The Moscow Times
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Russians Report Worsening Mental Health Amid Rising Economic Worries – RAS Survey

March 16, 2026



Yaroslav Chingaev / Moskva News Agency

Russians' psychological well-being has worsened as financial anxiety grows and hopes for a quick end to the war in Ukraine fade, according to a February survey by the Russian Academy of Sciences' (RAS) Institute of Psychology.

The monitoring study found rising levels of psychological distress across all socio-economic groups. Symptoms associated with depression were reported by 42% of respondents, while 27% said they experienced difficult-to-control anxiety.

Overall, 31% of Russians display pronounced anxiety and depressive symptoms, the institute said.

The findings highlight mounting social strain as Russia's war in Ukraine enters its fifth year and economic uncertainty persists.

Residents of cities, especially large urban centers, reported the worst indicators, with nearly half (48%) citing symptoms of depression and 30% reporting anxiety.

Young adults aged 25-34, people with low incomes and private-sector workers were the most psychologically vulnerable groups, the institute said.

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Two-thirds of respondents said they feel anxious when thinking about their finances, up from 60% in December, with the sharpest increase among public-sector workers and residents of major cities.

Joint surveys by the institute and state-run pollster VTsIOM show that 84% of Russians are worried about rising prices, up 7 percentage points from September 2025. Fears of an economic crisis rose to 74%, an increase of 9 points.

Nearly half of respondents (47%) expect their family’s financial situation to worsen over the next year, while 53% anticipate a deterioration in the country’s economic conditions.

Sixty percent of respondents see the continuation of the war as the most likely scenario for 2026. The share of those who believe the worst times for Russians still lie ahead has risen to 52%, up 7 percentage points since December.

The institute said rising prices and the effects of growing federal and regional budget deficits — rather than hopes for the war’s end — are now the main factors shaping Russians’ economic expectations.

Only 39% of respondents believe their children will live better lives than they did, while 42% view Russia’s economic prospects over the next five years negatively, according to the survey.

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