moreover, the possibility for meaningful competition was undermined in a number of ways not attributable to recognized advantages of incumbency. Notably, the State-controlled media displayed clear bias in favour of the incumbent in news presentation and coverage of the campaign, and the CEC failed to take adequate remedial action towards this bias. Localised

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<sup>1</sup> This report is also available in Russian, but the English version remains the only official version.

instances of election-related abuse of official function, whilst met with an appropriately robust response by the electoral authorities in some instances, reflected a lack of democratic culture, accountability and responsibility, particularly in areas distant from the capital.

There was a commendably inclusive approach to the exercise of voters' rights, but its practical application in some cases raised concerns. Observers reported that the involvement of local administrations in increasing turnout was vigorous, and in some cases local administrators carried out inappropriate activities to guarantee high turnout. In addition, some of the official "get out the vote" campaigning, including one of the CEC's widely-aired public information announcements shown on countrywide television, contained imagery and messages which could be understood to favour the incumbent.

The genuine wish to enfranchise as many people as possible included significant financial outlays to enable voting in remote locations and a flexible approach to the establishment of special polling stations. However, some of the latter provisions raised questions about the adequacy of safeguards against multiple voting. In addition, there were implausibly high voter turnout figures reported from six federal subjects (See Appendix 1).

The legal framework promotes openness and transparency both in the organization and conduct of the election, although in certain aspects it is unduly complex, and merits a number of revisions. Notably, the threshold of 2 million signatures to be collected in support of persons seeking registration as candidates (other than the nominees of State Duma parties/blocs) is an unreasonable hurdle, which results in a disparity of equal conditions for candidates, and one that could invite malpractice.

The CEC gave strong professional leadership to the country's vast election administration, which functioned in an efficient and generally open manner in the pre-election period. However, a more mixed picture of the competence of the election administration at the lower levels emerged on election day. Voting and counting were carried out in a generally calm and peaceful manner, and the conduct of voting in the vast majority of polling stations was positively assessed by EOM observers.

A significant irregularity that was widely observed, however, was the persistence of the practice of open voting, which directly challenges the principle of a secret vote. In a high proportion of the polling stations where it was observed, open voting was actively encouraged by the responsible election commission. Instances of group voting were also noted in over one third of polling stations observed. There were isolated cases of more serious irregularities, such as unauthorized persons apparently directing the work of polling stations, and intimidation.

Counting and tabulation were more problematic, with one quarter of those counts observed being assessed negatively. In many instances procedures were not strictly adhered to, and the transparency of the process was not safeguarded. Isolated instances of result falsification were directly observed.

The OSCE/ODIHR stands ready to co-operate with the Russian authorities to address the concerns raised in this report, and is willing to offer its services in order to follow up on any of the recommendations outlined below.

## II. INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Election of the President of the Russian Federation was held on 14 March 2004. Following an invitation by the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation, the OSCE/ODIHR established an Election Observation Mission (EOM) on 6 February 2004. The EOM was headed by Mr. Julian Peel Yates (United Kingdom) and consisted of 17 core team members and 34 long-term observers from 16 OSCE participating States, based in Moscow and 15 regional centres.

Ahead of election day, the OSCE/ODIHR EOM was joined by short-term observers, including a delegation of 12 observers from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), led by Mr. Rudolf Bindig (Germany). Collectively, the OSCE/ODIHR deployed 336 observers from 39 OSCE participating States to follow election day proceedings, in a joint International Election Observation Mission (IEOM). On election day, IEOM observers were deployed in 22 of the 89 Federal Subjects of the Russian Federation and visited a total of nearly 1,350 polling stations.

In parallel with the presidential election, other electoral contests took place in various parts of the Russian Federation on 14 March. The IEOM did not observe any of these contests except to the extent that they impacted on the presidential election in the affected locations.

The OSCE/ODIHR wishes to express its appreciation to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation, as well as to other authorities and civil society organizations, international organizations and resident embassies and consulates of OSCE participating States, for their cooperation and assistance throughout the course of the observation.

## III. POLITICAL BACKGROUND

The 14 March 2004 election was the third election for President since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the adoption of the 1993 Constitution of the Russian Federation. The office of President of the Russian Federation embraces exceptional and wide-ranging executive powers.

The previous four years in office of the incumbent President, Vladimir Putin, were chiefly characterised by a reviving economy, a consolidation of state power at the centre, and above all by the perception of stability that was broadly endorsed by the population at large. The seemingly overwhelming popularity of the incumbent – as evidenced by his consistently high approval ratings in public opinion polls before and during the election campaign – produced a sense of predictability in the outcome of the 2004 Presidential Election.

The presidential election came barely three months after the December 2003 elections to the State Duma, the lower house of the federal parliament. Those elections had produced a significant shift in the configuration of Russian parliamentary politics. The association of the incumbent with United Russia had contributed to that party's appeal to voters, and United Russia had emerged from the elections with a two-thirds State Duma majority. The established opposition parties had experienced a dramatic decline in their support, and were

left preoccupied with the loss of a federal parliamentary presence or weakened party machinery.

In combination, the factors of an incumbent in an apparently unassailable lead, and a weakened party political opposition, directly impacted on the selection of candidates to run against the incumbent. He faced a field of opponents who commanded little apparent public support. The better known of them, Irina Hakamada and Sergey Glazev, ran without the backing of their respective political party/bloc, and the rest had little profile nationally, including the two State Duma party-nominated candidates, Nikolay Kharitonov of the Communist Party (CPRF) and Oleg Malyshkin of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDPR) who were not the leaders of their respective parties.

In the course of the campaign none of the rival candidates articulated any expectation of being able to defeat the incumbent, whilst one, Sergey Mironov, openly supported him.

#### IV. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The presidential election is regulated principally by the Presidential Election Law<sup>2</sup> (PEL) and the Basic Guarantees of Electoral Rights Law (BGL).<sup>3</sup> The PEL is a detailed legislative act that in most respects complies with international standards and OSCE commitments.

The Russian Federation presidential election is conducted according to a majority run-off formula. Article 76(3) PEL provides that a candidate is elected in the first round if he or she has received more than half of the votes cast. The number of regular ballots found in the ballot boxes constitutes the total number of the votes cast. In case none of the candidates emerges as winner in the first round, a second round is held between the two candidates who received the highest numbers of votes. In a second round, the candidate with more votes is elected, provided that the number of votes he or she received is higher than the number of votes cast “against all.”

There are also additional thresholds within these general provisions. The first round vote should be considered to have failed (not been held) if (a) the turnout is less than 50 per cent of registered voters or (b) the number of votes cast “against all”<sup>4</sup> is higher than the number of votes received by any of the candidates (Art. 76(4) PEL). In the case of a failed first round, new elections must be held within four months (Art. 76(5) PEL). This provision in the law presents a potential for a failed election process, and may invite electoral malfeasance. The Russian authorities may wish to reconsider the need for such provisions, in particular a turnout requirement combined with the need to call a new election in case the turnout is less than required.

The most positive aspects of the legislative framework are its transparency measures, and the clear complaints procedures combined with tightly regulated deadlines for dealing with

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<sup>2</sup> Federal Law of 10 January 2003, No. 19-FL *On the Election of the President of the Russian Federation*.

<sup>3</sup> Federal Law of 12 June 2002, No. 67-FL *On the Basic Guarantees of Electoral Right and the Rights to Participation in Referenda of the Citizens of the Russian Federation*.

<sup>4</sup> For comments on the “against all” provision, see Section VI, part D, below.

complaints. The former include the right of candidates to appoint a member with non-voting rights to each electoral commission at every level (Art.16 PEL), the obligation on the part of electoral commissions to provide reasoned decisions when addressing complaints (Art. 12(4) PEL), and the right of various participants to receive copies of results protocols (Art. 24(12)(7) PEL).

A number of provisions aimed at preventing abuse of administrative resources add to the strength of the PEL. Notably, facilities are to be provided by local administrations to all participants on equal terms, and state public officials are prohibited from campaigning. Nevertheless there were isolated instances where the local administration did engage in promotion of candidates.<sup>5</sup>

The EOM received reports that persons campaigning against participation in the election process were being treated as engaging in unlawful campaigning and had been subject to sanctions by law enforcement bodies. However, there is nothing in the legislation that prohibits such a campaign (Art. 49 PEL). Furthermore, there is a guarantee of the right to non-participation, in Article 1(2) PEL. Initiating sanctions against people calling for non-participation appears to be inconsistent with the right to freedom of expression.

## V. ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

### A. ELECTION COMMISSIONS

The election of the President of the Russian Federation is administered by four levels of election commissions, involving close to one million commission members. The CEC, the 89 Subject Election Commissions (SEC) and the approximately 2,750 Territorial Election Commissions (TEC) are permanent bodies with a four-year mandate. Precinct Election Commissions (PEC), numbering approximately 95,000, were appointed specifically for these elections and established no later than one month before polling day. The majority of PEC members had previous experience drawn mainly from having administered the recent State Duma elections.

Each of the registered candidates has the right to appoint one non-voting member to each of the election commissions. Representation of candidates through the appointment of non-voting members to commissions at all levels is an important transparency safeguard. Regrettably, below the level of the CEC and some SECs, presidential candidates generally failed to make such appointments to observe the pre-election day process, apparently for lack of sufficient numbers of supporters willing or able to take on the role of a non-voting commission member, or for lack of funds to pay them.

The PEL ensures a high degree of transparency through access of candidates, their financial representatives and proxies, as well as journalists, to all stages of the electoral process. Nevertheless, transparency was found to be wanting in some aspects. Notably, guaranteed

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<sup>5</sup> For example, the Deputy Head of the Ryazan regional administration recruited proxies for the campaign of Mr. Putin. See also comments on bias in the “get out the vote” campaign run by municipal authorities in south Moscow, in section VII, below.

access to commissions applies only to formal sessions and commissions' work with sensitive materials, while access to the work of working groups is only guaranteed for the interested parties. The law also does not require public announcement of sessions of commissions, but only notification to persons who are entitled to be present. While the CEC, many SECs and some TECs publicised their sessions in any event, a public display/announcement of sessions would serve to advance the transparency of the work of the commissions.

