

Half of Russians Believe Country Won WWI, State Pollster Says

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Almost half of Russians think their country emerged victorious in World War I, despite the country having left the war before it ended to deal with domestic upheaval, according to a state-backed survey published ahead of the centenary of the end of the war.

Russia joined the European-wide conflict on Aug. 1, 1914, but after losing an estimated 3 million people it signed a separate peace with Germany in March 1918 as the Bolshevik revolutionaries took over Tsarist Russia. World War I ended in an armistice on Nov. 11, 1918.

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According to the survey [published](#) Wednesday by the state-funded VTsIOM pollster, 49 percent of respondents said they believe Russia won in World War I, while one-third said Russia lost.

“Some may find it surprising, but awareness and understanding of history among Russians is steadily growing,” VTsIOM’s head of research, Stepan Lvov, said.

In 2014, 34 percent of respondents said they thought Russia won the war and 35 percent said it was defeated.

Meanwhile, the percentage of respondents who believe that Russia should have participated in the war has increased to 42 percent this year, up from 30 percent in 2014.

Only 0.1 percent of this year’s respondents named the year “1917” or the “Treaty of Versailles” when asked to recall the most memorable events linked to World War I.

Ten percent named the Brusilov Offensive counterattack that broke the back of the Austro-Hungarian army in 1916, followed by 6 percent who named the use of chemical weapons. Three-quarters of respondents were unable to recall a single event.

VTsIOM conducted the survey among 1,600 Russians on Saturday, Nov. 3.

Reuters contributed reporting to this article.

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