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# Poll shows Russians Negative About U.S., Ukraine, Positive Towards Belarus and China

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Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev (L), China's President Xi Jinping (C) and his wife Peng Liyuan leave Red Square after the Victory Day parade in Moscow, Russia, May 9, 2015.

The majority of Russians have negative feelings towards the United States, the European Union and Ukraine, according to survey released Monday by the independent pollster Levada Center.

Just 15 percent of those polled said they viewed the United States "well" or "very well," in the survey — a drop of four percentage points since March this year. In January 2014, before the crisis in Ukraine soured relations between Russia and the West, this figure stood at 43 percent.

The pollster also found that public support for the European Union has dropped to 26 percent — down from 31 percent in March this year. In January 2014, this figure stood at 51 percent,

according to an earlier poll by Levada.

The fallout from the Ukraine crisis has also affected the way in which Russians view that country, with just 26 percent saying that they look upon Ukraine positively or very positively — down three percentage points since March. In January 2014, this figure stood at 66 percent.

Relations between Russia and the West have been strained since Moscow annexed Crimea from Ukraine in March 2014.

The West has also accused Russia of supporting separatists battling Ukrainian government forces in the eastern part of the country with weapons and manpower — a charge the Kremlin has repeatedly denied.

In contrast, when asked to list the countries considered most friendly to Russia, 55 percent of Russians said Belarus was a "close friend" while 43 percent chose China, reflecting Moscow's shift away from the West and toward Asia.

Forty-one percent said they considered Kazakhstan to be a "close friend," to Russia followed by India and Armenia with 18 percent each, the pollster found.

The Levada Center poll was carried out from May 22-25 among 1,600 people in 46 Russian regions. The margin of error was no greater than 3.4 percent.

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