Limitation of the rights of domestic non-partisan observers to the election day is another aspect of transparency that should be improved in line with the Copenhagen Document. Explicit provision for both domestic and international observers to observe the work of electoral commissions in the pre-election period should be included in the legislation.<sup>6</sup>

## **B. ADMINISTRATION OF THE ELECTIONS**

In recognition of the exceptional scale of the operation, the CEC should be credited with having ensured that the election administration, particularly in the preparatory phase, was generally efficient and well coordinated. However, observations on election day, particularly during the vote count, revealed that there is a need for improvement in the understanding of and adherence to procedures at the level of the PECs and TECs (see section XIII, below). Sometimes the need to accelerate the voting process, particularly where several elections were held simultaneously, led to the administrative procedures being streamlined in a way that undermined safeguards in the system. For instance, PEC members would each carry out all of the procedures in parallel lines instead of dividing tasks between the members, which provides for mutual checks on the process.<sup>7</sup>

On election day, the TECs premises were in some instances organized in a manner that limited transparency, by making it difficult for observers or candidate proxies to witness the whole process at TEC level. Transparency at this level of election administration could be enhanced by attempting to provide a single room for the different functions performed by the TECs, including the data entry of results into the "Gas Vybory" system, the checking of documents and receipt of materials.

The organisation of the work of electoral commissions relies for logistical support on the local administration. Although the BGL seeks to limit the extent of involvement of the local administration by specifying some of the supportive roles permitted in Art. 20(16) BGL, as well as naming responsibilities of the electoral commissions in Art. 50(1) BGL, an element of vagueness remains in those provisions, exacerbated by commentaries to Art. 20(16) BGL. The legislation would benefit from explicitly listing prohibited activities. Moreover, many TEC chairpersons and secretaries encountered by EOM observers are employees of the local administration or institutions connected to it, raising concerns that the election administration's separation from bodies of state power was not being adequately maintained.

Several examples highlighting these concerns were observed by the IEOM on election day. At the Khamovniki TEC (Moscow city), the three senior commission members, all

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<sup>6</sup> This is with the exception of the CEC whose Regulation specifically permits the attendance of international observers in section 32.

<sup>7</sup> Confidence in the polling procedures in most emerging democracies is enhanced by the sequential split of responsibilities for parts of the process between different PEC members: one checks documents, another takes signatures, yet another delivers the ballot, etc.



administration appointees, carried on the work of the TEC with other administration representatives, physically apart from other TEC members who were prevented by security personnel from entering the TEC operations room. Disproportionate influence on the work of the electoral commission by its local administration members was noted in Dmitrov (Moscow city). In Voronezh region on election day, representatives of the local administration were observed to be in many polling stations, and appeared to be trying to exert control over proceedings. The importance of clear delimitation of roles of local administration and electoral commissions was also demonstrated by instances of local administrations' bias in the "get out the vote" campaign (see section VII, below).

Different stages of the ballot printing and delivery process were observed by the EOM in Moscow, Kazan (Tatarstan), Ufa (Bashkortostan), Novosibirsk and Barnaul (Altay territory). There were concerns in some locations about maintenance of transparency safeguards and security measures. EOM observers noted a lack of knowledge among certain of their SEC interlocutors about initial procedures for delivery of electronic templates and the status of any electronic trace of the templates on the printers' systems. In Kazan, there were concerns about security of ballots at the printing house, and SEC members were absent at the time of observation. In Ufa the foil templates were not destroyed but kept signed and sealed by the printing house staff in the printing house in case a reprint was needed should the ballots be destroyed en route to their destinations. The control of sensitive materials by bodies other than the election administration, without its effective input, is of concern.

### C. VOTER LISTS

The CEC announced on 10 February that there were some 109.1 million persons registered to vote. As voter lists were subsequently updated, the CEC did not periodically announce a revised total of registered voters, as it had been recommended to do by the OSCE/ODIHR following the 2003 State Duma elections. The final figure for registered voters, established at the conclusion of voting on 14 March<sup>8</sup> and as announced with all final results on 23 March [see section XIV, below], was 108,064,281.

Comparison between voter lists as of December 2003, February 2004 and March 2004 reveal divergent regional patterns. There are instances of sudden expansion – in Moscow region the number of voters was increased by 6 per cent within a month, while in the Republic of Marii El the figure dropped by 4 per cent. Reasons for such sudden changes in the number of voters should be investigated and explained to enhance confidence in the integrity of the lists.

There was a commendably inclusive approach to the exercise of voters' rights, but its practical application in some cases raised concerns over control of voter lists. In addition to making significant financial outlays on dispatching mobile ballot boxes to remote locations for early voting, many SECs adopted measures to facilitate access to voting for as many voters as possible. These measures included, for example, the formation of polling stations at the airport and train station in Yekaterinburg exclusively for persons with absentee voting certificates (AVCs), and of polling stations especially for students in St. Petersburg, Khabarovsk and Novosibirsk.

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<sup>8</sup> On the basis of the voter lists prepared before election day plus voters added on election day on presentation of proof of residency or absentee voting certificate.

On election day the IEOM observed voters with no AVCs being permitted to vote in the special polling station in Novosibirsk which had no voter list of its own, without any crosschecking being done with their original polling stations. There was also an observed breach of the provision for AVCs in Khabarovsk, with the requirement for AVCs being waived by the chairman of PEC 0144 of Krasnoflotsky TEC.

Most SECs also established a special polling station where persons without residency registration or with temporary registration were able to vote. However, in Novosibirsk, Kemerovo and Volgograd, provision was made for such persons at one ordinary polling station in each TEC, thereby considerably multiplying the number of polling stations giving access to unregistered persons. IEOM observers in Novosibirsk were told that there would be no cross-checking between these PECs concerning such voters, except for the two such PECs in Novosibirsk city where this was to be done by half-hourly reporting of names of voters who had cast their vote. This provides no effective safeguard against multiple voting. A similar provision of half-hourly reports on voter names was made for the PECs in Volgograd.

Migrant populations such as internally displaced persons (IDP) frequently encounter difficulties in participating in the election process. IDPs residing outside camps are reportedly required to obtain AVCs from an electoral commission at their place of permanent residence. There are serious practical obstacles to this, particularly in the case of IDPs from conflict-affected areas, and thus it constitutes a considerable impediment to their participation in elections.

## **VI. REGISTRATION OF CANDIDATES**

### **A. NOMINATION**

Nomination to be a candidate for the presidency could be done in one of two ways:

1) Through self-nomination, with the support of an initiative group of at least 500 members. The initiative group was required to make the nomination, and then submit the necessary nominating documents to the CEC. The deadline for such submissions for this election was 1 January. Once the CEC accepts a nomination, the nominee must collect a minimum of 2 million signatures (with not more than 50,000 coming from any one subject of the Federation) and submit these to the CEC. The deadline was 28 January, whereupon the CEC had until 8 February to check the authenticity of the signatures, along with documents such as the nominee's income and property declarations, before deciding on whether to register the candidate;

2) By a political party or bloc. The deadline for party nominations was 6 January. If nominated by a political party or bloc that had had its proportional list elected to the current State Duma, the nominee was automatically registered as a candidate. If the party was not one elected to the State Duma, the nominee was required to follow the same process as those who were self-nominated and collect a minimum 2 million signatures for submission to the CEC.

For the 2004 presidential election, the CEC received 11 nominations, of which seven candidates ultimately secured registration. Two of these were automatic registrations on the basis of nominations by State Duma parties, from the CPRF and the LDPR. A nominee of the

Russian Party of Life and four who had self-nominations accepted went on to collect the necessary signatures and were registered by the CEC by the 8 February deadline.

One nominee, Viktor Gerashchenko, failed to secure registration as a result of having attempted to claim nomination by a parliamentary party. His nominating political party, the Party of Russia's Regions (PRR) was a part of the Homeland (*Rodina*) electoral bloc that had its proportional list elected to the State Duma in December 2003. Subsequent to the decision on nomination by the party, the Higher Council of Homeland agreed and gave authority to the PRR to nominate a candidate on its behalf. The CEC deemed this to be at odds with the PEL on the grounds that Homeland had failed to get itself re-registered for the Presidential Election,<sup>9</sup> and that there was no provision in the PEL permitting delegation of the right to nomination by the bloc to one of its constituent parties.<sup>10</sup>

Mr. Gerashchenko was nevertheless accepted by the CEC as a party nominee with the requirement to collect 2 million signatures, but he rejected this course of action and instead challenged the CEC's refusal of his automatic registration by appealing to the Supreme Court. His appeal was rejected on 6 February.

Two nominees, both businessmen, withdrew: Anzori Aksentyev-Kikalishvili on 27 January, citing as the main reason an "information blockade" on his election campaign by the mass media; and Vladimir Bryntsalov on 28 January, declaring that he did not want to detract from support for Mr. Putin.

The nomination of businessman German Sterligov was rejected by the CEC on 27 December 2003, on grounds that documentation submitted by his nominating group was not in conformity with the election legislation. According to the CEC, the possibility was offered to him to correct the errors and resubmit the application, but instead Mr. Sterligov lodged a Supreme Court appeal against the rejection of the documentation as submitted. The appeal was turned down on 9 January.

## B. SIGNATURE COLLECTION

As noted above, a nominee from a party or bloc that had had its proportional list elected to the current State Duma gained automatic registration as a presidential candidate.<sup>11</sup> Such nominees gain an advantage over other nominees who must comply with complex nomination<sup>12</sup> and registration requirements. The electoral authorities in the Russian Federation state openly that the intention is to steer the presidential election process towards one in which candidates are primarily parliamentary party nominees, and that the strict requirements of the self-nomination process are required to deter all but the most serious and well-organized of such candidates.

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<sup>9</sup> Art. 30 PEL.

<sup>10</sup> The CEC ruled that nomination could only be done in accordance with Art. 35(5) PEL.

<sup>11</sup> Provided that the requirements for a party conference and the decision on the nomination and appointment of proxies had been complied with in accordance with the Art. 32 and Art. 35, PEL.

<sup>12</sup> Nomination requirements for self-nominated candidates (those not supported by any political party) are particularly onerous, as their nominating group of 500 persons has to submit not only documentation of their meeting and nomination, but also the five hundred members of the initiative group must have their signatures in support of nomination verified before a public notary.

However, the requirement for a nominee to collect 2 million signatures in support of their registration, with no more than 50,000 coming from any one Federal Subject, is an unreasonably high hurdle which invites malpractice. While in theory self-nominated candidates had up to 48 days to collect the required 2 million signatures, in practice they had not completed the nomination procedures in order to be able to commence the collection of signatures until the end of December or beginning of January.<sup>13</sup> This left the candidates with four to five weeks to collect the signatures before the deadline for submission of signatures on 28 January.

