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Half of Russians Now Support Stalin's Role in WWII

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Dmitri Lovetsky / AP

Half of Russians today say they approve of the role Josef Stalin played in the Second World War, according to a new nationwide survey by the Public Opinion Foundation. Support for Stalin's role in the war is up 10 percent since 2005.

In this year's survey, 50 percent of respondents said Stalin played a positive role in the war, 32 percent said he played a mixed role, and just 8 percent said his role harmed the USSR's battle against the Nazis.

For the first time in more than a decade, a majority of Russians now say Stalin's role in the Soviet victory over Germany is valued appropriately in Russia today, with just 19 percent of people saying his role is valued incorrectly.

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Asked what feelings they have about May 9, when Russia celebrates the USSR's World War II victory, almost a third (29 percent) of Russians said they feel national pride and patriotism, while 18 percent said they feel grief, sorrow, and pain for the enormous losses incurred in the war.

A whopping 87 percent of Russians say they have relatives, either living or deceased, who fought in the war against Hitler. Just 9 percent of the country says no one in their family fought in the war.

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