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Most Russians Hold Putin Responsible for Country's Problems — Poll

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Vladimir Putin (r) / Zykov Kirill / Moskva News Agency

A majority of Russians hold President Vladimir Putin responsible for Russia's problems, according to the results of a Levada Center poll published Monday.

Putin is widely expected to announce his candidacy for elections next March which would give the president a fourth term. Opposition leader Alexei Navalny, whose anti-corruption protests this year drew thousands onto the streets across the country, is barred from running because of a prior conviction he says is politically motivated.

Seventy-six percent of respondents said they held Putin responsible to at least some extent for the country's problems, while 19 percent abdicated him of any responsibility.

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Some 15 percent of those polled said they believe Putin "does not know how people live" and

has “forgotten about ordinary people.” Seven percent said he does not do enough to fight corruption.

But 19 percent described Putin as a “strong-willed” and “real man,” and 18 percent said they appreciate that he protects the country from the West.

Levada’s survey was conducted Oct. 20 - 24 among 1,600 people in 48 Russian regions.

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