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### Important Dates

Last Day of Campaigning	Sept 28
Elections	Sept 30
Opening Of Rada Session	+30 days
Government Formation	+30 days

### Latest Polls

Agency	Completed
Democratic Initiatives*	Sept 4-11
Party of Regions	34.2%
Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc	25.7%
Our Ukraine	11.9%
Lytvyn Bloc	3.3%
Undecided	12%
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Razumkov Center	Sept 1-10
Party of Regions	33.9%
Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc	23.5%
Our Ukraine	13.1%
Communists	5.0%

*\* Democratic Initiatives & KIIS were the only survey to correctly predict the outcome of the 2006 Rada elections.*

*Note: There is a 3% threshold to enter the Rada.*

**As we head into the weekend, election polls show that the incumbent Regions Party is likely to come out the winner in this Sunday's elections, but who will make up the new ruling coalition is still anyone's guess.**

### Polls Suggest Regions Victory

The last two polls to be released in the run up to the elections have the Party of Regions (34.2-33.9%) coming out on top of the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc (25.7-23.5%) and the President's Our Ukraine Bloc (13.1-11.9%). The Communists (2.7-5.0%) and the Vladimir Lytvyn Bloc (3.3-3.0%) are the only other two parties that look as if they may surpass the 3% barrier to enter the Rada.

Surprises aside, with the big three parties entrenched in the same positions they held following the March 2006 Rada elections, it could be the smaller parties that decide who makes up the new coalition. For a BYT-Our Ukraine coalition the ideal scenario would be that no other parties make it over the 3% threshold. The Speaker post, which any third party is likely to demand, is said to be fundamental in the Our Ukraine-BYT coalition agreement and Our Ukraine is not likely to be willing to give it up. For Regions the stronger the showing by a small party the better, as the party would be more than willing to give up posts in the Rada to junior parties to obtain complete control of the government. Moreover, the Communists, should they make it in, would only be willing to join with Regions.

### The Falsification Factor

Nearly every party involved in the elections has accused the others of preparing mass voter fraud and each of the big three political parties have set up small tent camps in the center of Kyiv and threatened to bring their supporters to the streets should their election monitors detect falsifications. Given the fact that these elections were hastily thrown together and are more poorly equipped than in March 2006, the chances of the polls being somewhat tainted is more likely. To help prevent fraud the Central Elections Commission has promised to thoroughly inspect votes from any polling stations where voter turnout reaches 80%.

Expect the "falsification card" to be used by all three major parties in an attempt to rally support. There will be a lot of hard fought political wrangling after the polls close, including lawsuits and protests, but the results of the election are likely to hold. A revolution scenario looks highly unlikely as it plays against the business interests of all parties involved. Expect weeks to pass before the election results are confirmed and possibly more time before any coalition is formed.

### The New Coalition: Choices, Choices, Choices

**BYT & Our Ukraine:** These two parties have done a lot to mend fences since the President dismissed the Rada in April, however, it is still not clear whether their post-election coalition agreement is iron clad or simply cosmetic. A live TV meeting yesterday between Yushchenko and Tymoshenko in which they both pledged to form a democratic coalition after the elections is the closest Our Ukraine has come to guaranteeing they will team up with Tymoshenko after the elections. BYT's political stance gives it no other possible partners. While the President's pragmatic relationship with certain members of the Regions party has always kept this option open as a possibility for his party. If these two parties do form a coalition, they will likely find stiff resistance from the Party of Regions and their financial supporters in the Rada.

**The Party of Regions & Our Ukraine:** By most accounts it was the closed-door meetings between the President and Ukraine's richest man, Rinat Akhmetov, who is considered the leader of what is commonly called the moderate wing of the Party of Regions and the party's biggest financial supporter that ended the political standoff between Yanukovich and Yushchenko in the spring and led to the current elections. The strengthening of Yushchenko and Akhmetov's relationship has many political observers suggesting that this will be the next coalition. Given that Our Ukraine and Regions business interests are generally aligned this alliance makes sense and could possibly bring the most stability to Ukrainian politics generally, but the political risks for Our Ukraine are quite high.

**Regions & Communists:** A strong Regions showing (+36%) and a return to the Rada by Communists would make this coalition an easy choice for the hard-line elements in the Party of Regions, however, the combined oppositional force of Our Ukraine and BYT would likely lead to more conflict in the Rada.

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