



ELECTRONIC COLLECTION OF SIGNATURES IN SUPPORT OF A CANDIDATE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF RUSSIAN AND FOREIGN EXPERIENCE

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Abstract - *The article is devoted to a comparative legal analysis of foreign and domestic experiences on the introduction of electronic collection of signatures of voters in support of nominated candidates. To conduct this study, several criteria were used, including: the level of elections, the online platforms used for this purpose, legislative regulation, and the number of electronic signatures allowed for a candidate in relation to paper signatures.*

The article cites member States of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) that have sufficient potential and technical capability to introduce the mechanism under consideration, but currently do not use such an instrument.

The paper outlines the election campaigns of a number of states, in which proposals were put forward to use electronic signature collection in support of candidates, but were not supported by parliaments, as well as the experience of judicial challenge against the inadmissibility of online signature collection (Italian Republic).

Demonstrating the states where the collection of signatures on the Internet is allowed as part of the nomination of popular initiatives and referendums, the authors suggest the subsequent introduction, by analogy, of electronic signature collection in support of candidates nominated for elections.

Keywords: *digitalization of the electoral process; digital technologies in the electoral process; collection of signatures on the Internet; the rights of candidates; collection of signatures of voters in electronic form.*

INTRODUCTION

The rights to vote and to be elected in the legal doctrine belong to a group of political rights, the establishment of which by the Constitution of the Russian Federation declares the possibility of participating in the management of state affairs.

Today, the Russian Federation is on the path of digital transformation of social, economic spheres, as well as state and municipal administration, which is one of the national goals of the «Russian Federation for the period up to 2030 and for the future up to 2036»¹.

The purpose of such fundamental transformations is to reduce the distance between government agencies and citizens, providing the latter with the opportunity to solve their problems as soon as possible by contacting the authorities.

The end result of such transformations is the digital maturity of the areas under consideration by 2030, which means the automation of most processes using digital platforms in each industry and management through the accelerated introduction of machine learning, artificial intelligence, and big data technologies. In other words, the introduction of digital technologies into the life of society is dictated by the demands of the time and is relevant not only for the Russian Federation. However, the use of automated information systems, simplifying the life of society, simultaneously poses new challenges to it. For example, more and more attention is being paid in the scientific literature to «a new way of

¹ Decree of the President of the Russian Federation dated 05/07/2024 No. 309 «On the National Development Goals of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2030 and for the future up to 2036» // «Collection of Legislation of the Russian Federation», 05/13/2024, No. 20, art. 2584



carrying out illegal activities in violation of security measures of automated information systems»², in other words, the growing cybercrime resulting from the insecurity of the automated information systems used. However, it seems that this problem should not be considered as an obstacle to the active use of digital technologies in society and in public administration, in particular. On the contrary, the simultaneous implementation of digitalization with its proper regulatory and legal regulation and control over the security of information technologies used will ensure accelerated growth in various areas on a global scale, simplifying management and organizational processes.

In Russia, active and passive electoral rights are implemented in the electoral process, the digitalization of which, as the main tool for citizens' participation in the management of state affairs, should be accompanied by transparency, accessibility, and efficiency.

The key digital platform providing the opportunity to participate in state and municipal governance in the Russian Federation today is the federal state information system «Unified Portal of State and Municipal Services (Functions)» (hereinafter referred to as the Gosuslugi portal).

Automation of the implementation of active suffrage through the Gosuslugi portal is quite advanced, which cannot be said about passive suffrage, while some foreign countries are moving one step ahead in this direction. For example, Laslidj Navel, Buzuleg Khaled³, Conducting a comparative analysis of the experience of Oman and Algeria in the issue of electronic elections, they cite as an example the election campaign for the elections to the Shura Council in 2019 in the Sultanate of Oman, which was characterized by the electronic nature of all stages, including the stages of nominating candidates and announcing their lists.