No nominee was rejected after the signature collection phase. The signature authentication procedure conducted by the CEC, which is based on sampling in amounts defined in the PEL, revealed many formal technical errors which led to the invalidation of signatures (e.g. incomplete name of the proxy confirming the receipt of signatures, or of the collector; incomplete address of the signatory or the collector; date of signature judged by handwriting experts not to have been entered by the signatory). More seriously, a significant proportion of invalid signatures collected for some nominees was assessed to have been based on falsified data. However, the proportion of invalidated signatures was below the threshold (25 per cent of the sample) that would have led to registration being automatically refused.

Nevertheless, out of five nominees who collected signatures, three – Mr. Glazev, Mr. Rybkin and Dr. Hakamada – were considered by the CEC to have had such a high proportion of falsified data that the CEC passed the matter to the prosecutor's office.<sup>14</sup> The remaining two nominees had a lesser number of what may be seen as falsified data but there was no reference to the public prosecutor. For instance, signatures collected for the registration of Mr. Mironov were deemed to include 722 signatures made by a person other than the named signatory, of which 696 were in a single Federal Subject.

The verification procedure significantly relied on handwriting experts whose evidence led to the finding on the CEC working group level that 26.16 per cent of signatures collected for Mr. Rybkin were invalid and would have led to refusal of his registration. This was not upheld by the CEC, on the basis of evidence of proxies who confirmed that their own signatures certifying receipt of voters' signatures were in fact made by them, and which reduced the number of invalid signatures to 16 per cent.

There were credible allegations of administrative resources being deployed to assist the signature collection supporting the incumbent's registration. In Moscow, it was reported to EOM observers that housing superintendents in apartment buildings (who carry out a range of organizational and informational functions on behalf of the local administration) engaged in signature collection for Mr. Putin, having been recruited on the basis of lists provided to the Putin campaign team by local administrations. A similar allegation was made to observers in Barnaul. Instances of collection of signatures for Mr. Putin at workplaces by representatives of the management, which is against the law,<sup>15</sup> were reported to the EOM in Irkutsk,

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<sup>13</sup> 22 December – Mr. Putin; 29 December – Mr. Rybkin; 30 December – Mr. Glazev; 1 January – Dr. Hakamada.

<sup>14</sup> While provisions permit registration in spite of a number of signatures being obtained through use of unlawful means, the very fact of publicized references to the prosecutor's office could damage the campaign of the candidates and undermine the signature collection process.

<sup>15</sup> Art. 36(7) PEL

Khabarovsk and Rostov-na-Donu. One similar instance was confirmed in relation to collection of signatures to support Mr. Glazev in Sverdlovsk region.

### C. REGISTERED CANDIDATES

The seven registered candidates were as follows:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Nominated by</i>	<i>Registered</i>
Sergey Yurevich GLAZEV	Self-nominated	8 February
Irina Mutsuovna HAKAMADA	Self-nominated	8 February
Nikolay Mikhailovich KHARITONOV	CPRF	Automatic
Oleg Aleksandrovich MALYSHKIN	LDPR	Automatic
Sergey Mikhailovich MIRONOV	Russian Party of Life	6 February
Vladimir Vladimirovich PUTIN	Self-nominated	2 February
Ivan Petrovich RYBKIN	Self-nominated	7 February

Ivan Rybkin withdrew on 5 March. His candidacy had been surrounded by controversy from the beginning: he had not been in attendance at his registration hearing at the CEC, having gone absent from his home on 5 February, and his wife had filed a “missing person” report which gained much media attention, including internationally. Mr. Rybkin reappeared in Kiev, Ukraine, on 10 February, before returning to Moscow and subsequently departing for London where his principal acknowledged financial sponsor, Boris Berezovskiy, is based. He initially announced that he had been on a private trip, but later made allegations that during his stay in Kiev he had been held against his will by unidentified persons. Ukrainian authorities opened a criminal investigation into these allegations. Mr. Rybkin proceeded to conduct his campaign from London, but returned to Moscow to make his withdrawal announcement.

Mr. Rybkin’s withdrawal came before the legal deadline of 9 March, but after the ballot papers had been printed. Consequently, his name was crossed off manually on all ballot papers.

### D. “AGAINST ALL”

In addition to the choice between six candidates on the ballot paper, voters were also offered the option to vote “against all”.

Since elections are about representation, the “against all” option is difficult to reconcile with a standard definition of representative democracy - “against all” implies that voters may choose not to be represented at all. Choosing not to participate in the election, or choosing to cast an invalid ballot, should be considered indication enough of a voter’s discontent with the choice of candidates offered.

The method used to count votes “against all” and determine the result could also be considered controversial. At the point of determining turnout, votes “against all” are considered to have the same status as any other valid vote cast. However, at the point of determining the winner votes “against all” are in fact considered as invalid ballots and may

influence the result only if they prevail over each of the other choices. Voters who select the “against all” option may be unaware of the potential impact of their choice.

## VII. THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Campaigning for the 2004 Presidential Election was generally very low key. The few campaign events taking place were organized around visits by some candidates to the regions; otherwise there was almost no visible campaign activity beyond what was present in the media (see Section VIII, below). Facing an incumbent who was perceived to be in an unassailable position as frontrunner, the other candidates showed little motivation to make any significant investment in campaigning, and some also lacked financial and human resources to do so.

In the many parts of the country where other elections were taking place contemporaneously at various levels of the administration, the visibility of the campaign for those local contests far surpassed that for the Presidential Election.

Lack of a political party infrastructure obviously hampered some self-nominated candidates. Having failed to carry the official backing of her party, Union of Right Forces (SPS), Dr. Hakamada reportedly could rely on only a minor part of the party’s local organizations to campaign on her behalf. Mr. Glazev saw his capacity to organize campaigning undermined by an internal dispute in the Homeland bloc. His self-nominated candidacy contributed to a split in the bloc leadership, and Mr. Glazev appeared to lose some of his campaign infrastructure through failing to carry the allegiance of some of the bloc’s activists at regional and local level.

There was also speculation that factional rivalry inside the CPRF, evident since shortly after the 2003 State Duma elections, was affecting Mr. Kharitonov’s campaign, compounding a reportedly severe lack of campaign funds. This did not appear to be borne out by Mr. Kharitonov’s surprisingly strong result in the election, however (see section XIV, Election Results, below).

Mr. Glazev was clearly obstructed in getting his campaign message across to voters in some locations. This was most evident in Nizhny Novgorod, where the electricity supply was cut off at a venue where he was due to give a press conference. EOM observers received allegations that in Yekaterinburg an absence of local media coverage of a campaign visit by Mr. Glazev was upon the recommendation of local authorities. Mr. Glazev’s campaign team told observers that it had faced difficulties, allegedly instigated by the Sverdlovsk regional and Yekaterinburg city administrations, in obtaining a venue for a press conference. When the press conference went ahead on 26 February at a Yekaterinburg museum, with EOM observers in attendance, Mr. Glazev reported that the local fire department had requested closure of the venue that morning for a fire inspection that had not been previously announced. The press conference was subsequently interrupted by police reportedly responding to a telephoned bomb threat. A similar allegation was made to the EOM that local authorities or media owners had recommended against media coverage of a Glazev campaign visit to Novosibirsk. As reported by the CEC, however, no formal complaints concerning this obstruction were made.

Against this background of a low-key campaign that largely failed to capture public attention, a series of actions by the incumbent President deftly seized the news agenda during the second half of the official media campaign period. In an apparent assumption of the electoral outcome, President Putin dismissed the government of Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov on 24 February. The President stated that it would enable voters to assess the new government, and that having it in place before the end of the election campaign would provide the stable framework needed for speedy implementation of his programme of reform. On 1 March the President nominated Mikhail Fradkov as the new Prime Minister. In the following days the media was dominated by the appointment of other members of the new government.

The low-key campaign and apparent predictability of the election outcome produced concerns about voter turnout, and consequently a vigorous “get out the vote” advertising campaign was put in place by the electoral administration and some local authorities. There was clear evidence that the imagery and messages in some of this advertising were not neutral, but could be understood to promote the incumbent. Notably, a public information announcement by the Central Election Commission screened on State-controlled countrywide television contained numerous elements similar or identical to campaign advertisements produced by United Russia in the recent State Duma elections. Subliminal pro-Putin messages were also apparent in the wording of “get out the vote” posters produced by the South Moscow district prefecture.<sup>16</sup>

Despite an appeal by CEC Chairman Aleksandr Veshnyakov to local administrations to exercise restraint and comply with the law in their voter mobilization efforts, only in some cases were inappropriate “get out the vote” activities by the local administration met with an appropriate response from the authorities. In Khabarovsk, a hospital director was reprimanded for asking people seeking admission to hospital to produce an AVC, while in St. Petersburg a housing administrator was ordered by the SEC to withdraw a letter sent to housing superintendents in one city district instructing them to ensure a 70 per cent turnout for the elections. EOM observers reported that elsewhere the involvement of local administrations in increasing turnout continued to be vigorous. The deputy governor of Novosibirsk appealed to the electorate stating that “it was [their] constitutional duty to vote.” Moscow mayor Yury Luzhkov launched a similar initiative on 12 March that could be interpreted not only to aim at increasing turnout, but also to contain subliminal messages aimed at encouraging voters to vote for Mr. Putin.

Political pressure on election commissions was credibly alleged in Bashkortostan, where PEC chairpersons in the town of Neftekamsk were ordered at a meeting with a representative of the republican president to produce a high turnout and to encourage voters to vote for the incumbent. Similar allegations were investigated by EOM observers in Krasnodar, where PECs had been instructed to produce a 66 per cent turnout.

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<sup>16</sup> E.g. “Reliability, the main thing on the way!” – in Russian “Nadezhnost – Glavnoe v Puti!”.

## **VIII. THE MEDIA**

### **A. BACKGROUND TO THE MEDIA IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

Television is the main source of public information in the Russian Federation. Two State-controlled TV channels, First Channel and TV Russia, have countrywide outreach, while the most significant private TV stations are NTV and Ren TV.

Despite a pluralistic media environment, the two State-controlled television channels with countrywide outreach represent a dominant source of public information on political life in the Russian Federation. Since the 2000 presidential election, it is widely considered that administrative restrictions and obstructions have been used to eliminate the most significant and influential media outlets that attempted to offer an editorial line independent of or critical of the presidency or government. With the closure in the past two years of two nationwide TV channels with a more independent editorial line, the number of influential sources of information able or willing to offer independent or critical reporting has been sharply reduced.

