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More Than Half of Russians See Stalin in a Positive Light

By The Moscow Times

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The poll was conducted from Dec. 19 to 22 among 1,600 adults in 134 cities.

More than half of Russians believe Soviet leader Josef Stalin played a positive role in Russia, a poll published Tuesday by the independent Levada Center revealed.

16 percent of respondents to the poll said Stalin's role was "definitely positive," while another 36 percent said it was "more positive" than negative. In February 2013, the number of those enthusiastic about Stalin's impact was much lower: Only 9 percent of respondents gave Stalin a "definitely positive" assessment at that time.

Nine percent of respondents said in the latest poll that Stalin's contribution had definitely been negative, while another 21 percent said it was "more negative" than positive, and 19 percent expressed difficulty in answering the question.

While Westerners tend to associate Stalin's legacy with oppressive measures, many Russians

credit Stalin with victory in World War II, and continue to celebrate the Soviet Union's achievements in modernization under his rule. Kremlin critics have accused President Vladimir Putin of playing up Stalin's image during his term and portraying the dictator in an overly positive light.

The poll was conducted from Dec. 19 to 22 among 1,600 adults in 134 cities. The margin of error did not exceed 3.4 percent.

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