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Russia Approves Petitions for Referendum on Retirement Age Hike

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Anti-retirement age hike rally/ Sergei Fadeichev/ TASS

Russian election officials have cleared three proposals to hold a referendum on the controversial plan to raise the retirement age, moving forward the first referendums approved in 25 years.

The government's plan to raise the retirement age to 65 years for men and 63 years for women has been met with widespread protests. A referendum petition from the Communist Party was rejected last month, allegedly over improper wording.

On Wednesday, Russia's Central Election Commission (CEC) approved all three petitions for a referendum on raising the retirement age, including from the Communist Party, the RBC news website reported.

"Do you agree that the age at which a person has the right to receive a state pension (age 60 for men, age 55 for women), as stipulated by the Russian Federation legislation on pensions

as of July 1, 2018, should not be raised?" asks the Communist Party's framing of the question.

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The CEC has also greenlighted two similarly-worded referendum petitions from the A Just Russia party and two Moscow residents.

The petition's authors now have 45 days to collect at least 2 million signatures, according to the RTVI broadcaster.

A Change.org petition against the legislation gathered nearly 3 million signatures in two months.

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