The Russian electronic media still does not facilitate the exchange of opinions, public debate, confrontation, investigation and commentary that would offer the public fully informed, analyzed and assessed views of persons and groups seeking elected office. For the 2004 presidential election, strong and independent media providing unbiased coverage of the campaign, thereby enabling the electorate to make an informed choice, were lacking. This is likely to remain so until the State-controlled broadcasters are transformed into a genuinely independent public service media.

As regards print media, State-controlled and private newspapers offer a wide range of views and political positions. However, while the main daily newspapers have a relatively high circulation, they tend to be distributed only in the main urban areas.

Most regional media outlets are economically dependent on local authorities. As such, they lack editorial independence and often face various forms of impediment forcing them to adjust their comments to what is considered acceptable by the local administration. In the regions, EOM observers noted reluctance by many journalists to approach contentious issues for fear that this might prompt the local administration to impose various administrative obstacles against them. For instance in Bashkortostan, the Novyi Telekanal TV station was the subject of an investigation due to alleged irregularities in its use of frequencies for broadcasting, resulting in the suspension of licence. Following the previous closures of other private media outlets, there is currently no independent local source of information in this republic.

### **B. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE MEDIA**

The election legislation includes detailed provisions (Articles 45-53 of the PEL; and 44-52 of the BGL) governing the conduct of electronic and print media in the Russian Federation during a pre-election campaign, inter alia providing for free and paid broadcast time and print space to all candidates on equal conditions for campaign purposes. The law also requires equal media access for all candidates, and that news items on election events must be separated from editorial commentaries.



The State-controlled TV channels with a countrywide outreach each allocated one hour of free time for regular debates among candidates or their representatives, and for individual candidates' campaign spots. Through a lottery on 9 February 2004, the CEC distributed this free time among six of the seven candidates; Mr. Putin declined to utilize the free time for campaign spots or to participate in TV debates with other candidates.

A party or bloc whose candidate received less than 2 per cent of the vote must reimburse in full the costs of providing any free broadcasts and print space they have received from state broadcasters and publishers. If the party nominating a candidate had failed to pay after the previous elections they may be unable to use free air time at presidential elections.<sup>17</sup> Candidate Mironov had his free air time reduced as a result of his nominating party having failed to reimburse costs incurred for broadcasts in the campaign for the December 2003 State Duma elections.

[See also section IX, part A, for complaints and appeals relating to the media coverage of the election.]

### C. MEDIA MONITORING

The EOM monitored five television stations and ten daily and weekly newspapers, using a proven methodology of qualitative and quantitative analysis.<sup>18</sup> The monitoring exercise ran for the whole period of the official media campaign, from 12 February through to the start of the "media silence" on 13 March. The EOM sought to evaluate whether the media provided impartial and balanced coverage of the political contestants and campaign issues.

As recipients of State resources, State-controlled media have an enhanced duty to ensure balanced and fair treatment between candidates. However, the State-controlled media comprehensively failed to meet its legal obligation to provide equal treatment to all candidates, displaying clear favouritism towards Mr. Putin. While the other candidates had access to television and other media, through free airtime and televised debates, their access to the primetime news programmes and current affairs programmes on the State-controlled broadcasters was limited.

According to the Administrative Code, the CEC has the power to apply to a court for a media organization to be fined if it is considered to have breached the election legislation. The CEC failed to take adequate remedial action towards bias in the State-controlled media and thus did not meet its obligation to ensure that established conditions for election campaigning are observed for all candidates (Art. 19(12) PEL).

The State-controlled broadcasters monitored by the EOM generally complied with the free airtime provisions of the election law. The televised debates provided an opportunity for candidates to present their messages, although Mr. Putin's choice not to participate, as was his

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<sup>17</sup> Art. 52(2) PEL.

<sup>18</sup> Television: State-controlled *First Channel, Russia TV* and *TV Centre*; Private *NTV* and *Ren TV*. Newspapers: State *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* and *Parlamentskaya Gazeta*; Private *Kommersant*, *Moskovskiy Komsomolets*, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, *Novaya Gazeta*, *Argumenty i Fakty*, *Zhizn*, *Izvestiya* and *Moskovskie Novosti*. For the full EOM media monitoring results, see [www.osce.org/odihr/elections/field\\_activities/2004\\_russia/](http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/field_activities/2004_russia/).

right, reduced the value of these debates to voters. The democratic deficit thus created in the campaign environment by the other candidates' lack of opportunity to address questions and comments to the incumbent President on his performance in office was compounded by the general absence of critical mass media posing such questions in its reporting. Regrettably, for reasons that are unclear, candidates did not use their full entitlement to free airtime on regional electronic media, in some regions failing to avail themselves of this entitlement completely.

Outside the free airtime, the electronic media news and information coverage during the election campaign was characterized by extensive reporting of Mr. Putin's activities. As he was entitled to do, Mr. Putin effectively refrained from conventional campaign discourse, but on the State-controlled television channels he received coverage far beyond what was reasonably proportionate to his role as Head of State. In the four weeks preceding the election, First Channel provided in total more than four hours of its political and election news coverage to Mr. Putin. All of the coverage was overwhelmingly positive. The next most covered candidate, Mr. Kharitonov, received some 21 minutes of the prime time news coverage. TV Russia devoted more than two hours of its primetime news to the incumbent President, with an overwhelmingly positive tone; by comparison, Mr. Glazev received a total of only some four minutes of mainly negative and neutral coverage. TV Centre, a television station controlled by the Moscow City administration, allocated one hour and 25 minutes to Mr. Putin, with overwhelmingly positive coverage, while Mr. Glazev received some seven minutes of mainly negative and neutral coverage. This station also aired some primetime news items discrediting Mr. Glazev.

In contrast to the coverage by State-funded TV channels, private broadcasters monitored by the EOM provided more balanced coverage, with a greater diversity of views. For example, Ren TV allocated 35 minutes of its primetime news coverage to Mr. Putin, but 35 per cent of this coverage was negative. By comparison, Dr. Hakamada received some 22 minutes of mostly positive and neutral coverage. NTV allocated more than 31 minutes to Mr. Putin that was mainly positive or neutral. In its analytical programmes, such as *Svoboda Slova* and *Namedni*, this television station offered its viewers a more balanced picture of the main contestants and the State leadership. NTV decided not to air election debates or special broadcasts for campaign programming, on the grounds that Mr. Putin's refusal to take part in the debates lowered viewer interest.

The print media provided a plurality of views, but showed strong bias either in favour of or against Mr. Putin. Consequently, voters could form an objective view of the campaign only if they read several publications. State-controlled newspapers met the legal requirements in regard to free space to all candidates,<sup>19</sup> but were biased in their political and campaign coverage, clearly supporting the incumbent President and largely ignoring the other candidates. For example, *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* devoted almost 80 per cent of its political and campaign coverage to the incumbent, with an overwhelmingly positive slant. The next most covered candidate received some 8 per cent of the coverage.

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<sup>19</sup> Not all the candidates availed themselves of the opportunity to fully utilize free space to advertise their messages to voters.

Of the privately owned newspapers monitored by the EOM, *Argumenti i Fakty*, *Komsomolskaya Pravda* and *Zhizn* showed their support to the incumbent, whilst *Novaya Gazeta* and *Moskovskie Novosti* were clearly against him. Another private paper, *Kommersant*, offered its readers a more balanced picture of the campaign.

Regional television generally devoted very little news coverage to candidates' campaign activities. In their primetime news, the regional State-controlled and private broadcasters were biased in favour of the incumbent: out of 20 regional media outlets monitored by the EOM,<sup>20</sup> 13 showed overt support to Mr. Putin, including six<sup>21</sup> which devoted all of their political and election news broadcasting to him. Three of the monitored outlets gave no coverage at all to the candidates.

## IX. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

### A. MEDIA-RELATED COMPLAINTS

Most of the complaints addressed to the CEC concerned the media. The CEC reported receiving a total of 31 media-related complaints, of which 14 were received on the federal level and 17 were referred from lower-level election commissions. Most of the decisions and replies in relation to these did not involve a session of the working group on the media,<sup>22</sup> but were dealt with by way of delegation to a member of the CEC. The CEC working group on the media held only one session at which it considered three complaints concerning the State-controlled television.

Mr. Glazev complained to the CEC that some of his free campaign broadcasts were not aired on State-controlled television and radio, as required by law. The CEC found that Radio Russia had not broadcast Mr. Glazev's spot on 24 February due to "technical problems", and that First Channel had broadcast a television spot at a different time than scheduled, which according to the CEC, "did not mean that the channel had failed to fulfill its legal obligation towards candidate Glazev." The CEC, however, reminded the State-controlled television of its obligation to follow the schedule of the free airtime allocation as set by the CEC.

Dr. Hakamada and Mr. Kharitonov separately complained to the CEC about a lengthy broadcast of Mr. Putin's meeting on 12 February with his campaign proxies which was shown live on one of the State-controlled channels and received significant coverage especially in the subsequent news broadcasts of State-controlled TV stations. Dr. Hakamada and Mr. Kharitonov contended that the coverage breached the principle of equal treatment of

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<sup>20</sup> St. Petersburg, Rostov-na-Donu, Krasnodar, Volgograd, Nizhniy Novgorod, Kazan, Izhevsk, Ufa, Novosibirsk, Barnaul and Irkutsk

<sup>21</sup> Local branches of State-controlled TV Russia in Ufa, Izhevsk, Novosibirsk and St. Petersburg; Efir TV Kazan and STN Volgograd.

<sup>22</sup> In September 2003, the CEC established a working group on the media to assist in overseeing compliance with the rules on allocation of free airtime, publication of opinion polls and illegal campaigning. The working group included CEC members, the Deputy Minister of Press and Broadcasting and mainly journalists from the State-controlled media outlets.

candidates in information programmes,<sup>23</sup> and that the airtime should have been paid for on the grounds that it constituted campaigning.<sup>24</sup>

While the CEC identified the amount of airtime given to Mr. Putin's speech in a single day (12 February, 57 minutes on First Channel and 62 minutes on TV Russia) to be "more than is usually given to a report of campaign events" and "under certain conditions, the presentation of election-campaign events of this candidate may be viewed as favouritism", it rejected both complaints. The CEC ruled that the programming was aired at the TV channels' own initiative in reflecting public interest and to inform the electorate, and as such it was impossible to prove the intent of the State-controlled TV channels to campaign in favour of Mr. Putin. The CEC did not find any discrimination against the two complainants by the State-controlled TV channels as there was no evidence that the two channels would refuse to broadcast coverage of similar events by other candidates. According to the CEC, both channels announced their readiness to guarantee equal news treatment of the candidates over the course of the pre-election campaign period.

