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Only 52% of Russians Identify With Any Political Party, Poll Reveals

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Although only 52 percent of Russians believe that their interests are adequately represented by one of the parties currently active in Russian politics, the ruling United Russia party has been hit by a recent surge of support, according to a survey conducted by state pollster VTsIOM.

While eight percent of respondents remained optimistic that a suitable party could be formed in the next year, 27 percent rejected the possibility.

Respondents were hard-pressed to name specific alternatives to the present mix of party platforms, with 15 percent answering that they were unsure of what would make a party specifically desirable. Eight percent said that they wanted a "popular party that aims to defend simple citizens," a figure that has doubled since the same question was asked in 2012.

The percentage of respondents that had difficulty explaining the utility of political parties likewise jumped from 28 to 39 percent since 2012. Both years' polls revealed that only 20

percent of respondents believe that political parties fulfill the necessity of uniting like-minded people.

This general lack of confidence in political parties has not soured the popular sentiment toward the country's ruling United Russia party, however.

VTsIOM's most recent polls reveal that United Russia's approval rating had soared in recent months to 60.4 percent from a January average of 41.7 percent.

United Russia's rating may have earned a boost from President Vladimir Putin recent surge in popularity. Putin's current approval rating hovers at approximately 85.9 percent according to recent polls — up from 60.6 percent in January. This significant increase in popularity is widely seen as a reaction to events in Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea.

The VTsIOM polls were conducted on May 10 and 11 among 1,600 respondents throughout Russia and carried a 3.4 percent margin of error.

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