It is noteworthy that the thesis about the need to integrate digital technologies into such stages of the electoral process in the Russian Federation as the nomination and registration of candidates is not new in the scientific literature. So, back in 2010, a team of authors (Dvornikov D.V., Krasinsky V.V., Puchnin A.S.⁴), Based on the analysis of the imperfections of the procedures for nominating and registering candidates in Russia at that time, the concept of SMS nomination was proposed. The essence of the proposal was as follows: in order to participate in this kind of nomination, citizens who have the active right to vote in the relevant electoral district must send an SMS message to the single interactive service number provided by the mobile operator and notified in advance to the electorate by the election commission of the subject of the Russian Federation, indicating the serial number of the candidate to whose support the vote is being sent. The list of candidates with ordinal numbers is directly formed by the election commission of the subject of the Russian Federation by drawing lots with the participation of mass media, electoral associations and candidates. After sending the relevant message by the voter, the mobile operator confirms the registration of his vote by sending a return message and transmits the relevant information to the election commission and organizations overseeing the procedure in question.

The concept defined a list of SMS messages that are not subject to accounting, including those received from the Internet, from other subjects of the Russian Federation, from foreign cellular operators, as well as those sent from different SIM cards that are identified online with an identical international mobile phone identifier.

At the end of the period allotted for the nomination of candidates, the election commission, based on information provided by the mobile operator, taking into account the legally permissible volume of SMS messages, forms and forms an attachment to the relevant decision on registration of a candidate or refusal to register a candidate, the final SMS nomination protocol, copies of which are transmitted to the candidate, the electoral association.

² Santillán Molina Alberto Leonel, Vinueza Ochoa Nelly Valeria, Benavides Salazar Cristian Fernando, Santillán Ojeda Salvatore Joel Cybercrime and the insecurity of automated information systems due to the lack of detection and control of computer incidents // Russian law journal, Vol. 11 №. 13s (2023) P. 56.

³ Lasledj Nawel, Bouzouleg Khaled electronic Elections in Algeria: between reality and expectations comparative study with the omani experience // Russian law journal, Vol. 13 No. 01 (2025), P. 451.

⁴ Dvornikov D.V., Krasinsky V.V., Puchnin A.S. The concept of electronic polling of voters when collecting signatures in support of the nomination of candidates for deputies (for elected positions) (SMS nomination) // Bulletin of Tambov University. Series: Humanities. Tambov, 2010. Issue 9 (87). pp.250-255.



Despite the positive aspects noted in the proposed project: its promise, the ability to reduce financial costs for elections, ease of use, and effectiveness, the concept has not found its practical application.

In 2016, the Russian Public Initiative website posted a federal-level question on the introduction of a procedure for collecting electronic digital signatures of voters in support of candidates for elections at various levels on the official website of the election commission on the Internet or by providing them on a memory card. According to the text of the initiative⁵ Its advantages are: eliminating the possibility of providing false information, reducing the financial costs of holding elections, and saving the electorate time. The ratio of votes cast was as follows: 703 for and 62 against, however, similar to the previously proposed draft, this mechanism has not been implemented in the electoral process, and steps towards digitalizing the interaction of election commissions with candidates are currently being taken.

In particular, in order to eliminate the indicated imbalance, the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation (hereinafter referred to as the CEC of Russia) is taking measures to expand digital tools for candidates, one of which is the electronic collection of signatures of voters in support of candidates in some elections (heads of constituent entities of the Russian Federation, deputies of legislative bodies of constituent entities of the Russian Federation) through the Gosuslugi portal.

An analysis of the experience of the Russian Federation in enabling candidates to electronically collect signatures in their support, as well as similar foreign practices in order to assess the current level of development of the mechanism under consideration and to form legal recommendations for further implementation determine the relevance of this article.

Research method

The methodological basis of this study is a system of scientific methods for understanding legal processes, among them the dialectical method, which allowed analyzing the mechanism of electronic collection of signatures of voters in support of election candidates. The hermeneutic method is used for the purpose of interpreting and interpreting normative legal acts and court decisions.

Using the axiological method, draft regulatory legal acts on the introduction of the use of electronic signature collection in support of election candidates are analyzed.

