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Russia Celebrates Constitution, But Few Russians Know What It Says

By The Moscow Times

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Russian children are only taught the very basics of the Russian Constitution in school.

As Russia celebrates Constitution Day on Friday, a poll shows a vast majority of citizens have no knowledge of what their country's Constitution actually says, but four in ten still believe it protects their rights, a recent poll indicated.

A total of 41 percent of respondents said they had never read the Constitution, while another 24 percent said they remembered "nothing" from the text, and yet another 24 percent acknowledged having only vague memories of it, independent Levada Center pollster said in a report released Wednesday.

Only 12 percent of respondents said they had a fairly good knowledge of the text, according to the report.

Lack of knowledge of the law did not seem to imply a lack of faith in it, however, the poll

showed.

The number of Russians who believed that the Constitution "guarantees citizens' rights and liberties" has increased to 38 percent in the latest poll, up from 29 percent a year earlier, the report said.

Another 26 percent thought the Constitution ensured "order" in the workings of a state, marking little change from the 23 percent recorded in November, 2013, the report said.

A sizable minority of Russians, or 16 percent, took a bitter view of the Constitution, saying that it played no role in the country because "few [people] take it into consideration," according to the poll. This compares to 27 percent a year earlier.

The poll was conducted on Nov. 21-24 among 1,600 people in 46 of Russia's regions, and gave a margin of error of no more than 3.4 percentage points.

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