First Channel and TV Russia failed to honour these guarantees to the CEC. Not only did the State-controlled TV channels fail to allocate equivalent coverage of other candidates' meetings with their election proxies, but, as noted above (see section VIII), they also significantly failed to guarantee equal news treatment over the course of the entire election campaign.

This clear breach of the legal provision for equal treatment of candidates was not pursued. Given past problems of media bias in electoral coverage, the CEC's acceptance of the TV channels' guarantees did not provide for effective remedy, and the violation continued without any sanction.

The 30 October 2003 Constitutional Court decision differentiating journalistic analysis of election-related events from prohibited campaigning constituted an improvement in the media situation regarding election coverage. However, the current interpretation of the Constitutional Court decision and its requirement to have evidence of subjective intention of campaigning for something to constitute campaigning, has had the result of no action whatsoever being taken in relation to the Kharitonov and Hakamada complaints. The current interpretation of that decision fails to provide means to create a balanced media environment.

Dr. Hakamada appealed the CEC's decision to the Supreme Court, which on 1 March referred the matter back to the CEC on a point of procedure. The CEC on 9 March again rejected the complaint on the basis of the same findings, but within the administrative code. The substantive appeal before Basmanniy District Court was also rejected, the court accepting the CEC reasoning.

The CEC working group on the media has as one of its expressly stated competencies the scrutiny of campaigning material (including audio-visual material) for compliance with the law. Queries relating to the refusal by media houses to broadcast campaign slots for Mr. Rybkin containing footage from an interview with Mr. Putin were referred to the Ministry of

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<sup>23</sup> By law (Art. 46(2) PEL; Art. 45(2) BGL), candidates are to have equal access to the media.

<sup>24</sup> On the basis of Art. 48(5) BGL, which states that election campaigning shall be paid for exclusively from relevant electoral funds.

Press for determination of a point of statutory interpretation as to whether Mr. Putin's permission was required given that the broadcast used his image, or whether there was an exemption to this requirement because it involved use of his opinion (Art. 49(7) PEL). The ambiguity in the legislation was resolved by the Ministry's advice that consent was necessary.

## **B. OTHER COMPLAINTS AND INVESTIGATIONS**

Supporters of Dr. Hakamada complained to the CEC *inter alia* about its "get out the vote" public announcements closely resembling United Russia campaign advertising. The complaint was rejected in spite of the strong resemblance, as noted above (see section VII), with an explanation that the clip was intended to instill patriotic feelings rather than to promote a particular party.

Dr. Hakamada made a number of complaints to various courts including lodging a civil libel suit against rival candidate Sergey Mironov. Mr. Glazev, in addition to his complaint concerning his free airtime clips (see above) lodged complaints of libel and "black PR", as well as complaining to the office of the prosecutor in relation to a reported allegation of bribery of voters during signature collection on his behalf in Nizhny Novgorod. The complaint was dismissed upon investigation.

The prosecutor's office informed the EOM that it had commenced investigations in relation to signature collections for Dr. Hakamada in Moscow and Tambov, and in relation to Mr. Glazev and Mr. Rybkin in Tombov, Udmurtia and Moscow. While the information was referred to the relevant regional prosecutors' offices by the CEC shortly before 11 February, only one of the investigations was completed and information dismissed a week before the elections. The impact of the unresolved criminal prosecutions on the campaigning of those candidates should have warranted urgent attention to those matters.

## **X. PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN**

OSCE gender policy is guided by the principles put forward in the Copenhagen Document (1990), which outlines key non-discrimination provisions and commitments to political rights and the rule of law. The principal OSCE standards on gender equality are included in the Moscow Document (1991) and the Charter for European Security (1999), both of which commit participating States to promote equality between men and women. Article 19 of the Russian Constitution guarantees equality of rights of men and women.

Despite this solid legal framework, and as evidenced during the 2003 State Duma elections, women's participation in federal-level politics continues to decline. The number of women represented in the State Duma currently accounts for 9 per cent of the total composition. Women are generally better represented in local government, however.

EOM observers reported that women were extensively involved in the election administration, with many holding senior positions such as the chairperson of election commissions, especially at the TEC and PEC levels.

Gender issues did not feature in any of the candidates' campaign programmes, and none of the candidates was observed to target women voters with gender-specific messages during the

campaign. Mr. Kharitonov, Mr. Malyshev and Mr. Mironov had the option to draw on the official gender policy of their nominating parties, but did not do so.<sup>25</sup>

In a CEC voter mobilization TV spot, children were asked to draw images of the president as they perceived the office holder.<sup>26</sup> On 3 March Dr. Hakamada made a complaint to the CEC on the basis that all pictures portrayed were male figures, thus suggesting to voters that the president was naturally a man. The complaint was rejected.

Although she received only 3.85 per cent of the vote, Dr. Hakamada's performance in the 2004 election was nevertheless the best of any woman who has run for President of the Russian Federation. In 1996 Galina Starovoitova's efforts to register as a presidential candidate were frustrated by her failure to gather sufficient signatures. Ella Panfilova ran in the 2000 election and received 1 per cent of votes cast.

## **XI. ISSUES RELATING TO MINORITIES IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS**

Issues relating to the treatment of and relations between the Russian Federation's national groups were largely absent from the election campaign.

The right to participate in election processes is tied to citizenship and regulated by the PEL, BGL and the Russian Federation Constitution. As most minority groups in the Russian Federation hold Russian Federation passports and are registered at their permanent place of residence, the overwhelming majority of Russia's minority populations face no legal impediments to vote. However, the situation of the Meskhetian Turks in Krasnodar territory was again brought to the attention of the OSCE/ODIHR during the work of the EOM, and demonstrated that the institutional and legislative framework may discourage or deny to some minority communities the full realization of their political and human rights. This is in contravention not only of the Copenhagen Document, but also other international legal documents to which the Russian Federation is a signatory.

The Federal Laws "On RF Citizenship" and "On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the RF" greatly affected the legal status and rights of resident migrant populations from the former Soviet Union who did not obtain RF citizenship by the time the legislation became effective. The Krasnodar territory's administration continued to refuse to grant permanent residency documentation to Meskhetian Turks and other resident minorities on the basis of regional legislation, with the effect that several thousand members of minority communities were unable to obtain Russian Federation passports despite being entitled to citizenship. They were therefore unable to realize a number of rights that were contingent on citizenship, including the right to take part in elections.

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<sup>25</sup> The points on gender within the official party programmes of the CPRF, LDPR and the Party of Life reflect the traditional, family-based definition of the role of women in society rather than politics. In the case of the LDPR, gender equality is openly questioned.

<sup>26</sup> "Shto takoe, president?" – "What is the president?"

## **XII. DOMESTIC OBSERVERS**

The legal provisions to allow a fuller role for domestic non-partisan observers remain lacking. There is an absence of provisions for any domestic non-partisan observers to have access to the electoral administration prior to election day, and the requirement to be an “All-Russia” public association to qualify to observe on election day appears disproportionate in a country the size of the Russian Federation.<sup>27</sup> Such provisions restrict the participation of civil society in the electoral process, a significant commitment in paragraph 8 of the Copenhagen Document. On election day, domestic non-partisan observers were present in one third of polling stations visited by IEOM observers.

On the other hand, the rights of candidate-nominated observers to monitor the election process on election day are well protected by the election laws, while the non-voting members, proxies and candidates have access to the pre-election period and in the voting and counting periods. It is regrettable that none of the opposition candidates appeared able to deploy observers in any significant numbers on election day, and thus apply this important transparency safeguard. The combined efforts of the campaign headquarters of Dr. Hakamada, Mr. Glazev and Mr. Kharitonov are reported to have covered 30 per cent of polling stations through appointment of both observers and non-voting members.

## **XIII. OBSERVATION OF VOTING AND COUNTING**

### **A. VOTING**

IEOM observers made a positive assessment of voting in 95 per cent of polling stations visited.<sup>28</sup> Overwhelmingly, voting was conducted in a manner that was generally procedurally correct. Occasional lapses in certain procedures were noted,<sup>29</sup> but in the polling stations where these occurred they were mostly judged not to be of a scale or character to affect observers’ overall positive evaluations.

However, breaches of secrecy of the vote occurred to a significant extent. Open voting was observed in 22 per cent of polling stations, with little or no discouragement from PEC members and in many cases with their active facilitation, for example by the provision of tables and chairs which voters could use instead of entering voting booths.

Instances of group voting were also noted in one third of polling stations observed. In nearly 80 per cent of such cases this appeared to be family voting. Although this is a consequence from past practices, it is prohibited in law, and PECs have a duty to prevent it.

The persistence of open voting and group voting, which are breaches of paragraph 7.4 of the Copenhagen Document, are particularly regrettable as, in response to an OSCE/ODIHR

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<sup>27</sup> This provision came into effect in 2002. To be registered as an “all-Russia public association”, an organisation must be registered, with a minimum number of members, in at least half of the 89 federal subjects in the Russian Federation.

<sup>28</sup> Voting was observed by the IEOM at approximately 1,200 polling stations.

<sup>29</sup> This was particularly the case with procedures upon opening of a polling station. For example, in one quarter of the 115 polling stations where opening procedures were observed the PEC failed to count and record the number of unused Absentee Voting Certificates before the polling station was opened.

recommendation following the 2003 State Duma elections, the CEC had assured the EOM that revised instructions had been issued to all electoral commissions to prevent such practices. In some instances, PEC chairpersons interviewed by IEOM observers stated that the provision of tables and chairs for open voting was for the greater convenience of the voters, and they were apparently oblivious to instructions that only voting booths should be used, as well as to the prohibition on group voting.

The experimental use of automated vote scanning machines in around 500 polling stations in Moscow and St. Petersburg included instructions about the handling of ballot papers that failed to guarantee that the voter's choice would not be visible. The violation of the secrecy of the vote that this invited was observed on election day in 16 per cent of polling stations visited where scanning machines were in use. The provision of voting machines that could scan a ballot inserted either way, rather than just face down, compounded this problem.

