[RU] The Presidential Election Followed The New Law on Presidential Elections

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In the summer of 1999 the main amendments to the "Law on Basic Guarantees with respect to the Voting Rights of Citizens and Their Right to Take Part in Referenda" (Law on Basic Guarantees) was adopted. The Law on Basic Guarantees is the main law that determines the principles for implementing all federal, regional and local elections. The changes made to the Law on Basic Guarantees had made it necessary for all other laws governing the organisation of various elections to be brought into line with it.

That is why incorporating the changes to the Presidential Elections Law was crucial to the successful organisation of the Presidential Election.

The new version of the Presidential Elections Law is the last law to have been signed by Russia's first President, Boris Jelzin, on 31st December 1999.

The Presidential Elections Law governs the activities of the mass media in four different respects: (1) the relationship between the mass media and election committees; (2) the relationship between the mass media and Presidential candidates; (3) limitations and bans; (4) liability for violations of the law.

The Presidential Election law divides all television and radio operators into five groups, i.e. private national and interregional; private regional; public national and interregional; public regional and city broadcasting companies.

Article 12 provides that public national and interregional television and radiobroadcasters, as well as public regional television and radio broadcasters are to allocate broadcasting time to providing information for the electorate free of charge to the electoral committees. All media are to provide each of the electoral committees with the required information as well as all documents

Article 21 establishes the right of journalists to be present at every meeting of every election committee as well as at the sorting and counting of votes.

Article 40 requires the Presidential candidates who work for the State, the city or for the media to be granted leave of absence during election campaign periods.

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Article 44 refers to the following forms of election campaigning carried in the media: discussions, round-table discussions, press conferences, interviews, advertisements, documentaries or short films, etc.

Article 45 establishes when the election campaign is to start and end. It may not start before the Presidential candidates have registered with the Central Election Committee. Election advertising on radio and television may not start earlier than thirty days before the date of the election. Election advertising is not to end any later than twelve o'clock midnight of the day before the voting.

Under article 46, no results of opinion polls conducted before the elections, may be published in the media during the three days preceding the election.

Article 48 provides that radio and television airtime for the Presidential candidates may be allocated either free of charge or in return for payment. Only Presidential candidates may use the broadcasting time of national radio and television free of charge. All private and television stations, wishing to broadcast election advertising, are to publish the cost of a minute of broadcasting time at the latest 30 days after the official announcement of the election date.

Article 49 covers the transmission of election advertising. All presidential candidates enjoy the same right of using radio and television broadcasters free of charge; the airtime for election advertising of every public national and interregional television station should come to at a least one hour per working day. For every public regional television and radio station, the minimum amount of free election advertising is set at thirty minutes per working day.

Federalny Zakon Rossijskoj Federatsii „O vyborach Prezidenta Rossijskoj Federatsii“.

The Federal Law of the Russian Federation on Presidential Elections, published on 5 January 2000 in Rossijskaja Gazeta.

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