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Russians' Support for Stalin Monument Doubles in a Decade – Poll

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The tomb of Soviet leader Josef Stalin near the Kremlin wall. **Sergei Kiselev / Moskva News Agency**

Support for erecting a monument to Soviet dictator Josef Stalin has nearly doubled in the past decade, a survey by the independent Levada Center polling agency said Wednesday.

According to the results, 48% of Russians said they support a Stalin statue and 20% are against the idea.

This marks a turnaround from 2010, when 25% of Russians expressed support for a Stalin monument compared with 36% who opposed it.

Experts attribute the shift in public opinion to the "Stalinization of mass consciousness" for several years under President Vladimir Putin. Putin has referred to Stalin as a "complex figure" and has been gradually rehabilitating his image, in contrast with the Soviet Union's repudiation of him after his death in 1953.

Related article: Why Is Stalin's Popularity On the Rise?

Divisions over Stalin's legacy play out regularly on Russian social media, with supporters citing his role in the Soviet victory over Nazi Germany in World War II and opponents pointing to mass repressions.

Levada said support for a Stalin monument has increased across all social and demographic groups in the past decade.

"But it was especially pronounced among the youngest and wealthiest respondents," Levada said.

Support for a Stalin monument grew fivefold among respondents aged 18-24 between 2005 and present, and threefold among wealthier respondents.

Indifference has also prevailed throughout the decades, with 28-29% of Levada's respondents giving that response in 2005, 2010, 2015 and 2021.

The polling agency conducted the Stalin survey among 1,620 adults in 137 Russian towns and cities from May 20-26.

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