

Half of Russian Youth Say They're Unaware of Stalinist Repressions – Poll

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Monument to victims of political repression in Moscow / Moskva News Agency

Nearly half of Russian youth say they have never heard of Stalin-era purges, according to a new state-sponsored survey.

Conservative estimates say nearly 700,000 Soviet citizens were killed in the 'Great Terror' under Stalin's rule in 1937-38. Contemporary attitudes to Stalin as a historical figure are divided in Russia, with President Vladimir Putin having said that attempts to demonize the Soviet leader were a ploy to attack Russia.

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Forty-seven percent of Russian respondents aged 18-24 told the VTsIOM pollster that they were hearing about Stalin-era repressions for the first time, according to the [results](#) of a survey published on Friday.

The figure contrasts with 80-percent awareness of the period among the general population and 88.5 percent among respondents aged 45 and over.

More than a third of respondents said they had family members who were deported, illegally convicted or forced to give up their property under Stalin.

Of those who knew little about their relatives' fate, the majority said they would like to know more about the events that affected them. More than two-thirds of respondents aged 18 to 34, as well as 45 to 59, told VTsIOM they would like to learn more about their relatives who fell victim to the Great Terror.

“Many would like to know more about the fate of their loved ones, about their family’s history, but they don’t know where and how to look for information,” said the poll’s partner, the head of the Gulag Museum, Roman Romanov.

Reuters contributed reporting to this article.

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