

Geographic Snapshot: Europe-Eurasia



A summary of INFER forecasts on elections, diplomacy, and geopolitical events in the region.

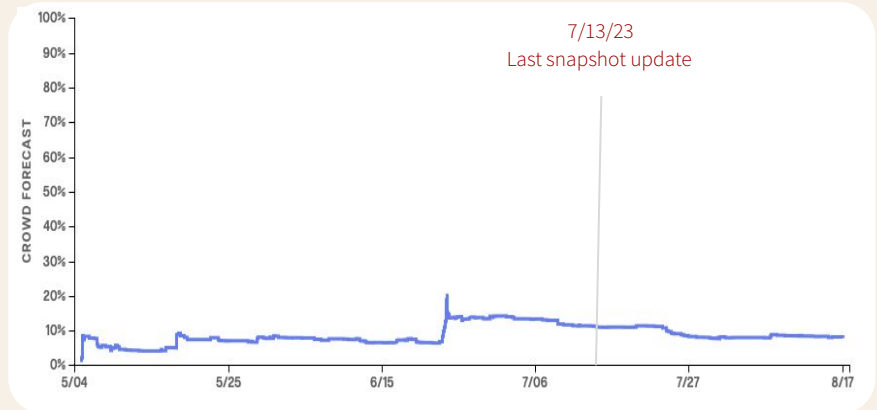
Data as of 18 August 2023

Europe and Eurasia Region

Will Vladimir Putin cease to be the president of the Russian Federation before 1 May 2024?

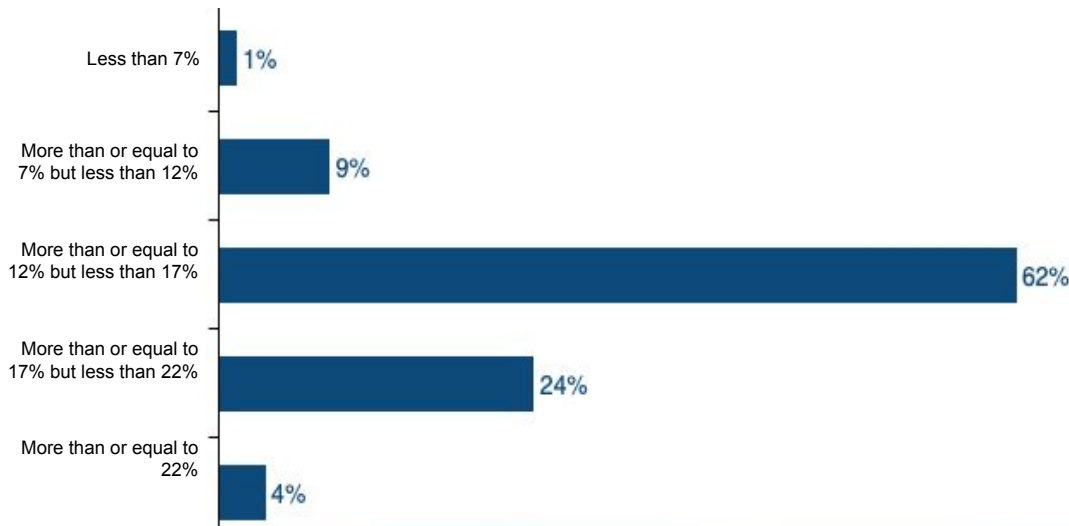
8% chance

↓ **Down 3% from 7/13/23**
Based on 523 forecasts



[See detailed forecast rationales](#) • [See consensus trend and crowd profile](#)

What percentage of Ukrainian territory will be held by Russia in December 2023?



Based on 297 forecasts

[See detailed forecast rationales](#) • [See consensus trend and crowd profile](#) • [Read blog post comparing forecaster and expert perspectives](#)

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A. Rationale Summaries By Forecast Question

This section presents a high-level summary of forecasters' rationales for each question in the report, along with the crowd forecast and change in consensus since the last report (in parentheses). Rationales can be found in full by clicking “See detailed forecast rationales”, and a list of sources linked within rationales can be found by clicking “See source links”. The data in this report is from 1 July through 18 August 2023.

Will Vladimir Putin cease to be the president of the Russian Federation before 1 May 2024?

