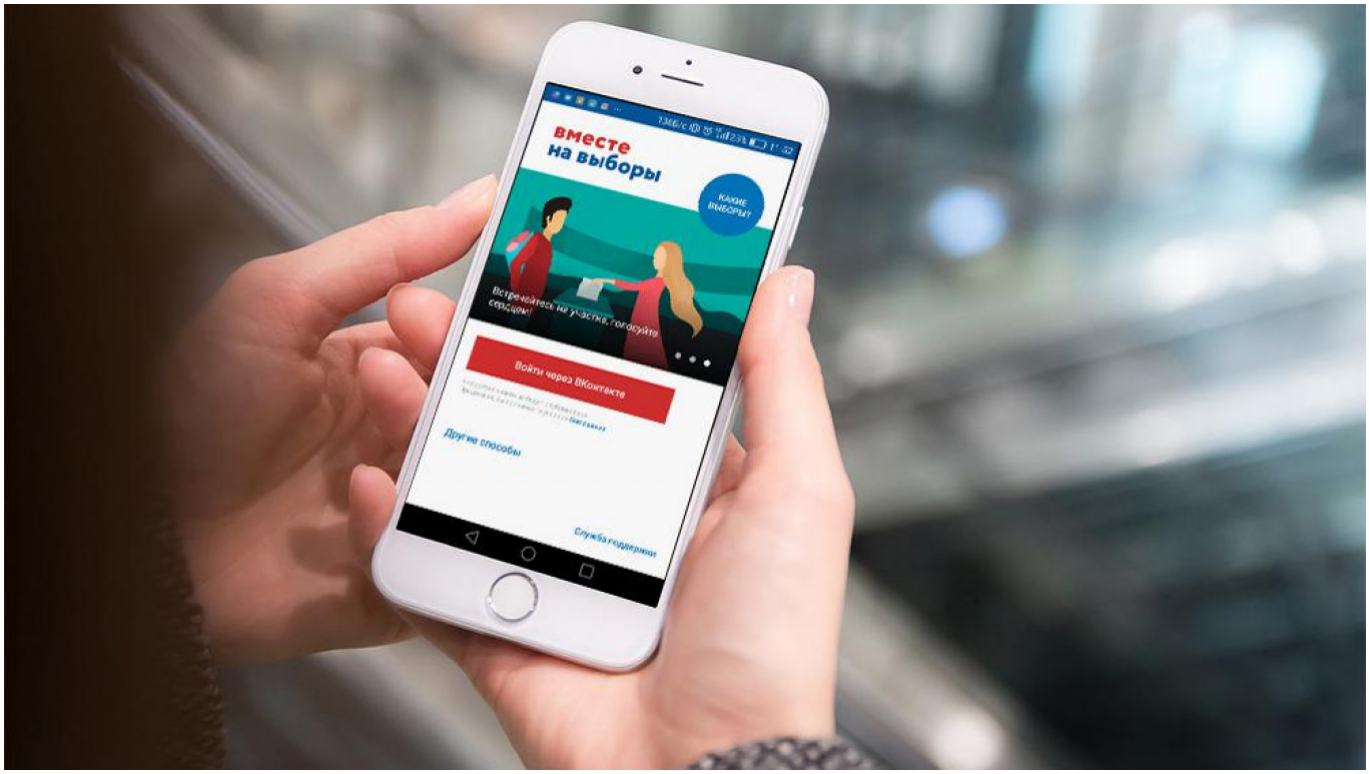
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Russian Dating App Recruits Couples to Boost Election Turnout

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A Russian dating service has launched an app to encourage Russians to get together as part of a reported Kremlin initiative ahead of upcoming municipal elections to boost voter turnout.

The app titled "Together to the Elections" matches users to meet and go to polls together on Sept. 10, the day of municipal elections in 16 regions across Russia.

The app's users are shown photos of possible matches and asked: "Will you go to the elections with him/her?" Available for iPhone and Android, "Together to the Elections" had been downloaded 10,000 times as of Monday.

The opposition-leading Dozhd news website reported that the app was affiliated with another Russian dating site Mamba, citing similarities in design and that all technical queries to the new app are redirected to Mamba.

Mamba launched "Together to the Elections" at the request of Russian authorities who are

hoping to boost turnout for the municipal elections on Sept. 10, Dozhd cited sources close to the Kremlin as saying.

The head of Mamba, Andrei Bronetsky, told Dozhd he was "advised" to launch the app and when asked whether the advice had come from the presidential administration, he asked Dozhd to call back later.

If the initiative proves successful, it will also be used to boost the turnout for the presidential elections in March next year, Dozhd reports.

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