

# Nearly All Crimeans Now Russian Citizens

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Some 98 percent of Crimeans have acquired Russian citizenship since Russia annexed the peninsula last March, Interfax reported Thursday, citing regional migration officials.

"As of today, 98 percent of Crimeans have received Russian passports. This is a wonderful number," said Pyotr Yarosh, the head of the Federal Migration Service's Crimea branch, according to Interfax.

Yarosh added that the remaining two percent of residents had yet to be granted Russian citizenship simply because they did "not come" and apply for the document.

Registered residents of Crimea who hold Russian, Ukrainian or Soviet passports will be allowed to cast a ballot Sunday during the republic's first parliamentary elections as a Russian federal subject, according to the Crimean election commission.

Russia does not require Crimeans with Ukrainian passports to relinquish their Ukrainian citizenship although law enforcement officials and civil servants are obliged to surrender

their Ukrainian passports if they wish to remain in their positions.

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