

Final Vote Result Shows Big Majority for Putin Reforms

By [AFP](#)

July 02, 2020



Critics have questioned the vote. **Dmitry Rogulin / TASS**

Russians have overwhelmingly backed constitutional reforms that will allow President Vladimir Putin to extend his rule, the Central Elections Commission said Thursday.

With all votes counted, the CEC said 77.92% of voters had backed the reforms, with turnout of about 65%.

Related article: [‘All We Have Is Putin’: Russians Vote to Grant President Ability to Extend Rule Until 2036](#)

Only one region, the Nenets autonomous district in Russia's Arctic, registered a majority of votes against the amendments.

In the republic of Komi, the CEC initially [reported](#) that 68.88% of votes opposed the reforms.

It later [said](#) that 66.19% of votes in the region were for the amendments, almost completely reversing its earlier count.

An election monitor in St. Petersburg tweeted a photo of more than a dozen ballots with "yes" votes in what appeared to be nearly identical handwriting.

Embed:

Strong evidence of vote-rigging in St. Petersburg if you look at the almost identical ticks here <https://t.co/OH5u4WdxhP>

— Nataliya Vasilyeva (@Nat_Vasilyeva) [July 1, 2020](#)

From June 25–July 1 Russians voted on the package of constitutional changes proposed by Putin, including a reset of presidential term limits allowing him to run twice again after his current six-year term ends in 2024.

Other amendments would strengthen presidential and parliamentary powers, enshrine traditional values including an effective ban on gay marriage and guarantee better minimum wages and pensions.

Russia's two houses of parliament previously approved the amendments but Putin said they would only take effect if supported by a majority of voters.

Leading Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny described early results showing Russians' strong backing for the reforms as a "huge lie" that didn't reflect reality.

Independent election monitor Golos said it has received hundreds of complaints of violations, including people voting more than once and claims that employers had put pressure on staff to cast ballots.

“The vote was indeed unprecedented and will go down in the history of the country as an example of encroachment on the sovereignty of the people,” Golos [said](#) in a statement Thursday summarizing its monitoring campaign.

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