

《CCTV9英语新闻：乌克兰东部两州公投开始》

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Residents in Donetsk and Luhansk regions have gone to the polls in referendums on whether they want to remain part of Ukraine.

The two self-proclaimed republics decided to hold the simultaneous referendums though Kiev dismissed them as "illegal." In Donetsk, 3 million ballots have been distributed to eligible voters. More than 1,500 polling stations have been set up.

The two regions have a population of 6.6 million, about 14 percent of Ukraine's total. They're following the lead of Crimea, which held its own referendum and joined Russia on March 18th, which was not recognized by the West.

