

1 in 2 Russians Say They're Ready to Join Pension Protests – Poll

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Vladimir Smirnov / TASS

Over half of the Russian population is willing to protest government plans to raise the retirement age, according to a new survey published by the independent Levada Center pollster.

The government introduced draft legislation on June 14 that proposed raising the pension age for men and women by five years — to 65 and 63 years respectively. The Communist Party staged nationwide protests against the planned reform on Sunday, with more rallies — organized by opposition leader Alexei Navalny — expected on Sunday, Sept. 9.

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According to the pollster's results published Monday, 53 percent of Russian respondents [said](#) they are willing to take to the streets to protest against the pension reform.

Last month, 37 percent of respondents [told](#) Levada that they were willing to protest the reform while 53 percent said they were not.

Meanwhile, three-quarters told Levada in the latest poll that they would vote in favor of keeping the current pension age if the question was raised in a referendum.

Russian authorities, including Putin, argue that leaving the retirement age unchanged is unsustainable for the national economy.

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The Russian president [issued](#) a televised address to the nation last Wednesday in favor of the reform in which he also proposed reducing the retirement age increase for women by three years — from 63 to 60.

Levada sociologist Denis Volkov [told](#) the RBC news website that Putin's address was unlikely to ease public discontent with pension reform, but "could help them accept it."

The Levada poll was carried out among 1,600 respondents in 52 Russian regions between Aug. 23 and Aug. 30.

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