

Russians Have Increasingly Negative Views of Britain, Poll Says

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A newly released poll has shown that a majority of surveyed Russians think poorly of Britain in the wake of a Russian ex-spy's poisoning in England that has triggered mass expulsions and strained ties between the countries.

Britain, the U.S. and around two dozen other Western countries expelled more than 100 Russian diplomats after accusing Moscow of poisoning former double agent Sergei Skripal and his daughter with a nerve agent. Russia, which denies responsibility for the Skripals' March 4 poisoning in the English city of Salisbury, retaliated in kind.

Related article: [Russia Vows Retaliation for U.K.'s Expulsion of Diplomats Over Poisoning Scandal](#)

The independent Levada Center pollster [said](#) Thursday that 51 percent of surveyed Russians

thought “very” or “rather” poorly of Britain. Only one-quarter said they viewed the U.K. in a positive light.

Of the 81 percent who said they were aware of the Skripal poisoning, only 9 percent believed that Western accusations were justified. Seventy-two percent said the accusations that Russia poisoned its former spy were “rather” or “absolutely” unjustified.

“Up to 70 percent of our respondents are ready to believe that all attacks from the West are based only on the Western countries’ desire to weaken and humiliate Russia,” the RBC business portal [cited](#) Levada sociologist Denis Volkov as saying.

A decade ago, a similar poll found that 61 percent of Russians had a positive view of Britain, with only 21 percent saying that they had a negative view.

The Russian-British diplomatic row deepened this week after the Foreign Office deleted a tweet that claimed British military researchers had concluded that the nerve agent was “produced in Russia.”

The Foreign Office deleted the March 22 tweet after the head of the same research laboratory said they had “not identified the precise source” of the military-grade nerve agent.

Embed:

Why would [@foreignoffice](#) delete this tweet from 22 March?
pic.twitter.com/Nvu1BfJw9J

— Russian Embassy, UK (@RussianEmbassy) [April 4, 2018](#)

Media reports on Thursday [suggested](#) that British security officials may have identified the location of a secret Russian laboratory where the Novichok-class nerve agent was produced.

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