The principle of scientific objectivity has made it possible to take into account the totality of factors influencing the implementation of norms on the introduction of digital technologies in the electoral process, and it is impossible without a transition from the abstract to the concrete, from simple to complex. The use of induction and deduction has helped to identify and systematize the rights and obligations of persons involved in the electoral process, to analyze the possibilities of their exercising their constitutional rights. Thanks to the use of the static method, the collection of online signatures by candidates during election campaigns in different regions of the Russian Federation has been analyzed.

1. Results and discussion

The Russian Federation is currently actively implementing a mechanism for the electronic collection of signatures of voters in support of candidates in certain elections (heads of constituent entities of the Russian Federation, deputies of legislative bodies of constituent entities of the Russian Federation) through the federal state information system «Unified Portal of State and Municipal Services (Functions)». To date, this service remains in low demand among candidates, while at the same time the reliability of the portal and the authenticity of such signatures («such a mechanism, according to Nikolai Bulaev, Deputy Chairman of the Central Election Commission of Russia, is «protection against signature forgery»»⁶) suggest the need for it to be rooted in electoral practice.

There are also opinions in the scientific community that electronic signature collection is an appropriate alternative to paper signature lists. Thus, in the course of discussions about the disadvantages of remote electronic voting, it is noted that «... the use of the remote method in the election campaign should not be excluded. It is quite suitable for the procedure of collecting signatures in support of a candidate...»⁷. It is also considered among the «promising areas of digitalization implementation at the initial stages of

⁵ Initiative No. 63F21803 To allow the collection of signatures in support of candidates for participation in elections at various levels in electronic form using digital signatures on the website of the Election Commission // Official website of the Russian Public Initiative URL: <https://www.roi.ru/21803/> / (date of request: 05/04/2025)

⁶ Frolova T. Y. Digital technologies as a means of exercising the electoral rights of citizens of the Russian Federation // Actual problems of Russian law. - 2024. - T. 19. - No. 8. - p. 42. - DOI: 10.17803/1994-1471.2024.165.8.038-045.

⁷ Chashin A.N. Remote voting: pro et contra // State power and local self-government. 2021. N 3. P. 17. DOI: 10.18572/1813-1247-2021-3-16-17 (www.doi.org).

the electoral process»⁸. In addition, according to E.V. Gritsenko⁹, the consolidation of such a digital innovation at the legislative level is an effective tool in the struggle to gain the trust of voters in the electoral process and its openness, and Yerygina V.I.¹⁰ evaluates electronic signature collection as a guarantee of ensuring the protection of the electoral rights of political parties, as well as a legal guarantee of universal suffrage. At the same time, researchers also note the disadvantages of electronic signature collection, for example, the possibility of violating the legally established prohibition on collecting signatures in specific places without the possibility of recording such violations and establishing liability (Kolyushin E.I.¹¹).

In the Message of the President of the Russian Federation Dmitry Medvedev to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation dated 12.11.2009¹² (hereinafter referred to as the Message), a proposal was put forward to abandon the collection of signatures in support of political parties for their participation in elections as part of efforts at the level of subjects of the Russian Federation to strengthen democratic institutions. In the same Message, the Government of the Russian Federation and the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation were jointly tasked with developing a concept for accelerated technical re-equipment of the electoral system.

According to the recommendations set out in the Report¹³ of the working group on monitoring citizens' electoral rights (IWG) of the Presidential Council for the Development of Civil Society and Human Rights on the results of the presidential elections of March 15-17, 2024 and a Single voting Day on September 08, 2024, it is necessary to continue work on the development of electronic interaction of election commissions not only with by the voters, but also candidates for deputies through the Gosuslugi portal, including in terms of improving the mechanism for electronic collection of signatures in their support.

In 2024, the Chairman of the Central Election Commission of Russia stated that it was advisable to consider at the legislative level the issue of introducing such a mechanism in federal elections, although back in 2020 there was talk of continuing such an experiment only in the regions due to the lack of full-fledged regulatory regulation at the level of the Russian Federation.

The above positions emphasize the relevance of this work, speak about the expediency of analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of this tool, and researching similar foreign experience.

