

Most Russians See Navalny Trial as Dirty, Poll Says

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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More than half of Russians believe that the government will put pressure on the court in the ongoing embezzlement trial of opposition leader Alexei Navalny, and nearly half think he will be found guilty, according to a poll released Monday.

In addition, 44 percent of Russians are actively watching the trial at a Kirov court, where Navalny is accused of embezzling 16 million rubles (\$500,000) from the state-owned company KirovLes when he served as an adviser to the Kirov governor in 2009, the independent Levada Center pollster said.

Thirty-three percent of those surveyed heard of Navalny for the first time, even though Interfax reported earlier that Navalny was the fifth-most-mentioned person in the Russian media in April, the month his trial began. (President Vladimir Putin topped the list.)

Of those aware of the Navalny case, 52 percent think the government will put pressure on the

judges, the survey said, according to Interfax. Forty-seven percent think he will be convicted, with 27 percent saying he will be jailed and 20 percent saying he will be handed a suspended sentence.

Navalny faces up to 15 years in prison if convicted.

Only 5 percent believe that Navalny will be acquitted and the case dismissed for lack of evidence.

Some respondents think the government is using the case as a tool to demonstrate that he is corrupt (23 percent) or prevent Navalny from taking part in the next parliamentary and presidential elections (12 percent).

Navalny first made a name for himself as an anti-corruption blogger. Russian law prevents those with a police record from running for public office.

The Kirov court started the trial on April 17, and the next hearing is scheduled for May 15.

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