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Russians Becoming More Disillusioned With Church - Report

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Russian society became more anti-clerical in 2015, according to a report published Wednesday by the Moscow-based Sova Center for Information and Analysis.

“This [trend] manifests itself in more frequent standoffs and arguments between church supporters and opponents,” director of Sova, Alexander Verkhovsky, told The Moscow Times.

A number of protests took place in Moscow and in dozens of Russia's regions this year against the construction of new churches. In three Moscow districts, local residents filed lawsuits against the Russian Orthodox Church, demanding that the construction be canceled.

Another sign of growing tensions between the church and society is the controversy surrounding the trial of Viktor Krasnov in Stavropol — a man facing a sentence of one year in prison for writing “There's no God” on a social network.

Society's growing discontent with the Church can be traced back to 2011 when amid anti-Kremlin protests, the church positioned itself as a strong supporter of the government, according to Verkhovsky.

“It does not mean that we have an anti-church movement, but such tendencies are increasing,” Verkhovsky said.

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