The initiative to introduce electronic signature collection through the Gosuslugi portal is not new, and it is in the form of a draft law¹⁴ was put forward for the first time in 2017 by a group of deputies from the Just Russia political party, motivated as a consistent step in the dissemination of digital resources in the electoral process, the extensive use of Gosuslugi portal tools by voters, for example, to change

⁸ Khudolei D.M., Khudolei K.M. Electronic voting in Russia and abroad // Bulletin of Perm University. Legal sciences. 2022. N 3. Pp. 476 - 503. DOI: 10.17072/1995-4190-2022-57-476-503 (www.doi.org).

⁹ Gritsenko E.V. Ensuring basic guarantees of electoral rights in the context of the informatization of the electoral process // Constitutional and municipal law. 2020. N 5. pp. 41-49. DOI: 10.18572/1812-3767-2020-5-41-49 (www.doi.org).

¹⁰ Yerygina V.I. Constitutional guarantees of realization of electoral rights of citizens and political parties // Constitutional and municipal law. 2023. N 6. pp. 47-53. DOI: 10.18572/1812-3767-2023-6-47-53 (www.doi.org).

¹¹ Kolyushin E.I. The problem of quasi-rule of law in electoral law // Constitutional and municipal law. 2022. No. 6. pp. 51-56. DOI: 10.18572/1812-3767-2022-6-51-56 (www.doi.org).

¹² Message of the President of the Russian Federation to the Federal Assembly dated 12.11.2009 «Message of the President of the Russian Federation Dmitry Medvedev to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation» // Rossiyskaya Gazeta, No. 214, 13.11.2009.

¹³ Report of the Working Group on monitoring of citizens' electoral rights of the Council under the president of the Russian Federation on the development of civil society and Human Rights following the results of the presidential election of the Russian Federation on March 15-17, 2024 and the single voting day on September 8, 2024 // official website of the Council under the president of the Russian Federation on the development of civil society and Human Rights URL: <url> / / official website of the Council under the president of the Russian Federation on the development of civil society and Human Rights URL: <URL> / / official website of the Council under the president of the Russian Federation on the development of civil society and Human Rights URL: <URL> / https://www.president-sovet.ru/presscenter/news/spch_opublikoval_doklad_monitoringovoy_rabochey_gruppy_po_itogam_vyborov_prezidenta_rf_i_edg_8_sentya/ (accessed 04.03.2025)

¹⁴ Draft Federal Law No. 317307-7 «On Amendments to Federal Law No. 67-FZ dated 12.06.2002 "On Basic Guarantees of Electoral Rights and the Right of Citizens of the Russian Federation to Participate in a Referendum» (as amended by the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, text as of 17.11.2017) // URL: https://sozd.duma.gov.ru / (accessed 03/16/2025)



the polling station for voting at the location. This initiative was not adopted at the legislative level, and the mechanism in question was introduced only in 2020, based on the results of consideration and approval of another legislative proposal.

The procedure for providing voters with their signatures in support of a candidate and a list of candidates through the Gosuslugi portal is directly established by the relevant Resolution of the Central Election Commission of Russia¹⁵.

Today, the conditions that allow voters to sign their signatures in support of the nomination of candidates online are quite simple in the Russian Federation:

- the voter's possession of an active right to vote in the relevant electoral district;
- the presence of registration on the Gosuslugi portal for both the voter and the electoral association, the candidate in whose support the signature is given, and confirmed accounts, respectively (only for individuals);
- enhanced qualified signature obtained by candidates, electoral associations in certification centers, the list of which is posted on the portal.

The Central Election Commission of Russia (CEC), together with the Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media of the Russian Federation, is conducting an active awareness campaign to help political parties and candidates make better use of the Gosuslugi portal to collect the necessary signatures in support of their candidacies. As part of this campaign, various information materials are being developed and distributed, such as memos and presentations explaining how to properly and effectively use the capabilities of the Gosuslugi portal to collect signatures. The main purpose of the above-mentioned events is to simplify and speed up the process of collecting signatures, making it more convenient for all participants in the electoral process.

