The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Kicks Off Early Voting in Occupied Ukrainian Regions

February 26, 2024



A an election poster in Donetsk that reads: "Together We Are Strong – We Are Voting for Russia." **Dmitry Yagodkin / TASS**

Early voting for Russia's presidential election has begun in remote areas of the country and parts of occupied Ukraine, the pro-Kremlin newspaper Izvestia reported Monday, citing election authorities.

While regular voting in the presidential race is due to take place between March 15 and 17, people in occupied parts of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions were able to cast their ballots starting on Sunday, according to Izvestia, including in areas near the front line.

Russia's Central Election Commission (CEC) has also allowed for so-called "mobile polling stations," whereby poll workers set up a makeshift voting booth outside of apartment buildings in residential areas.

Early voting is scheduled to end on March 14, Izvestia said.

Related article: Racy Election Ad Urges Russians to Vote or Face Dystopian Gay Future

Critics have said that extended voting periods, which include early voting, make it easier to commit voter fraud, as it becomes harder for monitors and poll workers to notice irregularities.

Vladimir Putin, who has been in power as either president or prime minister since 2000, is widely expected to win his fifth term in the March 15-17 race.

Russia controls roughly one-fifth of neighboring Ukraine's territory, including the Crimea peninsula, which it annexed in 2014, and parts of the Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions.

According to Izvestia, certain categories of residents in 37 regions — including those Ukrainian territories that are under Russian occupation — are eligible to vote early.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/02/26/russia-kicks-off-early-voting-in-occupied-ukrainian-regions-a84247