IEOM observers noted a lack of uniformity of ballot boxes, some of which were considered unsuitable and insecure. Similarly, observers noted that the arrangement of voting booths was frequently not suitable to enable voters to cast their vote comfortably or in secret. The IEOM is aware that the electoral authorities are in the process of testing a variety of alternative technologies and facilities for voting.<sup>30</sup> However, pending the widespread implementation of these new technologies, measures should be taken to improve and ensure the integrity of the existing technologies and procedures, including ballot boxes and voting booths.

There were observed instances in which procedures relating to mobile ballot boxes were not strictly adhered to, with ballot papers being despatched from polling stations in greater quantities than there were corresponding requests from voters. The OSCE/ODIHR had made a specific recommendation on this issue following the 2003 State Duma elections. Secrecy of the ballot during mobile voting was not strictly maintained, with voting in voters' homes occasionally being observed to take place openly in front of PEC members, with no effort on the latter's part not to view the voter's choice.

IEOM observers reported instances of voters being intimidated in 10 polling stations. While this is only 1 per cent of the sample of polling stations observed, intimidation is a serious violation of the electoral process. One of the polling stations was PEC 0924 in Tosnensky TEC (Leningrad region), where a candidate-nominated observer, representing Mr. Putin, was seen to be directing voters as to the procedures, attempting to see the voters' choice on the ballot paper before it was put into the box, and behaving in a hostile manner towards those who had not voted for Mr. Putin. The observers noted that PEC members were entirely passive towards this.

Allegations received by IEOM observers in Khabarovsk in the days before the election that students would be compelled to turn out to vote appeared to be confirmed by election day observation at a dozen PECs including 0158 and 0173 of Krasnoflotsky TEC and PEC 0190 of Tsentralny TEC, as students who voted had a stamp entered into their student identity document (the document that is also required, inter alia, to register to sit examinations) by youth organization staff.

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<sup>30</sup> In addition to the experimental use of scanning machines during the Presidential Election and the recent State Duma elections, the CEC informed the EOM that it would next test touch-screen computerized voting machines.



Military voting was observed in some instances to take place in circumstances that appeared to breach the principle that voting should be voluntary. For example, at polling stations in Khabarovsk soldiers were observed entering polling stations in a marching line, and being called to vote in the order that their names appeared on the voter list.

Police were present in two thirds of observed polling stations inside the room where voting was taking place, and in over 70 per cent of such polling stations IEOM observers determined that this was not at the request of the PEC Chairperson, which is the requirement in law. In the period up to election day, and on election day itself, there was a persistent lack of clarity as to who had authority to order the deployment of police in polling station voting rooms. At one point the CEC issued a reminder of the authority of election officials in this matter, although comments not consistent with this were made to the EOM by Ministry of Internal Affairs and lower-level election commission personnel. While the EOM recognizes the legitimate security concerns, clear provisions for the presence of police inside polling stations need to be promulgated.

Observers overwhelmingly made the assessment that the presence of police in the voting room was regarded by voters as unobtrusive. However, there were isolated instances where the role of the police aroused concern. At PEC 0555 of Kirovsky TEC, St. Petersburg, a policeman was observed taking note of voters' names and passing this information to unidentified persons. In several cases, IEOM observers were obliged to submit to the control of police officers at polling stations. At PEC 1769 of Odintsovo TEC, Moscow region, police were observed reporting turnout figures at two-hourly intervals to their local headquarters.

Furthermore, private security guards, whose presence is prohibited, were observed in the voting room at 7 per cent of polling stations.

## **B. COUNTING**

Counting and tabulation were assessed by IEOM observers as more problematic. Observers made a negative assessment of the overall conduct of the counting in 24 per cent of the polling stations where the count was observed.<sup>31</sup> The assessment was based on the PECs' failure to follow procedures for the sorting and counting of ballot papers, which produced a lack of transparency in the establishment of the results at those polling stations.

Some of the procedural lapses breached important safeguards of the integrity of the result. For example, before the ballot boxes were opened, in 14 per cent of observed counts, unused ballots were not counted and cancelled. In 18 per cent of observed counts the PEC did not review and certify each page of the voter list. Correct procedures for the handling and recording of ballots from early voting and election-day mobile ballot boxes were not followed in a significant proportion of observed counts.<sup>32</sup> In more than half of the observed counts the

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<sup>31</sup> The vote count was observed by the IEOM at 111 polling stations.

<sup>32</sup> In half of the observations the number of early voters and in one in five observations the number of the voters using a mobile ballot box on election day was not declared aloud. In one in ten of the observations the seals of these mobile ballot boxes were not checked. In 38 per cent (for early voters) and 23 per cent (election-day mobile voting) the ballots were not counted without sorting and/or the non-standard ballots removed. In 14 per cent (early voters) and 8 per cent (election-day mobile voting) the number of ballots was higher than the number of declared voters.

voters' choice on each ballot was not announced aloud, and in a quarter the results for each candidate were not announced before being entered in the protocol.

While in those counts observed by the IEOM, these breaches were overall not considered to lead to malpractice, there were nevertheless isolated cases where observed procedural breaches appeared to be with the intent to commit fraud. IEOM observers in Nizhegorod region were informed of a formal complaint made by a CPRF non-voting member of PEC 0173, Balakhinsky TEC, to the effect that after an initial count of the ballots (632 votes, a 47 per cent turnout), the PEC chairperson and secretary had left the room carrying the voter list, and returned around 45 minutes later with an additional 50 ballot papers marked for Mr. Putin. At PEC 0123 of Tagansky TEC, Moscow city, observers saw strong evidence of manipulating supplementary voter lists to carry out ballot box stuffing. At PECs 1256 and 1257 of Vykhchino-Zhulebino TEC, Moscow city, commission members were observed filling out additional ballot papers.

In 30 per cent of observed counts the PEC members appeared to have difficulties completing the results protocols, or failed to follow the proper timetable and sequence of entering data. The approach taken to the filling out of results protocols in many cases indicated that PECs were not treating the results as established during the counting as definitive. Protocols were observed being filled out in pencil rather than in pen, with the numbers being altered if they did not reconcile. PECs were also observed to complete protocols only after they had telephoned results to TECs, giving the appearance of collusion between the PECs and TECs about what results should be recorded. There were instances in which the issuing of protocols to domestic and international observers was not done until the original protocols had been checked, and in some cases altered without recount, at the responsible TECs.

At PEC 0187 of Tsentralny TEC, Khabarovsk, IEOM members saw a fictitious protocol compiled and submitted to the TEC, with no vote count having taken place. A subsequent investigation by the Khabarovsk SEC, at the request of the CEC, rejected the observations of the IEOM as unfounded, albeit it did not indicate whether the electoral materials had been reopened and recounted to check their consistency with the protocol from this PEC.

### **C. TABULATION OF RESULTS**

Observers made an overall positive assessment of the results input into the tabulation system in 93 per cent of the TECs observed.<sup>33</sup> However, observers did note a problem with a lack of transparency in data input. For example, 10 IEOM observer teams reported that they were not allowed to observe the process of input into the GAS Vybory automated tabulation system. In addition, observers also reported that candidate-appointed observers (proxies) were not allowed to observe the data entry in 17 TECs, and domestic non-partisan observers in 21 TECs.

At least two instances were observed (Novo Peredelkino TEC, Moscow, and Leninsky TEC, Bashkortostan) where there was circumvention of data entry safeguards associated with the GAS Vybory automated tabulation system, with data being tested first by entry into a separate computer equipped with what appeared to be a version of the GAS Vybory software, enabling figures to be altered to eliminate discrepancies before entry into the proper system. The CEC

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<sup>33</sup> Results input into the tabulation system was observed by the IEOM at 93 TECs.

has subsequently maintained to the EOM, however, that what had been observed would not have been technically feasible.

The ability of the PECs and TECs to correct the “errors in data summation” in the results from the PECs by returning the protocol to the PEC is of concern, given the potential difficulty in ensuring that the voting and non-voting members and observers are present for the purpose of rewriting the protocol. However, eventual correcting PEC protocol figures in the absence of all PEC members and observers jeopardizes transparency and accountability of the process and has the potential to undermine confidence.

There is a lack of clear guidance on how the TECs are to decide whether something constitutes “an error in data summation” warranting a correction,<sup>34</sup> or whether it is an error or inconsistency raising doubts as to the accuracy of the protocol and therefore requiring a recount.<sup>35</sup>

Since the termination of the EOM, the ODIHR was informed on 1 April that the Communist Party (CPRF) has filed a formal complaint with the Office of the Prosecutor. While the dates of the petition refer to the year 2003, it appears clear from the text that the complaint relates to the Presidential election of 2004, rather than the State Duma election of 2003. It alleges inconsistencies, some of them significant, between copies of protocols given to candidate-appointed observers (proxies) and the official results announced by the CEC. The OSCE/ODIHR looks forward to receiving additional information regarding the outcome of this case.

#### **XIV. ELECTION RESULTS**

Provisional results for the Presidential elections were announced by the CEC on 16 March, and the final results, with some minor changes, on 23 March.

According to the final results, a total of 69,504,609 voters took part in the elections, representing a turnout of 63.39 per cent. This compared to a turnout of around 68.5 per cent in the 2000 Presidential elections. The number of valid votes was 68,925,785 and the number of invalid votes was 578,824.

The results for each candidate (listed in the order in which they appeared on the ballot) were as follows:

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<sup>34</sup> Art. 73(31) PEL  
<sup>35</sup> Art. 75(16) PEL

	<b>Number of Votes Cast</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Sergey GLAZEY</b>	<b>2,850,063</b>	<b>4.10</b>
<b>Oleg MALYSHKIN</b>	<b>1,405,315</b>	<b>2.02</b>
<b>Sergey MIRONOV</b>	<b>524,324</b>	<b>0.75</b>
<b>Vladimir PUTIN</b>	<b>49,565,238</b>	<b>71.31</b>
<b>Irina HAKAMADA</b>	<b>2,671,313</b>	<b>3.84</b>
<b>Nikolay KHARITONOV</b>	<b>9,513,313</b>	<b>13.69</b>
<b>Against All</b>	<b>2,396,219</b>	<b>3.45</b>

The vote for Mr. Putin reflected a marked increase in his margin of victory compared to 2000, when he won in the first round with 52.94 per cent of the vote. Aside from some exceptionally high figures for Mr. Putin in some Federal Subjects (see below), particularly in the North Caucasus, his support was generally evenly spread throughout the Russian Federation. His lowest result was 54.82 per cent, in Belgorod region.