The main difference between the practice of the Russian Federation and foreign countries is expressed in the use of electronic collection of signatures in support of candidates at different levels of elections: a number of foreign countries allow such a tool in presidential and Parliamentary elections, while in the Russian Federation these elections are exclusively at the level of subjects of the Russian Federation, and implementation at the federal level is still only being discussed in the expert community.

In Russia, for the first time online signature collection as part of election campaigns was applied in 2020 in 3 subjects - Perm Krai, Chelyabinsk Region, Chuvash Republic (where local legislation established such a possibility), and in 2021 - in 15, although in an experimental form it was possible to support the nomination of an independent candidate by SMS message. back in 2010, in the Tambov region.

The 2020 experiment showed a generally positive result: 7,000 signatures were collected through the Gosuslugi portal (each was counted, there was no doubt), while two candidates who submitted such signatures in the Chuvash Republic and Perm Krai collected the maximum number of signatures allowed for this method, and in the Chelyabinsk region, 5 political parties used the resource in question. and 3 candidates nominated in single-mandate constituencies, who were able to collect no more than 9% of the maximum possible number of signatures.

In a number of foreign countries (the Republic of Iceland, Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany), such a procedure was resorted to on a one-time basis due to the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus infection.

In the Russian Federation, such an opportunity was not provided for, which became the basis for legal proceedings¹⁶. Sinitsina L.I. filed an administrative statement of claim for recognition as illegal and for cancellation of the decision of the election commission of the Tula region on refusal to register as a candidate for deputy of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation of the eighth convocation due to lack of the number of signatures required for such registration. Sinitsina L.I.

¹⁵ Resolution of the CEC of Russia dated 06/04/2020 No. 251/1852-7 (as amended on 06/09/2021) «On the Procedure for collecting Signatures of voters using the Federal State Information System «Unified Portal of State and Municipal Services (Functions)» // Bulletin of the CEC of Russia, No. 5, 2020.

¹⁶ Cassation ruling of the Judicial Board for Administrative Cases of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation dated 06/01/2022 No. 38-IKAD22-1-A1 // SPS «ConsultantPlus»

motivated her claims by violation of her passive suffrage by illegal refusal to register, the failure of the Government of the Tula Region and the Election Commission of the Tula Region to take appropriate measures in the context of the spread of coronavirus infection in order to enable the collection of signatures online using the functionality of the Gosuslugi portal. The claims stated in the administrative statement of claim, as well as in the appeals and cassation appeals, were denied with reference to the provisions of the Federal Law On Elections of Deputies to the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation¹⁷, which do not establish the possibility of collecting signatures of voters through the Gosuslugi portal, the arguments were found to be unfounded.

In ten OSCE participating States, as well as the Republic of Tunisia, «legislation or otherwise provides for the possibility of collecting signatures of voters in support of the nomination of candidates in electronic form (in whole or in part) with their subsequent verification»¹⁸ for presidential and parliamentary elections (Kingdom of Belgium, Republic of Bulgaria, Romania, Republic of Lithuania, Republic of Iceland, Canada, Federal Republic of Germany).

Since 2021, the Republic of Bulgaria has introduced at the legislative level the possibility of supporting a candidate with a qualified electronic digital signature, which at the same time became the basis for refusing political parties to register their candidate lists due to the lack of electronic signatures collected in their support. Thus, as part of the 2021 election campaign for the election of deputies to the National Assembly, on this basis, «the Central Election Commission of Bulgaria rejected six political parties»¹⁹, which indicates the importance of introducing this mechanism into the electoral process of the state.

According to international electoral standards, the number of signatures in support of a candidate should not exceed 1% of the total number of registered voters²⁰, and this figure applies to both electronic and paper signatures.

