

# Growing Number of Russians Think State Has Failed in Duties to Citizens - Poll

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The number of Russians who believe the state is failing in its duties to citizens has increased to 39 percent from 28 percent a year ago, but analysts think the dissatisfaction is unlikely to affect the outcome of the upcoming parliamentary elections significantly, poll results reported Wednesday indicated.

The latest level of public dissatisfaction with the government is similar to results recorded before Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine in 2014, the Vedomosti daily reported, citing surveys by independent Levada Center pollster.

The annexation of the Black Sea peninsula was widely cheered in Russia, and sent President Vladimir Putin's domestic approval ratings soaring.

Levada Center deputy chief Alexei Grazhdankin said public displeasure with the government is likely to keep increasing, but by the State Duma elections next fall, voters will be in a more “positive” state of mind following summer vacations, Vedomosti reported.

Another factor that could potentially sway voters toward the Kremlin would be another armed conflict, Grazhdankin was quoted as saying. After annexing Crimea, Russia supported separatist insurgents in Ukraine's east, and last fall started air strikes in Syria.

“If no campaign is launched, complaints about the state will grow, but if a local conflict breaks out again and [the government] manages to blame it on certain forces, the trend will change again,” Grazhdankin said, Vedomosti reported.

Alexei Makarkin, a political analyst, said Russians still entertain hopes that the economic troubles of the past couple of years are temporary, although this optimism is fading, Vedomosti reported.

“Psychologically, it's hard to admit that the growth on 2014 was an illusion, that things are only getting worse, and to abandon hopes for changes,” Makarkin was quoted as saying.

The latest increases in voter frustration with the government is unlikely to sway parliamentary election results, he said, arguing that disappointed voters would either stay away from the balloting or vote for Russia's Communist Party, Vedomosti reported.

No methodology data for the poll was provided in the report.

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