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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Most Russians Unconvinced by WADA Doping Reports – Poll

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Supporters cheer as members of the Russian Olympic delegation arrive at Rio de Janeiro International Airport in Rio de Janeiro, Brazilю **Patrick Semansky / AP**

The majority of Russians do not believe the▣results of the investigation by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)▣on the doping of Russian athletes, the Interfax news agency reported▣Friday.

According to the results of a recent study carried▣out by the independent Levada Center pollster, only 14 percent of▣Russian citizens believe that Russian athletes were doping during the▣Olympic Games in Sochi.

Thirty-eight percent of respondents consider▣WADA's evidence “not very convincing” and 33 percent — “totally▣unconvincing,” Interfax reported. Fifteen percent of respondents▣couldn't or wouldn't answer when asked about their attitude toward▣WADA's doping allegations.

The poll was conducted among 1,600 people in 137 cities and towns around Russia. Results were gather before July 24, when the International Olympic Committee (IOC) convened to discuss WADA's call to ban Russian athletes from the upcoming Olympics in Brazil's Rio de Janeiro.

At that time, 83 percent of Russians said that a decision to disallow the country's athletes at the Olympics would be wrong, while 7 percent of respondents spoke out in favor of the ban. Ten percent of the respondents found the question difficult to answer, according to the poll.

The IOC ruled against banning "clean" Russian athletes from the Games. The committee left the fate of Russia's athletes to individual sports federations, which are to decide whether individual athletes are "clean enough" to compete.

On July 18, WADA announced the results of an investigation into Russian athletes' involvement in a state-sponsored doping scheme during the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi. Although a blanket ban on the Russian Olympic team hasn't been imposed, the Russian squad has been decimated.

Sixty-seven out of 68 Russian track-and-field athletes have been banned from Rio, along with dozens of other Russian athletes.

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