In the Russian Federation, the law stipulates that the number of electronic signatures «may not exceed half of the number of signatures of voters required to register a candidate»²¹. In the vast majority of subjects of the Russian Federation, where the law establishes the possibility of electronic collection of signatures in support of candidates for deputies of regional legislative bodies, their number is allowed to be no more than 50%, however, there are regions with a lower threshold (the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) - 10%, Orenburg Region - 15%, Tver Region, Krasnodar Territory, Primorsky Krai - 25%). For election campaigns for the election of senior officials of a constituent entity of the Russian Federation, the right to sign in support of a candidate through the Gosuslugi portal is significantly limited, possible only in seven regions, and their number mostly cannot exceed 25%, although in some constituent entities of the Russian Federation up to 50% is allowed (Yaroslavl Region, Murmansk Region). Thus, in five of the six subjects of the Russian Federation, where it was possible to collect signatures in support of the nomination of candidates for deputies of regional legislative bodies elected on a single voting day on September 08, 2024 through the Gosuslugi portal, the number of such signatures should not exceed 50% of the total number (Altai Republic, Khabarovsk Territory, Bryansk Region, Moscow, Sevastopol), and in one (Karachay-Cherkess Republic) no more than 25%. There are opinions among researchers about the appropriate consolidation at the level of the subjects of the Russian Federation of the possibility of electronic collection of signatures in full, rather than a limited number (Vaishnarovich G.V.²²).

¹⁷ Federal Law No. 20-FZ dated 22.02.2014 (as amended on 08.08.2024) «On Elections of Deputies to the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation» // Rossiyskaya Gazeta, No. 45, 26.02.2014.


¹⁸ Lysenko V.I. Foreign practice of collecting signatures of voters in electronic form // Citizen. Elections. Power. No. 4 (34)/2024. p. 105

¹⁹ Lysenko V.I. Collection of signatures of voters in electronic form during parliamentary and presidential elections: a foreign practice // Official website of the Russian Foundation for Free Elections - RFSV URL: <https://rfsv.ru/education/informirovanie/sbor-podpisei-izbiratelei-v-elektronnom-vidе-pri-provedenii-parlamentskikh-i-prezidentskikh-vyborov-zarubezhnaia-praktika> (date of request: 05/04/2025)

²⁰ Paragraph 1.3.ii of the Code of Recommended Norms for the Conduct of Elections. Guidelines and explanatory report (adopted by the Venice Commission at its 52nd session. Venice, October 18-19, 2002, Strasbourg, October 30, 2002).

²¹ Federal Law No. 67-FZ of 12.06.2002 (as amended on 08.08.2024, as amended dated 12/13/2024) «On basic guarantees of electoral rights and the Right of Citizens of the Russian Federation to participate in a Referendum» // Rossiyskaya Gazeta, No. 106, 06/15/2002.

²² Vaishnarovich G.V. On providing the opportunity to collect signatures of voters in elections to state authorities of a constituent entity of the Russian Federation using a Single portal of state and municipal services (functions) in the



In foreign countries, electronic signatures can be quantified both partially and completely. As part of the 2020 election campaign for the election of the President of the Republic of Iceland, only 13% of signatures were collected on paper, 87% electronically, and in the 2020 parliamentary elections of the Republic of Lithuania, self-nominated candidates had the right to collect 100% of signatures online, but in fact their number was only about 20%..

In the context of the spread of coronavirus infection in Romania in 2020, on the eve of the parliamentary elections, the electoral legislation underwent a number of changes, including a significant doubling in the number of signatures required to provide candidates with the opportunity to collect them electronically, while the issue of how to verify their authenticity was not worked out. only technical requirements were set.

Today, in the Russian Federation, such a percentage seems reasonable, due to the fact that candidates do not use the resource in question actively enough, as mentioned above.

Similar to the domestic experience, some of the countries under consideration use the portal for providing public services to the public (the Kingdom of Denmark) for this purpose, but automated systems of election authorities (the Republic of Lithuania), executive authorities (the Kingdom of Belgium), and other information systems (the Republic of Tunisia, the Republic of Iceland) are also used.

In the Republic of Montenegro, it is legally established that subscription lists must be submitted to the State Election Commission among the nomination documents, as part of the verification of which the information contained in them is correlated with information posted in the national register of Voters. In addition, voters have the opportunity to electronically verify the availability of their signatures in the database of support for the nomination of lists of candidates. Thus, during the early parliamentary elections in 2023, the State Election Commission introduced an application through which online voters could check for their signatures in the database to support the nomination of candidates and exclude the possibility of signing for them by another person in support of the nomination.