Putting him in second place, Mr. Kharitonov's result defied expectations, exceeding the 12.61 per cent achieved by the CPRF in the 2003 State Duma elections. At the start of the campaign Mr. Glazev, rather than Mr. Kharitonov, had been widely viewed by analysts as the main contender to place second to Mr. Putin. The vote "against all" nearly doubled, from 1.88 per cent in 2000.

In some Federal Subjects, the turnout figures, and the margin of victory for the incumbent, were implausible, and suggestive of fraud or manipulation. For example, the overall results for two of the North Caucasus republics, Ingushetia and Kabardino-Balkaria, showed turnout of 98.2 per cent and 98 per cent, with Mr. Putin's share of the vote at 96.2 per cent and 96.5 per cent, respectively. Similar or even higher figures were recorded in several individual TECs in Tatarstan, such as Atninsky (99.9 per cent turnout, 98.6 per cent for Mr. Putin) and Nurlatsky (99.7 per cent turnout, 99.7 per cent for Mr. Putin). Figures in excess of 94 per cent turnout, with a vote for Mr. Putin in excess of 91 per cent, were recorded also for the whole of Dagestan, Mordovia and Chechnya, as well as in individual TECs in Adygeya, Karachayevo-Cherkessia, Bashkortostan and North Ossetia-Alania.

The respective SEC as well as the CEC should investigate all "over 90 per cent" cases<sup>36</sup> to determine whether enforced participation or electoral fraud took place.

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<sup>36</sup> A sample of these cases is attached as Appendix 1.

## XV. RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of the following recommendations were previously made following the 2003 State Duma elections, and are reiterated here as they remain valid pending action by the authorities of the Russian Federation.

### **The Legal Framework**

1. A wide-ranging review of the election legislation should be undertaken with a view to clarifying and simplifying complex provisions, enhancing public understanding of legal provisions relating to elections, and facilitating voter education and training of election officials.
2. The election legislation should be revised to ensure independence of the election administration from the executive authorities. By legislative amendment or CEC instruction, clear regulations need to be established to regulate the presence of local or State administration officials in polling stations and define their role during the election campaign period and their role in relation to election administration bodies.
3. Consideration should be given to removing provisions allowing a vote “against all”.
4. Consideration should be given to lowering the signature requirement for self-nominated candidates to provide equal opportunities for candidates, while recognising the need for a sufficiently high signature threshold to discourage spurious nominations.
5. Provision should be made to allow correction of any formal or minor errors in the nomination and registration process, even a few days after the deadline for submission of nomination and registration documents.
6. Although a democratic election process invites participation from citizens, the election legislation should be reviewed to make clear that campaigning in favour of non-participation in the election process is not a violation, and this is consistent with the right to freedom of expression.
7. The election legislation should be amended, or the CEC should issue instructions after consultation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, to establish greater clarity in the regulations for the presence of police officers in polling stations and their role during election day.
8. Transparency of the work of election commissions should be enhanced by extending guaranteed access of candidates, their financial representatives and proxies, as well as journalists, to non-formal sessions, and by requiring public announcement of all sessions of election commissions.
9. Obstacles that restrict the involvement of domestic non-partisan observer groups in the electoral process, including the requirement that they be “All-Russia” public associations, should be removed from the electoral legislation. Domestic non-partisan observers should

be afforded the right to attend all sessions of election commissions and have access to all relevant information in a timely manner.

10. Explicit provision for international observers to observe the work of electoral commissions in the pre-election period should be included in the legislation.

### **Election Administration**

11. The CEC should take appropriate measures to prevent open voting and group voting. In addition to reiterating instructions to PEC officials and ensuring their adequate training in these matters, the CEC should examine whether the standard requirements for facilities at polling stations are adequate to prevent open voting and group voting, especially in conditions of high turnout. The CEC should also provide voter education on the obligation to vote in secret.
12. The CEC should ensure that any decision to introduce new technologies for voting should pay due attention to guaranteeing the secrecy of the vote.
13. Pending any substantive change in voting technologies, TECs and PECs should ensure that ballot boxes and voting booths meet the legal requirements to ensure the security and integrity of the ballot and the secrecy of the vote. Any decision by the CEC that involves retaining classic ballot boxes and voting booths should involve steps to upgrade the facilities.
14. The CEC should issue revised instructions on the procedures for mobile voting in order to strengthen the safeguards for secrecy of the vote and against fraud. Mobile ballots should only be issued for the number of voters who have requested the service.
15. The CEC should take steps to ensure that proper procedures for the counting of ballots and the tabulation of results are followed. Training sessions on how to correctly fill out election result protocol forms should be enhanced. Procedural violations should be investigated, and those who have violated the law should be held accountable.
16. Consideration should be given to the simplification of the procedures for filling out election result protocols. Attention should be given to enhancing the transparency of the tabulation process at the level of the TECs.
17. The CEC should issue a clarification of how TECs are to determine whether, during tabulation, something constitutes “an error in data summation” warranting a correction, or whether it is an error or inconsistency raising doubts as to the accuracy of the protocol and therefore requiring a recount.
18. A wide-ranging review of the voter registration procedures should be undertaken in order to achieve more accurate voter lists.
19. Voter list modifications between the time of submission of the list to the PECs and election day should be publicly announced. There should be periodical publication of revised figures, at minimum aggregated by TEC.

20. Methodology for verification of signature lists and the publication of the results of verification should be re-visited. Verification of signatures for the purposes of registration should be qualified so as to ensure that minor, formal errors do not result in the signature lists being declared invalid.
21. The CEC should revise the format of result protocols to include separate data on the number of voters added to the voter lists of every polling station on election day, on the basis of AVCs and on the basis of presenting proof of residency.
22. The handling of AVCs by the SECs and TECs should be opened for public scrutiny. This could be achieved through posting the serial numbers of the AVCs attributed to a TEC on the web page of the TEC or by introducing a new line in the SEC and TEC protocols in which the numbers of received, delivered and cancelled AVCs should be recorded.
23. The use of special polling stations for voters who do not have permanent residency registration should be carefully regulated to exclude the potential for double voting. The CEC should also issue revised instructions on the correct use of absentee voting certificates.
24. The CEC should investigate cases in those Federal Subjects and TECs where implausibly high turnout figures were reported, in order to prevent recurring malpractice.

## Media

25. The CEC and other supervisory bodies should ensure that all State-controlled media provide coverage of election campaigns in a neutral and equal manner. The CEC should consider conducting its own media monitoring during election campaigns in order to identify unequal and biased coverage of the campaign and to take prompt and effective action against those violating the law.
26. The federal authorities should move ahead promptly with plans to transform State-controlled broadcasters into an independent public service media that will provide citizens with impartial and politically balanced information on election contestants.
27. Consideration should be given to the creation of a media council, independent from the executive, with a clear mandate to oversee and control free, equal and fair access to the State-controlled broadcasters. Its membership should be diverse, with a professional composition including media professionals, civil society, judicial bodies and political parties. The members should not all be appointed by the President or by the Ministry of Press and Broadcasting. The appointment procedures for its members should guarantee its balanced pluralistic composition.
28. State authorities should refrain from interfering in the activities of journalists and other media personnel with a view to influencing elections. There should not be any intimidation, threats, closures, or pressure on the media by any member of the State or local administration.

## Minorities and women

29. Russian Federation authorities should undertake measures to address citizenship and registration issues to protect the basic human rights of resident migrant minorities and ensure that regional policies and actions of regional administrations are in compliance with federal legislation and the Russian Federation human rights commitments.
30. The authorities should undertake measures to simplify procedures for internally displaced persons (IDP) voting.
31. Political parties and candidates for political office could develop more focus on gender policies and address issues of special concern to women.

**The OSCE/ODIHR stands ready to cooperate with the Russian Federation authorities to address the concerns raised in this report, and is willing to offer its services in order to follow up on any of the recommendations outlined above.**



## APPENDIX 1 - Sample of Implausible Turnout and Result Figures

Sample of 188 “extreme” values of TEC turnout and result figures:

	Subject Election Commission	Territorial Election Commission	Turnout	Share of votes cast for V.Putin
	<b>Republic of Dagestan</b>	Republic-wide	<b>94.1%</b>	<b>94.6%</b>
1.		Agulskaya	94.1%	92.0%
2.		Akushinskaya	88.1%	96.3%
3.		Ahvahskaya	90.1%	93.4%
4.		Babayurtovskaya	90.1%	95.1%
5.		Botlihsкая	91.2%	97.6%
6.		Buynakskaya	94.6%	90.3%
7.		Buynakskaya gorods.	92.0%	94.5%
8.		Gergebilsкая	98.0%	96.0%
9.		Gumbetovskaya	92.8%	95.9%
10.		Gunibskaya	94.5%	95.9%
11.		Dagogninskaya gor.	96.0%	91.4%
12.		Dahadaevskaya	98.1%	97.9%
13.		Derbentskaya	95.5%	98.6%
14.		Derbentskaya gor.	90.0%	94.5%
15.		Dokuzparinskaya	96.9%	95.0%
16.		Izberbashkaya	97.4%	98.5%
17.		Kazbekovskaya	97.7%	95.4%
18.		Kaitagskaya	94.4%	95.7%
19.		Karabuhkentskaya	92.2%	96.2%
20.		Kaspiiskaya gor.	94.8%	93.4%
21.		Kayatenskaya	96.9%	97.2%
22.		Kiziliurtovskaya	95.2%	93.7%
23.		Kiziliurtovskaya gor.	91.8%	95.3%
24.		Kizliarskaya	91.0%	90.3%
25.		Kulinskaya	96.0%	97.6%
26.		Kurtomkalinskaya	93.5%	95.3%
27.		Kuharskaya	95.2%	91.7%
28.		Lakskaya	97.4%	94.3%
29.		Levashinskaya	94.4%	94.8%
30.		Magaramketskaya	97.1%	91.6%
31.		Mahachkala Kirovsk.	95.3%	95.6%
32.		Mahachkala Leninsk.	95.9%	96.1%
33.		Mahachkala Soviets.	93.0%	95.9%
34.		Novolakskaya	96.3%	91.6%
35.		Rutulskaya	89.2%	92.6%
36.		Suleiman-Stalskaya	92.1%	94.5%
37.		Tabasaranskaya	98.7%	97.7%
38.		Tarumovskaya	92.2%	93.4%

