

# Resolution on Russia's undemocratic presidential elections and their illegitimate extension to the occupied territories

2024/2665(RSP) - 25/04/2024 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 493 votes to 11, with 18 abstentions, a resolution on Russia's undemocratic presidential elections and their illegitimate extension to the occupied territories.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA and the ECR groups.

## *Context*

The so-called presidential election held by Russia from 15 to 17 March 2024 was conducted without any political competition, in a severely restricted environment of systemic and grave repression and during the Russian Federation's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine. There were reports of voters being intimidated, voters being denied their right to vote, ballot boxes being stuffed, protocols from the precincts being falsified on a massive scale and independent domestic election observers being detained. Russia also organised voting in the occupied Ukrainian territories of Crimea, Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia, at times amid violence and threats by armed Russian soldiers.

The Russian authorities did not invite OSCE/ODIHR to observe its election, which runs contrary to Russia's commitments and obligations as an OSCE participating state. This was the second Russian election in a row to have been held without impartial and independent international election observers in the country.

Putin's 'electoral victory' with 87 % of the vote, a clearly inconceivable number for a free and fair election, derived from a clearly manipulated outcome from polling stations throughout Russia, from Adygea to Yamalo-Nenets.

Parliament strongly denounces all electoral violations committed by the regime of Vladimir Putin during the so-called Russian presidential election of 15 to 17 March 2024, as well as the preceding long-standing and systemic repression and violations of civil and political rights. During the so-called presidential election, there were no genuine alternative candidates, no free media, no credible observers and no political freedoms. It concluded that the so-called presidential election in Russia was illegitimate and undemocratic.

Members unequivocally condemned the illegal so-called election conducted in the territories of Ukraine that Russia has temporarily occupied, namely the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, the City of Sevastopol and parts of the Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions. They stressed that holding an election in these territories constitutes a clear breach of Ukrainian sovereignty and a distinct violation of international law, in particular the UN Charter.

Parliament urged the Member States of the European Union and the international community not to recognise the outcome of the Russian presidential election as legitimate, as it was held in the illegally occupied territories of Ukraine, and, even within Russia, was neither free nor fair, did not meet the basic international electoral standards, and thus lacked democratic legitimacy.

The EU and its Member States are urged to:

- continue to actively support independent Russian civil society organisations, independent media outlets and human rights defenders;
- prepare for a situation in which Russia, like Belarus, ceases issuing passports in its consulates, in which case it may be necessary for the EU and all its Member States to recognise de facto statelessness and issue travel documents;
- provide humanitarian visas and other support to Russian dissidents, including lawyers, who are at risk of political persecution.

Lastly, Members deplored the fact that the Prime Minister of Hungary, Viktor Orbán, chose to break ranks with the EU and congratulate Vladimir Putin on his sham re-election.