The Kyrgyz Republic, where «biometric registration is the legally prescribed duty of every citizen»²³, having sufficient technical potential to implement such a convenient tool, does not use electronic signature collection.

In such states as the Republic of Austria (presidential elections in 2022), the Republic of Iceland (elections to the Althing in 2021), and the Republic of Slovenia (presidential elections in 2017), the issue of introducing electronic signature collection was considered, but the initiatives were rejected by parliaments. During the presidential elections in Finland and the Czech Republic (2024 and 2023, respectively), an initiative was put forward to switch from collecting 20,000 signatures on paper to electronic, but it also did not receive parliamentary approval. At the same time, in the Republic of Iceland, as part of the presidential election campaign in 2024, while providing candidates with the opportunity to electronically collect signatures, voters were given the right to revoke their electronic signatures before the end of the collection period.

In the Republic of Austria, the Republic of Slovenia and a number of US states, legislation allows collecting signatures in support of popular initiatives and referendums in electronic form. However, in some US states, similar bills have been drafted but not adopted. The reason for the refusal was the decisions of the courts, which considered the electronic collection of signatures unacceptable in this context. Thus, the situation is ambiguous: some jurisdictions have successfully implemented electronic signature collection for public initiatives, while others have encountered legal obstacles that have prevented the legalization of this practice. Judicial precedents in the United States have played a key role in blocking the introduction of electronic signature collection in some states.

legislation of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation // Materials of the Sixth Ural Forum of Constitutionalists. Yekaterinburg, 2021. p. 13.

²³ Dudchenko O.S., Frolova T.Y. Digitalization in electoral law: foreign experience // Economics and law in the new realities: Challenges of modernity: a monograph / Privalova E. P., Gut A.V., Toma Zh.V., Filatova E. A., Zubo S.A., Frolova O. A., Prikhoda I. V. - Rostov-on-Don: Manuscript, 2024. - p. 60.



CONCLUSION

Summing up the analysis, we can conclude that such a promising mechanism as the electronic collection of signatures in support of candidates through the Gosuslugi portal is gradually spreading both in the Russian Federation and in foreign countries on various platforms. Despite the current concerns in foreign countries regarding the collection of signatures online, it seems that with the development of digitalization, the tool in question will be widely used in the electoral process, similar to that already used in referendums and the promotion of popular initiatives, including in quantitative terms.

One of the main and indisputable advantages of electronic signature collection in support of candidates is the absolute reliability of signatures obtained in this way, which eliminates the possibility of formal refusals to register candidates, subjectivity in assessing the reliability and sufficiency of signatures.

Among other advantages: simplicity, which saves time (for both candidates and voters), resources (no need for paper subscription lists), accessibility (the number of users of the Gosuslugi portal in the Russian Federation as of September 2024 is 110,000,000 people). In addition, the resource in question is a powerful tool in the process of digitalizing the interaction of candidates and political parties with the Central Election Commission of Russia.

The Gosuslugi portal, used for electronic collection of signatures in the Russian Federation, seems to be the optimal platform for these purposes, since other digital resources of the Central Election Commission of Russia are also provided through this platform. The portal is used by citizens to receive a large number of public services, which indicates that voters are quite familiar with its functionality, remote collection of signatures is not a big technical problem for most age groups of the electorate.

The current legislative restrictions on the number of signatures that candidates can collect online seem justified due to the progressive introduction of the analyzed tool into the practice of the electoral process. Despite all the undeniable advantages (simplicity and convenience of collection, absolute reliability of signatures), candidates do not actively use the Gosuslugi portal to collect signatures in their support, and therefore it is impractical to grant the right to receive electronic voter support in one hundred percent, although it is appropriate to consider the possibility of electronic collection of signatures as part of election campaigns. at the federal level, in the same limited and legally defined amount., which exists at the moment and as the proposed resource develops, the number of signatures collected in this way increases.

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