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Less Than Half of Russians Believe Duma Elections Fair — Poll

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Moskva News Agency

Just 46 percent of Russians believe that last month's State Duma elections were carried out fairly, a survey by independent pollster the Levada Center revealed Monday.

Some 31 percent of respondents said they were certain that the vote had been unfair, while 22 percent refused to answer, the Interfax news agency reported.

Just under half of respondents believed that vote rigging had taken place during the count, with 30 percent saying that "inconsequential vote rigging" had taken place. Another 13 percent believed in "fairly significant" violations, which "probably had no effect on the result." Six percent of respondents believed there had been serious violations during the

vote count, Interfax reported.

Most
respondents — 78 percent
— said that they had not
encountered any kind of
pressure or intimidation in the run-up to the Sep. 18 vote. Five percent
said that they
had
been pressured by their employer to vote for a certain party, four percent by their local
administration or friends, and two percent
by their relatives.

The
ruling United Russia party secured a landslide victory
during last month's elections,
which saw
them gain
a constitutional super-majority of 76 percent in Russia's lower house of
parliament, the State Duma.

Electoral fraud, including ballot stuffing, was reported at some polling stations, and
independent monitors still reported that the vote was "far from free and fair."

Russia's Election Commission reported the turnout as a historically low 48 percent, whilst
some statistical analyses
have claimed the real turnout was just 37 percent.

Some 1600 people took part in the Levada Center poll from Sep. 23-26 in 48 Russian
regions, Interfax reported.

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