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Americans More Pessimistic Than Russians on Improving Ties – Poll

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Forty-three percent of Americans predicted the countries will grow further apart in the next 10 years compared to 29% of Russians. **Sergei Kiselyov / Moskva News Agency**

Russians are on average more optimistic than Americans toward the prospect of warmer relations between the countries, though both remain largely pessimistic, a new poll by the independent Levada Center has said Wednesday.

If only 10% of American respondents said they believe U.S.-Russian ties would improve in the next decade, 19% of Russian respondents held that view, according to Levada and its U.S. partner, the Chicago Council on Global Affairs.

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A previous Levada survey conducted after President Joe Biden's election victory in November showed only 12% of Russians believing in improved U.S.-Russian relations.

Forty-three percent of Americans predicted the countries will grow further apart in the next 10 years compared to 29% of Russians, the latest survey said.

Both Russian and American respondents predicted no changes to bilateral ties at 42% and 44%, respectively.

Russians' views of the United States have also improved in recent years, the Levada survey said.

The gap between Russians who view the U.S. positively (40%) and those who view it negatively (43%) has narrowed to a level almost resembling that seen before Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014.

"As Biden begins to confront Russia with newly announced sanctions, however, Russian sentiments may change," the Chicago Council said.

Russian and American respondents agreed that the U.S. is respected less around the world today compared to 10 years ago, with 49% of Russians and 67% of Americans sharing that view.

Those sentiments diverged widely on the topic of respect toward Russia, with 26% of Russians and 51% of Americans saying Russia is respected less than a decade ago.

Conversely, 42% of Russian respondents compared with 9% of Americans said Russia is more respected around the world.

Levada carried out the survey among 1,616 Russian respondents in 50 regions between Jan. 29-Feb. 2.

The Chicago Council conducted the online survey of 1,021 Americans with Ipsos across all 50 states and the District of Columbia between Jan. 29-Feb. 1.

The Levada-Chicago Council results were gathered before Biden sparked the worst diplomatic crisis in years by describing Russian President Vladimir Putin as a "killer." Following the comments, Moscow recalled its Washington envoy for consulations on the future of U.S.-Russia ties, an unprecedented move in recent history.

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