Crowd Forecast: 8% chance (↓3%) | [See detailed forecast rationales](#) | [See source links](#)

Higher probability forecasts discuss...	Lower probability forecasts discuss...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weakening control over the military: There are signs Putin is losing control over the Russian military. The removal of generals like Ivan Popov for criticizing the war effort and the Wagner group's aborted mutiny show discontent and disarray, even among Putin's allies. • Domestic discontent: The war in Ukraine is going poorly for Russia, draining resources and morale. Russia's economy is suffering under sanctions and living standards are falling, which could provoke popular unrest. Putin is even being criticized by pro-war nationalists for mismanaging the invasion. • Rumors of health issues: Putin's health seems to be deteriorating, with rumors he may have Parkinson's or cancer. A severe health crisis could force him to suddenly give up power. • Notable absences: Putin's refusal to attend the recent BRICS summit in person and a lack of visibility of key officials hints at behind-the-scenes power struggles. • 2024 elections: Looming 2024 elections provide an opportunity for leadership change if Putin's authority continues to decline. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authoritarian infrastructure: Putin has consolidated power over 20 years as an authoritarian leader. He maintains the loyalty of key security services like the FSB, as well as regional strongmen like Ramzan Kadyrov. He has cracked down on dissent even from nationalist voices. • Difficulty of opposition: There are no visible organized opposition groups ready to challenge Putin. Recent challenges by the Wagner Group and others have been effectively shut down by Putin. Further, the lack of a clear successor makes a potential transition risky for elites who have vested interests. • Historical precedent: Leaders in dictatorships often persist through inertia even when their direct control decays. Sudden coups are rare. • Putin's popularity: The Russian public has largely supported the war with Ukraine, and Putin maintains control over related propaganda and information.

What percentage of Ukrainian territory will be held by Russia in December 2023?

Crowd Forecast most likely outcome: 62% chance of Russia holding 12-17% of Ukraine (↓3%)

[See detailed forecast rationales](#) | [See source links](#)

Forecasts anticipating more Russian control discuss...	Forecasts anticipating less Russian control discuss...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stalling counteroffensive: The Ukrainian counteroffensive is stalling due to a lack of supplies. This suggests Russia may continue to hold or even gain territory. • Russian resolve: Russia is unlikely to retreat from the Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions it annexed in September 2022, as those areas have pro-Russian populations. Putin also needs to hold those territories to demonstrate strength headed into the 2024 elections. • Rumored Russian offensive: Russia may launch new offensives to gain territory, especially to connect land access to Crimea. Troop build ups near Kharkiv could signal an impending attack. • Russia favored in stalemate: There are concerns Ukraine's window to retake territory is closing as momentum slows. The stalemate favors Russia holding its current territory. • Declining Western support to Ukraine: As the war drags on, the US and EU will be increasingly focused on elections in 2024, which may reduce their support for Ukraine, constraining its ability to push Russia back. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small gains: Ukraine has slowly been regaining bits of territory in the Donbas region. The counteroffensive, while slower than expected, will likely continue this trend of small gains, which add up. • Recent Attacks by Ukraine: Ukraine seems to be targeting key infrastructure for Russia, e.g., by attacking bridges to Crimea, targeting Russian supply lines, and launching other attacks inside Russian borders. This could lead Russia to retreat without Ukraine making new gains. • Internal problems for Russia: Russia has manpower issues with an unpopular draft and failing to rotate tired troops on the frontlines. Its internal political and economic situation is unstable, which could potentially lead to a collapse and retreat similar to that which occurred in WWI. This would cause Russian forces to lose territory without Ukraine having to push them back. • External problems for Russia: Russia's annexed territories have active insurgencies and instability. Holding them long-term will be difficult as Ukraine keeps up the pressure. • Western aid: Continued Western military aid flowing to Ukraine keeps them in the fight and makes Russian gains unlikely. Recent aid commitments suggest Ukraine can at least hold territory.

