



EU-RUSSIA CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM
ГРАЖДАНСКИЙ ФОРУМ ЕС-РОССИЯ

Policy Paper

Public Control over the Electoral Process

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Working Group „ Democratic Structures and Processes“

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Public Control over the Electoral Process

Elections are the main instrument of a democracy, one of its major institutions, which allows citizens to form governing authorities at the national, regional, municipal and rural levels. Foremost, democratic elections allow forming a legislative branch of government, capable of reflecting citizens' interests in its decision-making and able to exercise control over an executive branch of government.

Transparency of the electoral process, with the possibility of civic control over the elections, is one of the best checks against falsification of voting results, electoral corruption, and is a prerequisite to a corruption-free society for the future.

The EU - Russia dialogue should raise the following pressing issues:

- Public control of civil society organizations as a prerequisite to free and fair elections;
- Expedite the adoption of a new Electoral Code in Russia, including the process of public hearings of proposed legislation;
- Review the principles for the creation of Electoral Commissions;
- Further development of the institute of intergovernmental election observation missions (OSCE and PACE), as well as election observation missions of professional non-profit organizations.

Transparent, free and fair elections in the EU and Russia help form a fair system of governance, defuse internal tensions, and create conditions for respectful relations between various political institutions. Therefore, elections cannot be considered a purely domestic issue, as their quality influences the creation of a wider economic and social space between the EU and Russia.

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