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Poroshenko's Politics Have ‘Failed,’ Russian Lawmakers Say After Ukraine Election Results

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Mykola Tys / EPA / TASS

A comedian’s double-digit lead over Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko in the first round of Ukraine’s presidential election signals that the incumbent’s politics have failed, Russian lawmakers have said.

Russia has paid close attention to the vote in Ukraine, a country on the front line of the West's standoff with Russia after the 2014 Maidan street protests ejected Poroshenko's Kremlin-friendly predecessor and Russia annexed the Crimean peninsula. With over half of all ballots counted by Monday morning, 41-year-old Volodymyr Zelenskiy — who held 30 percent of the vote over 53-year-old Poroshenko’s 16 percent — is set to face Poroshenko in a second-round runoff on April 21.

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“The preliminary results indicate the failure of the president’s ‘Maidan’ policy,” Leonid Slutsky, chairman of the Russian State Duma International Affairs Committee, said Monday.

Slutsky, who accused Poroshenko of coming to power in a coup and “waging war with his own people,” alleged that Poroshenko used “administrative resources and various machinations” to advance to the second round.

Duma lawmakers are also considering officially rejecting the Ukrainian election’s results over what they call “serious violations and mistakes.” The lower house of parliament’s council plans to advance a resolution rejecting the election’s legitimacy on Monday, its leader told the state-run TASS news agency.

The draft resolution singles out the Ukrainian ban on Russian election observers, criticizes the “use of dirty technologies” and claims Poroshenko is eyeing a victory with “widespread falsification of the results.”

Reuters contributed reporting to this article.

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