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1 in 4 Russians Believe They've Had Coronavirus – Poll

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Russia is already among the world's most-affected countries with nearly 5.1 million officially confirmed cases and more than 120,000 deaths. **Semyon Antonov / TASS**

Nearly one in four Russians say they have had coronavirus though most have not been officially diagnosed, according to an independent survey published Wednesday.

Only 7% of those polled told the Levada Center polling agency that they had obtained an official diagnosis after contracting the coronavirus. Another 17% said they had not been diagnosed but nonetheless believe they suffered from Covid-19.

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The combined percentage, which in solid figures equates to 34.5 million people, could signal a dramatic undercount in the official tally of Covid-19 cases nationwide.

Russia is already among the world's most-affected countries with nearly 5.1 million officially

confirmed cases and more than 120,000 deaths. The country's total excess fatality count since the start of the pandemic, seen as a more reliable indicator of the virus' human cost, stands above 460,000.

Also in Wednesday's Levada survey, 11% of respondents — roughly the same figure floated by the Russian government — said they have been vaccinated against Covid-19. Earlier Levada polling showed a majority of Russians, or 62%, unwilling to get vaccinated with their country's Sputnik V shot.

Authorities have openly admitted to slow public take-up of the highly touted Sputnik V and two other government-approved jabs amid widely entrenched vaccine skepticism. Despite official estimates that Russia will vaccinate 70% of its population by this fall, the current pace of vaccination suggests that target could shift to late 2022 or early 2023.

The Levada survey also revealed that 55% of Russian respondents are not afraid of catching Covid-19, compared with 42% of those who are.

A related Ipsos survey published last week showed Russians being one of the nationalities least-scared of the virus — with only Israelis placing higher — out of the 28 countries that took part in the poll.

Levada conducted its in-person survey among 1,620 respondents across 50 Russian regions between May 20-26.

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