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Russians Expect Political, Economic Decline in 2022 – Poll

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Sergei Vedyashkin / Moskva News Agency

Roughly half of Russians forecast a political and economic decline in their country this year with little faith in the government's ability to improve the domestic situation, according to an independent poll published Tuesday.

According to the Levada Center pollster, 44% of Russian respondents said they expected the political situation to worsen in the coming months. Likewise, 49% said they expect the same for Russia's economy.

Only 18% and 16%, respectively, said they expected Russia's political and economic life to improve in 2022.

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More than half of the respondents expressed skepticism toward the Russian government's

ability to improve the overall domestic situation, compared with two out of five who expressed confidence.

When asked to assess Russia's current political climate — which has seen an unprecedented crackdown on the non-systemic opposition over the past year — 47% of respondents called it "tense" and 12% called it "explosive."

Only 7% called the political situation "safe" and 32% called it "calm," according to Levada.

The independent polling agency's results reflect the general mood among Russians as Moscow seeks to wrangle security concessions from the United States and NATO amid a post-Cold War freeze in relations. The U.S. warns of an imminent Russian invasion of Ukraine and has threatened tough sanctions, including on key Russian industries, in response.

While Moscow's 2014 annexation of Crimea from Ukraine led to a surge in domestic approval for the country's leadership, it also sparked harsh sanctions from the West.

Levada conducted the survey among 1,603 respondents across 137 Russian towns and cities between Nov. 25-Dec. 1.

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