

# Summary of Electoral Issues in Russian-Occupied Ukraine

## Key Points

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- **Illegitimate Elections:** Russia conducted elections in Ukrainian territories it occupies, which are widely considered illegal and illegitimate.
- **International Condemnation:** Ukraine and numerous international stakeholders condemn these elections as a violation of international law and Ukrainian sovereignty.
- **Preparation for 2024 Elections:** The Kremlin aims to solidify control over occupied regions ahead of Russia's presidential election in March 2024, potentially using electronic voting systems.
- **Concerns over Electronic Voting:** There are fears that the introduction of electronic voting could facilitate election rigging and undermine the transparency of the electoral process.

## Important Stakeholders

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### Russia

**Vladimir Putin** - President of Russia, supports the elections in occupied territories to legitimize Russian annexation.

**Central Election Commission of Russia** - Organized and executed the elections in the occupied regions.

### Ukraine

**Volodymyr Zelenskyy** - President of Ukraine, strongly condemns the elections as a breach of sovereignty and calls for international sanctions against Russia.

**Kyiv Government** - Denounces the elections and urges the international community to not recognize the results.

### International Organizations

**European Union** - Condemns the elections, deems them illegal, and reaffirms support for Ukraine's territorial integrity.

**United States** - Rejects the legitimacy of the elections and continues to support Ukraine against Russian aggression.

**NATO** - Criticizes Russia's actions and calls for the respect of international law.

**United Nations** - Officials state there is no legal basis for the elections, emphasizing they undermine peace efforts.

## Other Stakeholders

**G7 Foreign Ministers** - Issue statements condemning Russia's "sham elections" and reinforcing support for Ukraine.

**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)** - Invalidates the elections, stating they do not comply with international standards.

**Various National Leaders** - Officials from countries like the United Kingdom, Canada, and Lithuania express condemnation and call for adherence to international law.

## Arguments and Counterarguments

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### Arguments Supporting the Elections

- **Russian Perspective:** Russia claims the elections are a democratic process, providing residents in occupied territories a voice and local governance.
- **Integration Efforts:** Some local stakeholders in occupied regions may support integration with Russia, viewing the elections as a step towards stability.

### Arguments Against the Elections

- **Violation of Sovereignty:** Ukraine and its allies argue the elections violate Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty.
- **International Law Breach:** The elections are seen as a breach of international laws, including the Geneva Conventions.
- **Electoral Integrity Concerns:** Electronic voting systems could be manipulated, raising concerns about election rigging and transparency.
- **Lack of Legitimacy:** The international community does not recognize the elections, viewing them as illegitimate and coercive.
- **Undermining Peace Efforts:** Holding elections in occupied territories hinders diplomatic resolutions and escalates tensions.

## Time Analysis

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The timeline below illustrates the key events and reactions related to the elections in the Russian-occupied territories of Ukraine:

### ● August 16, 2023

*The Central Election Commission of Russia announces plans to hold elections in occupied Ukrainian territories.*

● **September 4, 2023**

**Congress of Local and Regional Authorities** denounces the planned elections, stating they undermine local governance principles.

● **September 8, 2023**

**President Zelenskyy** condemns the elections and urges for additional sanctions against Russia.

● **September 9, 2023**

**European Union and United States** release statements rejecting the legitimacy of the elections and reaffirming support for Ukraine.

● **September 11, 2023**

**Russia** declares victory for its ruling party in the occupied territories; international condemnation intensifies.

● **September 14, 2023**

**G7 Foreign Ministers** issue a joint statement criticizing Russia's "sham elections" and call for respect of international borders.

● **September 19, 2023**

**United Nations** officials reiterate that the elections have no legal standing and stress that they undermine peace efforts.

● **September 30, 2023**

**Volodymyr Zelenskyy** announces a "Defense Industries Alliance," highlighting the need for strengthened defense in light of Russia's actions.