

More Than One-Third of Russians Blame U.S. for EU Migrant Crisis – Poll

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Thirty-six percent of Russians blame the U.S. and its actions for Middle Eastern immigrants and refugees pouring into the European Union, a survey by the state-run pollster VTsIOM revealed Monday.

Only 16 percent assigned the blame to Middle Eastern leaders and war in the region, and just 5 percent said the Islamic State extremist group and terrorists were responsible, the poll showed.

Most of the respondents — 86 percent — said they were aware of the refugee crisis. Almost half — 49 percent — said that war was the main reason for the immigrants fleeing to European countries. Ten percent said that the refugees were after “a better life.”

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“Russians' attitude toward the refugees is a projection of how Russian society treats 'outsiders': people of different religion, culture and historical experience,” Oleg Chernozub, head of monitoring research at VTsIOM, said in comments published together with the poll. “Society is united on most of the questions,” he added.

The survey was conducted from Oct. 10-11 and polled 1,600 people in 46 Russian regions. The margin of error did not exceed 3.5 percent.

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