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Record Number of Russians Shun Politics Ahead of 2018 Elections

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Andrei Makhonin / Vedomosti

A record number of Russians are turning away from politics in the run-up to the country's presidential elections in 2018, a report by independent pollster the Levada Center revealed Wednesday.

Some 52 percent of respondents said that they were "definitely not ready" to take a more active role in Russia's political life, while 28 percent described themselves as "reluctant" to take part.

The figures have risen dramatically since 2015, when 38 percent and 33 percent of respondents reported that they "definitely would not" or "probably would not" take more interest in the country's government.

Many of those who chose to shun politics claimed that it was the "responsibility of the

authorities" (30 percent), or that they "did not understand" the subject (26 percent.) One in four said that they were simply "too busy" to take a greater interest while 23 percent believed that "nothing can be changed."

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More than half of respondents (61 percent) also said they actively avoided contact with the authorities and tried to rely "only on themselves." Twenty-four percent said that they depended on the government, while only 9 percent said they actively approached the government to an attempt to procure support.

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