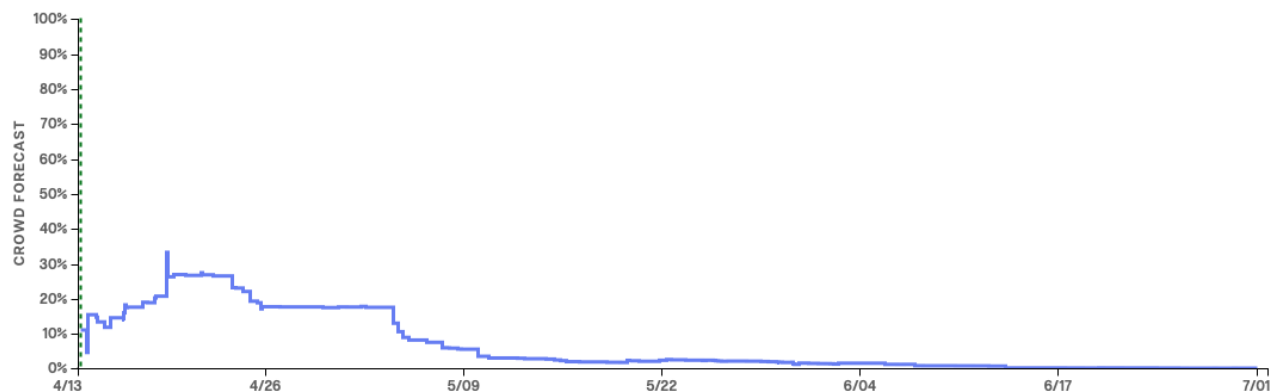
Read detailed perspectives in the blog post [“INFER forecasters weigh Ukraine’s counteroffensive”](#).

B. Resolved Questions

This section presents the forecast questions that have been resolved in July. A question is “resolved” when the outcome is known and it can be judged for accuracy.

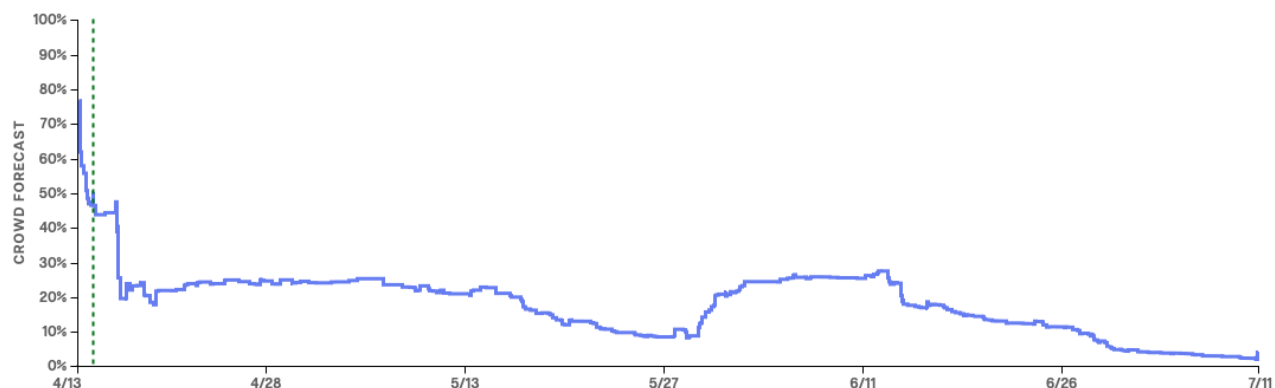
Will Kosovo and Serbia sign an EU-backed proposal aimed at normalizing diplomatic relations by 30 June 2023?

Final Crowd Forecast: Yes - 0% chance; No - 100% chance | **Correct Answer:** No



Will Sweden become a full member of NATO before the NATO Summit in July 2023?

Final Crowd Forecast: Yes - 3% chance; No - 97% chance | **Correct Answer:** No



C. The Forecasters

The forecasters who have participated thus far in these questions have the following profile:

- 171 total forecasters
- 39% are “INFER Pros” - participants in INFER’s Pro Forecaster Program, who were selected based on their accuracy track record of at least 1 year on INFER or other similar forecasting sites or programs.

Demographics

Country	Ratio
USA	35%
Canada, UK, Australia, New Zealand	6%
Europe	31%
Latin America, Caribbean	19%
Asia	7%
Africa	1%

D. Report Methodology

Rationales of INFER forecasters have been selected and summarized by Claude, an AI assistant tool created by Anthropic. To build the rationale summaries presented in this report, we provided forecasts (probabilities and narrative rationales) to Claude to summarize into bulleted lists of arguments. We then manually edited the bulleted summaries for accuracy and readability to ensure that each list item accurately represented forecasters' rationales and was assigned to the proper list.

Each question in the report also includes links to the crowd forecasts, rationales, and source links used by forecasters.