39.		Tliaratinskaya	92.2%	91.2%
40.		Uncukulskaya	95.6%	92.2%
41.		Hasaviurtovskaya	93.4%	95.6%
42.		Hasaviurtovskaya gor	94.9%	94.2%
43.		Hivskaya	92.9%	92.1%
44.		Hunzahskaya	96.2%	96.0%
45.		Cumadinskaya	91.0%	95.1%
46.		Cuntinskaya	99.5%	99.6%
47.		Charodinskaya	91.0%	94.1%
48.		Shamilskaya	97.7%	99.3%
49.		Uzno-Suhocumskaya	95.5%	96.6%
50.		Bezhtinskaya	96.8%	96.6%
	<b>Republic of Mordovia</b>	Republic-wide	<b>94.6%</b>	<b>91.3%</b>
1.		Ardatovskaya	96.1%	94.9%
2.		Atiurevskaya	98.0%	97.4%
3.		Atashevskaya	99.1%	98.5%
4.		Bolshebereznikov.	98.2%	94.9%
5.		Bolsheignatovskaya	99.3%	99.1%
6.		Dubenskaya	98.2%	98.2%
7.		Elnikovskaya	98.9%	94.9%
8.		Zubovopolianskaya	98.5%	98.7%
9.		Insarskaya	99.6%	99.0%
10.		Ichalkovskaya	99.0%	97.2%
11.		Kadoshkinskaya	99.3%	99.3%
12.		Kovikinskaya	99.3%	98.4%
13.		Kochkurovskaya	97.8%	93.8%
14.		Krasnoslobodzinska.	97.0%	92.1%
15.		Liambirskaya	95.5%	90.1%
16.		Romodanovskaya	97.7%	93.1%
17.		Oktiabarskaya	90.7%	88.2%
18.		Staroshaigovskaya	99.6%	99.1%
19.		Temnikovskaya	97.9%	95.2%
20.		Tengushevskaya	99.5%	98.8%
21.		Torbervskaya	98.5%	98.5%
22.		Chamzinskaya	97.5%	94.9%
	<b>Republic of Bashkortostan</b>	Republic-wide	<b>89.0%</b>	<b>91.8%</b>
1.		Abzelilovskaya	94.8%	90.9%
2.		Agidelskaya gor.	70.2%	95.3%
3.		Alshevskaya	94.5%	94.3%
4.		Arhangelskaya	98.1%	98.4%
5.		Askinskaya	95.8%	96.4%
6.		Aurgazinskaya	98.3%	98.0%
7.		Baymaksкая	94.4%	95.5%

8.		Bakalinskaya	98.3%	98.1%
9.		Baltachevskaya	99.4%	99.8%
10.		Belebeevskaya	87.1%	92.0%
11.		Belokataiskaya	91.8%	94.9%
12.		Bizhbuliakskaya	96.7%	94.0%
13.		Blagovarskaya	98.2%	98.6%
14.		Blagoveshchenskaya	95.5%	98.2%
15.		Buzdiakskaya	99.4%	99.6%
16.		Buraevskaya	99.6%	99.7%
17.		Burzianskaya	97.8%	92.5%
18.		Gafuriiskaya	96.0%	96.6%
19.		Davlekanovskaya	85.8%	90.1%
20.		Duvanskaya	98.0%	98.3%
21.		Diurtiulinskaya gor.	92.7%	95.9%
22.		Ermekeevskaya	97.5%	98.3%
23.		Ziachurinskaya	96.2%	97.8%
24.		Zilairskaya	97.9%	98.2%
25.		Iglinskaya	95.7%	97.5%
26.		Ilishevskaya	99.4%	98.7%
27.		Kaltasinskaya	95.1%	96.8%
28.		Karaidelskaya	97.9%	98.2%
29.		Karmaskalinskaya	98.4%	99.0%
30.		Kiginskaya	98.2%	98.3%
31.		Krasnokamskaya	93.7%	90.6%
32.		Kugarchinskaya	97.5%	97.4%
33.		Kushnarenkovskaya	96.3%	98.0%
34.		Mechetlinskaya	95.0%	94.2%
35.		Mishkinskaya	96.2%	96.0%
36.		Miakinskaya	98.4%	97.8%
37.		Nurimanovskaya	95.0%	94.8%
38.		Oktiabarskaya	87.2%	93.9%
39.		Salavatskaya	92.9%	94.6%
40.		Sterlibashevskaya	94.6%	97.6%
41.		Sterlitamatskaya gor.	86.9%	94.1%
42.		Sterlitamaskaya	96.5%	97.7%
43.		Tatishlinskaya	99.4%	99.2%
44.		Ufinskaya	91.4%	94.0%
45.		Fedorovskaya	95.5%	97.3%
46.		Haybulinskaya	97.4%	96.5%
47.		Chekmagushevskaya	98.0%	96.4%
48.		Chishminskaya	98.2%	99.2%
49.		Sharanskaya.	99.6%	98.6%
50.		Ianaulskaya gor.	96.0%	96.7%
51.		Birskaya gor.	89.1%	93.0%
52.		Kuiurgazinskaya	97.4%	97.0%
53.		Meleuzovskaya	90.1%	95.3%
54.		Tuimazinskaya	95.5%	95.5%

	<b>Republic of Ingushetia</b>	Republic-wide	<b>96.2%</b>	<b>98.2%</b>
1.		Dzeirahskaya	98.4%	97.6%
2.		Karbulakskaya	84.6%	92.7%
3.		Malobekskaya	96.8%	97.9%
4.		Malobekskaya gor.	94.8%	97.9%
5.		Nazranovskaya	97.7%	98.5%
6.		Nazranovskaya gor.	97.6%	98.5%
7.		Sunzhenskaya	96.5%	98.0%
	<b>Republic of Tatarstan</b>	Republic-wide	83.2%	86.5%
1.		Agrizkaya	93.8%	90.6%
2.		Aksubaevskaya	92.3%	96.1%
3.		Akatanishskaya	99.4%	94.0%
4.		Alekseevskaya	97.5%	94.3%
5.		Alkeevskaya	92.4%	98.6%
6.		Almeteevskaya	94.9%	86.0%
7.		Apastovskaya	100%	95.6%
8.		Arskaya	98.7%	97.0%
9.		Atninskaya	100%	98.6%
10.		Bavlinskaya	96.5%	87.5%
11.		Baltasinskaya	98.3%	95.5%
12.		Bugulminskaya	97.1%	84.7%
13.		Buinskaya	99.5%	98.0%
14.		Buinskaya gor.	93.0%	91.9%
15.		Verhneuslonskaya	95.4%	94.9%
15.		Vysokogorskaya	90.7%	91.9%
17.		Drojjanovskaya	99.1%	97.7%
18.		Elabujskaya	99.1%	97.0%
19.		Zainskaya	99.4%	98.9%
20.		Kaibitskaya	99.8%	97.4%
21.		Kamsko-Ustinskaya	97.3%	93.6%
22.		Laishevskaya	98.7%	93.3%
23.		Leninogorskaya	97.4%	89.5%
24.		Mamadyskaya	96.9%	94.1%
25.		Mendelevskaya	97.5%	97.3%
26.		Menzelinskaya	97.6%	93.7%
27.		Muslimovskaya	99.2%	97.5%
28.		Novoshehsminskaya	95.5%	97.5%
29.		Nurlatskaya	99.8%	99.7%
30.		Nurlatskaya gor.	96.6%	97.9%
31.		Pestrechinskaya	98.9%	98.7%
32.		Rybno-Slobodskaya	98.4%	96.8%
33.		Sabinskaya	98.7%	97.1%
34.		Sarmanovskaya	98.2%	95.5%

35.		Spaskaya	95.4%	95.3%
36.		Tetiushskaya	96.3%	95.2%
37.		Tukaevskaya	99.1%	97.2%
38.		Tiuliachinskaya	99.2%	98.3%
39.		Cheremshnskaya	99.3%	93.8%
40.		Chistopolskaya	94.0%	92.6%
41.		Utazinskaya	95.7%	91.4%
	<b>Republic of Chechnya</b>	Republic-wide	94.0%	92.3%
1.		Argunskaya	91.7%	93.8%
2.		Achhoy-Martanovska	96.4%	93.8%
3.		Groznenskaya	91.6%	95.0%
4.		Gudermeskaya	98.3%	97.0%
5.		Itum-Kalinskaya	95.9%	92.9%
6.		Kurchaloevskaya	97.0%	89.9%
7.		Nadterechnaya	97.9%	98.6%
8.		Naurskaya	96.2%	89.9%
9.		Nazhay-Urtovskaya	97.7%	97.6%
10.		Sunzhenskaya	97.2%	91.7%
11.		Urus-Martanovskaya	93.4%	92.5%
12.		Groznyi-Zavdskaya	93.2%	97.2%
13.		Groznyi-Oktiabarask.	93.2%	95.4%

## ABOUT THE OSCE/ODIHR

The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) is the OSCE's principal institution to assist participating States "to ensure full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, to abide by the rule of law, to promote principles of democracy and (...) to build, strengthen and protect democratic institutions, as well as promote tolerance throughout society" (1992 Helsinki Document).

The ODIHR, based in Warsaw, Poland, was created as the Office for Free Elections at the 1990 Paris Summit and started operating in May 1991. One year later, the name of the Office was changed to reflect an expanded mandate to include human rights and democratization. Today it employs over 100 staff.

The ODIHR is the lead agency in Europe in the field of **election observation**. It co-ordinates and organizes the deployment of thousands of observers every year to assess whether elections in the OSCE area are in line with national legislation and international standards. Its unique methodology provides an in-depth insight into all elements of an electoral process. Through assistance projects, the ODIHR helps participating States to improve their electoral framework.

The Office's **democratization** activities include the following thematic areas: rule of law, civil society, freedom of movement, gender equality, legislative support, and trafficking in human beings. The ODIHR implements a number of targeted assistance programs annually, seeking both to facilitate and enhance State compliance with OSCE commitments and to develop democratic structures.

The ODIHR monitors participating States' compliance with OSCE human dimension commitments, and assists with improving the protection of **human rights**. It also organizes several meetings every year to review the implementation of OSCE human dimension commitments by participating States and to discuss particular thematic areas.

The ODIHR provides advice to participating States on their policies on **Roma and Sinti**. It promotes capacity-building and networking among Roma and Sinti communities, and encourages the participation of Roma and Sinti representatives in policy-making bodies. The Office also acts as a clearing-house for the exchange of information on Roma and Sinti issues among national and international actors.

All ODIHR activities are carried out in close co-ordination and co-operation with OSCE participating States, OSCE institutions and field operations, as well as with other international organizations.

More information is available on the ODIHR website ([www.osce.org/odihr](http://www.osce.org/odihr)).