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# Russia to Shell Out $300M on the 2018 Presidential Elections

## There is little doubt that President Vladimir Putin will be elected for a fourth term next year

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**Sergei Vadyashkin / Moskva News Agency**

Russia's Central Election Commission (CEC) has been allocated 17.7 billion rubles ($302mn) to cover the costs of running the presidential election scheduled for March 2018, the commission said in a statement this week.

There is little doubt that President Vladimir Putin will be elected for his fourth non-consecutive 6-year presidential term in 2018 and the Kremlin is expected to work hard to ensure a clean and legitimate victory while setting a solid voting system in place.

About 14,000 ballot processing and electronic voting systems are set to be used during the voting, the CEC Deputy Chairman Nikolai Bulayev told the state-run TASS news agency.

"As a result, on March 18, our polling stations will be equipped with 13,000 ballot processing systems and 1,000 electronic voting systems that were made a long time ago but are in good working order," he said, adding that there will be around 14,000 electronic systems, one per each polling station.

In past years Russia has also had CCTV cameras installed in polling stations that live streamed to the internet. These cameras however caught ballot box stuffing and other infractions.

The greatest threat to Putin's re-election is perhaps public apathy with recent polls showing that over 40 percent of Russian don't know who to vote for, or whether they would vote at all.

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As demonstrated in municipal and regional elections in September, record-low turnover could jeopardize Kremlin's plan for a "70/70" presidential elections, where 70 percent of the population vote for Putin as president with 70 percent turnout.

In the last parliamentary elections in 2016, over half of all voters stayed at home.

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