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Russian Kids Are Patriotic, Apolitical and Tolerant of LGBT People — Study

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Seven in 10 young Russians are patriotic and two-thirds aren't interested in politics, according to the study. **Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency**

Russian schoolchildren are largely unwilling to participate in political protests but are concerned about the environment and tolerant of LGBT people, according to a newly published sociological study on the views of youngsters in the country.

The report follows the involvement of thousands of young activists in anti-government protests that gripped Moscow this summer. Russian authorities have targeted the youth with several recent initiatives, including a ban on minors attending protests, funding for military and patriotic education and a plan to monitor youngsters' online behavior.

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According to the Mikhailov & Partners study cited by the Kommersant newspaper Wednesday, 62% of young Russians say they are patriots of the country.

A total of 70% say they heard about the recent wave of protests in Russia but three-quarters say they wouldn't themselves participate in unsanctioned demonstrations. Another 67% say they aren't interested in politics.

Regarding views toward members of the LGBT community, 13% of Russian youth say they trust sexual minorities, 68% say they have normal views and 17% say they have negative views.

"This means that our conception about the patriarchal nature of the country is more likely coming from above than below," psychologist Alexander Kolmanovsky told Kommersant in comments about the study.

A total of 46% Russian schoolchildren named ecological problems as an area of concern, though nine out of 10 say they believe Russia needs new environmental protection laws. Only 31% named corruption as a problem that needs to be immediately addressed.

Among politicians, President Vladimir Putin elicited the most respect among respondents (15%) followed by nationalist politician Vladimir Zhirinovsky (7.3%) and Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev (2.8%). Another 56.5% of young Russians struggled to come up with an answer and 15% said there are no politicians who deserve their sympathy and respect.

Mikhailov & Partners polled 1,057 respondents aged 10-18 in 52 Russian regions in September.

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