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Half of Russians Blame Ukraine for MH17 Crash — Poll

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Maxim Zmeyev / Reuters

Half of Russians believe that Ukraine was responsible for the downing of Malaysian Airlines passenger jet MH17, a survey by
state-run pollster VTsIOM has revealed.

The flight was shot down over eastern Ukraine in July 2014, killing all 298 on board.

Older Russians were more likely to believe that Kiev was responsible for the crash, with 64 percent of those aged 60 or older blaming the Ukrainian army. Only 28 percent of those aged 18-24 held similar views.

A further 14 percent of respondents blamed Western special operations forces for the disaster, while 7 percent believed that the crash was due to terrorists which weren't linked to Ukraine conflict.

Just 4 percent believed that pro-Russian separatists had caused the crash, and only 1 percent said that Russia itself had been involved.

Some 14 percent of respondents expected stricter sanctions against Moscow as a result of the report, while another 6 percent said that there could be armed conflict.

A Dutch-led criminal investigation announced in a report on Sept. 28 that the jet had been downed using a Russian-made surface-to-air missile, fired from an area controlled by pro-Russian separatists in the Donbass region. The Kremlin has denounced the report as "unlikely to be true," and has repeatedly promoted alternate theories which implicate Ukraine.

The research was carried out among 1,600 participants between Oct. 2 – 3, with a margin of error not exceeding 2.5 percent.

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