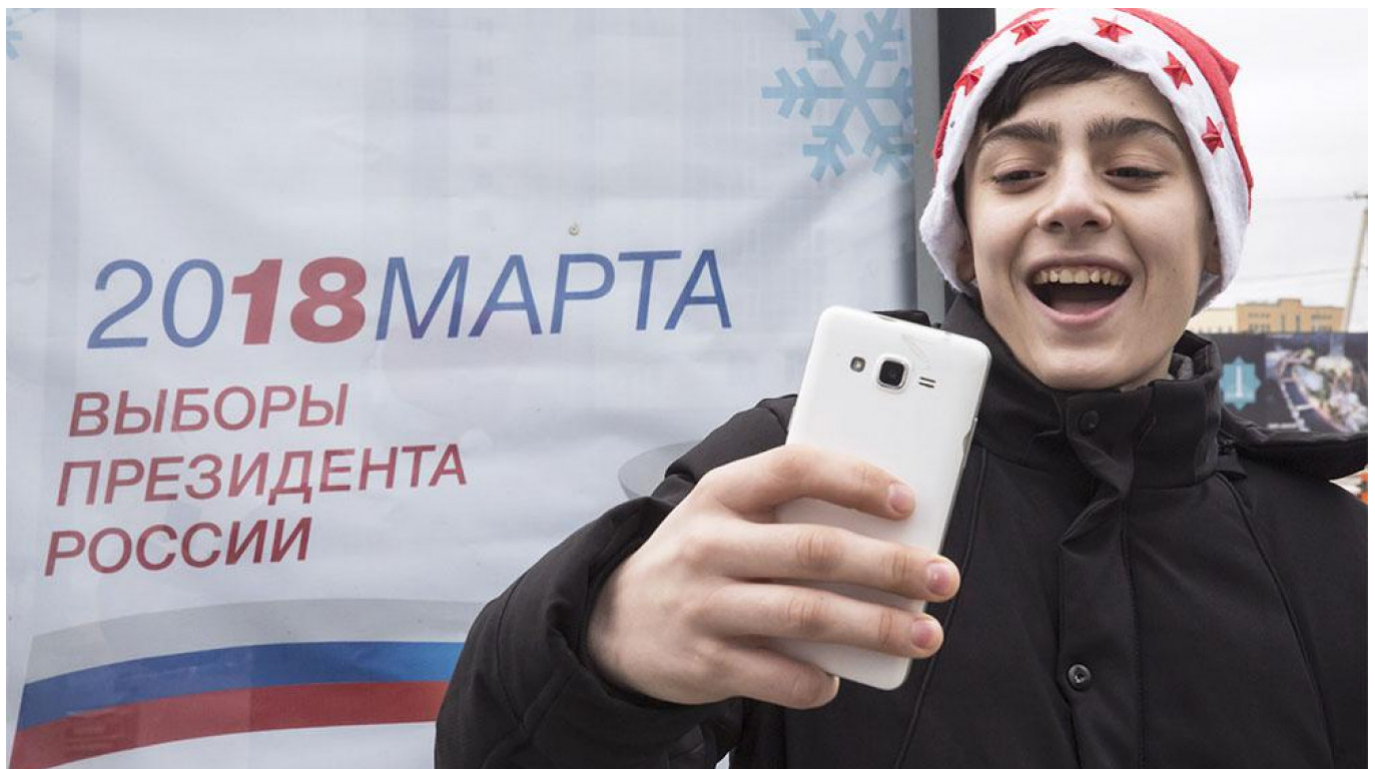


Young Russians Could Win iPhone Prizes for Voting

January 10, 2018



Yelena Afonina / TASS

The Kremlin is seeking to mobilize young voters in the upcoming 2018 presidential elections by holding selfie contests with iPhones as the main prize.

Election officials have [appointed](#) two Russian PR agencies in a \$13 million effort to boost youth turnout, which includes the use of memes and selfies. The Kremlin is reportedly [aiming](#) to achieve a 70-percent victory for President Vladimir Putin in the elections on March 18 with a voter turnout of 70-percent.

Related article: [Kremlin 'Aiming for 70% Victory' in 2018 Presidential Election](#)

According to a Kremlin directive [obtained](#) by the RBC business portal Wednesday, one of the proposed initiatives is a selfie competition that aims to attract 18-to-39 year-olds to polling

stations.

Participants who snap the best photos of themselves after casting their ballots will receive Apple electronics as prizes. The contest was tested in seven cities during the September 2017 local elections, when the first three prizes were an iPhone 7, an iPad and an Apple Watch.

The Kremlin's other youth voter turnout ideas cited by the portal include professional skills tests for children, referendums on school-related issues and contests for parents who show up at the polls with their kids.

RBC cites political scientist Alexei Makarkin as forecasting that "kids will drag their parents to the polls" to take part in the widely-publicized contests.

Political strategist Grigory Kazankov told RBC that the effect of the Kremlin's proposed selfie contest could create a "party" atmosphere in smaller cities.

"It's not even about the iPhone and iPad. If you make it stylish then many will vote," he said.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/01/10/young-russians-could-win-iphone-prizes-for-voting-a60>

150