

Voting Begins for Remote Residents

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The  **Moscow Times**

Voting for the presidential election began Friday for residents of remote and hard-to-reach areas of the country.

Members of the election commission will bring mobile ballot boxes to people in 36 of the country's 83 regions, primarily in the Far East, parts of Siberia, the Urals and northern territories, Channel One reported.

A limited number of voting stations in 52 foreign countries will also be opened, with the first votes to be cast in the Bulgarian city of Bobrich, RIA-Novosti reported.

The number of people voting in these far-off regions reached 150,000 for the State Duma elections in December, about 1 percent of the population.

The average budget cost per voter to hold the December vote was 577 rubles, but in more remote locations the cost can be up to 4,000 rubles per person.

These voters include nomadic herders and lighthouse keepers, workers in polar regions, shift workers, members of crews on ships.

Election workers travel long and difficult routes using helicopters and snowmobiles to reach them, spending as much as 18 hours traveling each day.

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