

Armed Russian Proxies in Ukraine Pressure Locals to Vote on Annexation – Official

September 23, 2022



Voters at a mobile polling station in the village of Krasny Yar, Luhansk region, Ukraine. EPA / TASS

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Надомное голосование уровень "оккупация". Первым идет член избирательной комиссии с правом решающего голоса
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— IanMatveev (@ian_matveev) [September 23, 2022](#)

Russian proxies in occupied Ukrainian territories are knocking on residents' doors and pressuring them to vote to formally join Russia, a Ukrainian official said Friday.

Russia-occupied areas of Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions, along with the breakaway Donetsk and Luhansk people's republics, are staging referendums from Sept. 23-27 that will decide whether they will be annexed by Russia.

"When a person checks 'NO' on the 'ballot' it is recorded in a 'notebook'," the Luhansk region's Ukrainian Governor Serhiy Haidai [wrote](#) on his Telegram channel of the Russian proxies' election visits.

Haidai added that the Russian proxies are accompanied by armed men on their door-to-door visits.

Kyiv and its Western allies have decried the referendum votes as a "sham" and an unlawful land grab by Moscow.

Related article: [Russia Proxies Hold Breakaway Polls in Ukraine](#)

The majority of referendum voting will be conducted at homes "as a security measure," the Russian state-run RIA Novosti news agency [reported](#).

Rallies in support of the ongoing referendums are being held in several Russian cities, media [reported](#), with state employees, students and political activists reportedly being transported to the events.

The referendums were announced a day before President Vladimir Putin declared a "partial" mobilization of Russia's military reservists, a move aimed at bolstering Moscow's flagging manpower in its seven-month invasion of Ukraine.

The vice spokesperson of Russia's Federal Council [said](#) earlier that any attack on Russia-occupied territories of Ukraine during and after the referendums would be viewed as an attack on Russia itself.

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