The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Mulls Barring Citizens in 'Unfriendly' Countries From Voting in 2024 Election – Vedomosti

January 09, 2024



Pelagia Tikhonova / Moskva News Agency

Russian authorities could bar its citizens living in so-called "unfriendly" countries from voting at embassy polling stations in the upcoming presidential election, the Vedomosti business daily reported Tuesday, citing several anonymous sources close to the Foreign Ministry.

Moscow has designated 49 countries as "unfriendly," accusing them of carrying out "hostile" actions against Russian missions abroad.

After first naming the United States and the Czech Republic to the list in 2021, Russia has since expanded it to include countries that have sanctioned Moscow or backed Kyiv following the 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

According to Vedomosti's sources, Russian authorities have not yet decided whether polling

stations at embassies in those countries will open for citizens to vote in the 2024 presidential election, which President Vladimir Putin is certain to win, but discussions were said to be ongoing.

Related article: Russia Greenlights Presidential Election in Occupied Ukraine

At the same time, not all embassies in "unfriendly" countries would be impacted by the move, one source told the newspaper, but a "significant portion of them" could be.

Vedomosti's sources claimed the internal discussions were rooted in concerns for the safety of voters, who may be forced to wait in long lines outside as they vote, as well as staff reductions at embassies in some "unfriendly" countries.

Officials from Russia's Central Election Commission (CEC) told the newspaper that the deadline for organizing polling stations at embassies abroad is Jan. 24.

"The coverage [of countries for] voting abroad has not yet been decided," said CEC official Pavel Andreel, who oversees international cooperation at the election authority.

Meanwhile, Russia's Foreign Ministry told Vedomosti that it was "currently assessing... the organization of voting from abroad."

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/01/09/russia-mulls-barring-citizens-in-unfriendly-countries-from-voting-in-2024-election-vedomosti-a83665