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Russians 'No Longer Ashamed of Country' — Poll

By The Moscow Times

December 07, 2015



The number of Russians thinking their country of birth the best in the world has grown dramatically over the past decade.

Russia has seen a surge in patriotic feelings since the annexation of Crimea in March 2014, with 82 percent of respondents saying that Russian citizenship was preferable to any other, according to a new study by the independent Levada Center pollster, the RBC news site reported Monday.

The number of Russians thinking their country of birth the best in the world has grown dramatically over the past decade — only 36 per cent expressed similar views in a Levada poll from 1996, with the figure hovering around 70 percent for much of the 2000s and early 2010s, the report went on to say.

At the same time, the number of respondents reporting "feeling ashamed of contemporary developments in Russia" fell from 81 percent in 1996 to 55 percent this year.

According to the most recent poll, conducted in November this year, most Russians took pride in the country's history (88 percent) and army (85 percent).

The socioeconomic situation left them less impressed, with 72 percent saying they were dissatisfied with the welfare state and 66 percent feeling underwhelmed by Russia's economic performance.

At the same time, only 29 percent thought it beneficial to "openly admit the country's faults," compared to 44 percent in 2012 — with opposing views strongly held by 33 percent.

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