

3 Ukrainian Cities Express Interest in Joining Crimea, Local Lawmaker Says

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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SIMFEROPOL — A senior Crimean lawmaker has said that representatives of three southern Ukrainian administrative capitals have expressed a willingness to become a part of the autonomous republic if its autonomy is broadened in a referendum.

Deputy speaker of Crimea's Supreme Council Serhiy Tsekov said Monday that Crimean authorities had received calls from "representatives of local administrative bodies" in Mykolaiv, Kherson and Odessa.

"They think that they should be together with Crimea," he said.

Ukraine's mainly ethnic Russian-populated region of Crimea is now at the center of the ongoing crisis in the country as pro-Russia groups move to distance themselves from a reformed national parliament that ousted President Viktor Yanukovich a week ago.

The Crimean parliament voted last week to hold a referendum on greater autonomy on March 30.

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