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Half of Russians Don't Hold ‘Democratic Values’ – Poll

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Alexander Nemenov / AFP

More Russians say they don't hold democratic values than those that do, according to a poll by the independent Levada Center polling agency published Tuesday.

The results follow last month’s elections to Russia’s lower house of parliament, the State Duma, which saw the ruling, pro-Kremlin United Russia party maintain its supermajority amid widespread reports of election fraud and the exclusion of most opposition candidates.

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Nearly half (47%) of Russians say they don’t hold so-called democratic values compared to the 44% who think of themselves as people of democratic convictions, Levada’s results said.

Younger Russians aged 18-24 were more likely to call themselves supporters of democratic values (50%) than older respondents (41%) between 40-54 years old.

Levada noted an increasing polarization on the issue, with a widening disparity in its results since its 2018 poll on the same topic.

Only 18% of Russians said they see themselves as supporters of leftist, socialist ideals, with the overwhelming majority of respondents (72%) declining to identify themselves as such.

Russians aged 55 years older were more likely to identify themselves as leftists or socialists than other age groups. Across all ages, 40% of respondents who supported leftist ideals also supported Russia's Communist Party.

Levada conducted its survey among 1,634 respondents in 137 Russian towns and cities between Sept. 23-29.

Meanwhile, a survey published by international communications agency PBN Hill + Knowlton Strategies and independent research agency MAGRAM Market Research said six in 10 Russians (63%) believe the country "desperately" needs a new ethics code — although only 7% of respondents said they were familiar with the term itself.

According to the survey's findings, key topics that Russians want to hear more about in the context of new ethics are the environment (85%), inclusiveness (83%), domestic violence (78%), politics (74%), equality in the family (59%) and in careers (57%).

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