



**EUROPEAN UNION**

**OSCE Permanent Council No 1114  
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**EU statement on the elections for the Duma in the Russian Federation**

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Elections for the State Duma in the Russian Federation took place on 18 September. According to the preliminary conclusions of the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission, the elections were transparently administered by the Central Election Commission, but challenges to democratic commitments remain.

In particular, the OSCE/ODIHR noted that the electoral environment was negatively affected by restrictions to fundamental freedoms and political rights, firmly controlled media and a tightening grip on civil society, as well as shortcomings related to candidate registration and the legal framework.

We expect the Russian authorities to do their utmost to address these concerns based on ODIHR recommendations.

The European Union has not recognised the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation and therefore does not recognise the holding of elections in the Crimean peninsula. The OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission did not conduct any activities in the illegally-annexed territories of Crimea and Sevastopol. Participation of EU Member States' diplomats in observation activities within the framework of the OSCE/ODIHR monitoring mission was also limited to the recognised territory of the Russian Federation, which does not include the illegally-annexed territories. The European Union remains unwavering in its support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\* and ALBANIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE and the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA align themselves with this statement.

\* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.