

Putin Calls on Russians to Fulfill Their 'Right to a Free Choice' in Presidential Elections

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Kremlin Press Service

President Vladimir Putin has launched a televised appeal for Russians to vote in the upcoming presidential elections, warning those that fail to vote that the decision will be made without taking their opinion into account.

Voters are widely expected to re-elect Putin to his fourth term this Sunday against a weak field of contenders. Russian media reports [suggest](#) that the Kremlin is seeking a nationwide turnout of 65 percent, matching the turnout of the last presidential polls in 2012, in which Putin won nearly 64 percent of the vote.

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"It is precisely the will of the people, the will of every citizen of Russia, that will determine what path our country takes," Putin said in a video [circulated](#) across Russian media outlets late on Thursday.

The president said that every citizen had the right to personally decide how to fulfill their "right to a free choice" in the elections on March 18.

"But if you avoid this decision, then this key choice will be made without taking your opinion into account," he warned.

Putin underscored that the Russian population is the country's "only source of power" and said that the Russian people have always decided their own fate by themselves based on their "conscience, understanding of truth and justice and love for the Fatherland."

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