

Russians Losing Faith in Courts, Poll Says

By [The Moscow Times](#)

August 13, 2013

The  Moscow Times

Most Russian would only consider defending their interests in court as a last resort as confidence in the country's judicial system continues to slide, a [poll](#) by the Public Opinion Foundation showed.

Despite their reluctance to go to court, 55 percent of the respondents said the right to a fair trial was the most important individual right, well ahead of freedom of speech and freedom of conscience on 18 percent and 11 percent respectively, Kommersant reported Tuesday.

The right to free medical assistance was named the most significant right by 74 percent of the respondents, followed by the right to work and get paid, which was chosen by 58 percent of those surveyed.

At the same time, 57 percent of people said they would only look to defend their rights in court when all other opportunities have been exhausted, which is 13 percent more than last year.

Only 30 percent of respondents said they would go straight to court if their rights were infringed, the poll found.

"People have nowhere to go for justice, the courts have a strong reputation for corruption and their prestige has been falling since the 1990s," the foundation's head Alexander Oslon said.

He said that the widespread mistrust of the country's court system has its roots in the traditional suspicion held by Russians against all state and bureaucratic institutions.

The poll was carried out among 1,500 respondents in 43 regions with a 5 percent margin for error.

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