



Russia

Levada Center

Globalization and Trade

Russians lean toward a positive view of globalization but are the least enthusiastic of those polled (along with Mexicans). Though they generally see international trade as positive their attitudes vary in somewhat unusual ways in regard to different aspects of trade.

- Only 41% of Russians say that globalization is “mostly good” for their country but even fewer (24%) say it is “mostly bad.”
- Two-thirds (66%) believe that international trade is good for Russia’s economy, but only a slight majority (51%) feels it is good for Russian companies.
- About three out of five Russians (59%) think that international trade benefits consumers like themselves, though only 45% say that it helps their own standard of living (19% disagree).
- A narrow majority (52%) believes trade helps create jobs for Russian workers and a plurality (43% to 32%) says it is good for their job security.
- Russians tend to think international trade is bad for the environment (44% to 25%).

Climate Change

A majority of Russians consider global warming a problem that must be addressed, though they are divided over whether to take steps to address it that require significant costs.

- A substantial majority of those polled in Russia (66%) believe something should be done about climate change. This majority is divided about whether the problem can be addressed gradually through low-cost measures (34%) or requires more urgent action even if it is costly (32%).
- A sizeable minority (22%) says action on climate change should be postponed until “we are sure that it is really a problem.” This is the second largest number (after India, 24%) to hold this position.

Genocide and Darfur

A majority believes that the UN Security Council has the right and a plurality believes it has the responsibility to intervene in the event of genocide.

- Russians think the UN Security Council has the right to authorize the use of force to prevent severe human rights violations such as genocide (64%).
- A plurality (48%) believes the UN Security Council has the “responsibility” to authorize intervention in such cases.

Future of the United Nations

Russians express support for most measures that increase the power of the United Nations and tend to believe that the UN Security Council has the right to authorize the use of force in a range of circumstances. However, a plurality is not willing to make more decisions within the UN if this means accepting policies their government does not consider optimal.

- 64% of Russians favor giving the UN authority to go into countries in order to investigate violations of human rights 58% support establishing a standing UN peacekeeping force; and 55% think the UN should be able to regulate the international arms trade.
- Russians are divided on whether the UN should be given the power to impose a tax on the international sale of arms or oil (39% favor, 36% oppose).
- A majority of Russians believe the UN Security Council has the right to authorize the use of force to defend a country that has been attacked (70%), to stop countries from supporting terrorist groups (65%), to prevent severe human rights abuses such as genocide (64%), to prevent countries from acquiring nuclear weapons (55%) and to stop them from getting fuel that could be used to produce nuclear weapons (53%).
- Russians are divided on whether the Security Council should be allowed to authorize force to restore a democratic government that has been overthrown (35% should, 37% should not).
- The Russian public tends to believe (44% to 33%) their government should not be more willing to make decisions within the UN if this means going along with a policy that is not its first choice.

US Leadership

Russians strongly reject the idea that United States should remain the preeminent world leader but are divided about whether they want the United States to cooperate with other countries or withdraw from world affairs. Most do not trust the United States to act responsibly nor do they believe it takes Russia’s interests into account when making foreign policy.

- A plurality of Russians think the United States should do its share in international efforts together with other countries (42%) but nearly as many think it should withdraw from such efforts (38%). Very few (8%) think it should remain preeminent.
- More than three-quarters (76%) of Russian respondents believe the United States is playing the role of world policeman “more than it should be.”
- A large majority of Russians (73%) do not trust the United States to act responsibly in the world.
- Two-thirds of Russians (66%) say US foreign policy does not take Russian interests into account very much (33%) or at all (33%).
- A plurality believes US-Russian relations are stable (45%), while nearly a third (28%) says they are “improving.” Only one in five (20%) thinks they are getting worse.
- Russians see the United States as very influential in the world, giving it an 8.5 on a 10-point scale, above Russia itself (7), China (6.2), Japan (6.4) and Germany (6.4).

Rise of China

Most Russians believe that China will catch up with the United States and views are fairly evenly divided about whether this would be positive or negative, although a majority does not trust China to act responsibly. Significant numbers see relations with China as improving,

- 62% of Russians believe that “China’s economy will grow to be as large as the US economy.”
- The most common view among Russian respondents (34%) is that it would be “equally positive and negative” for China to catch up with the United States. About the same percentages say it would be mostly negative (24%) or mostly positive (22%).
- A majority of Russians (56%) do not trust China to act responsibly in the world. A narrower majority (51%) does not trust Japan to do so.
- Russians are somewhat divided about whether China takes their interests into account when making foreign policy: 47% say it does, 42% say it does not. They are more convinced that Japan does not do so (51%).
- Russians tend to see Sino-Russian relations as improving (44%) rather than staying the same (39%) or worsening (7%). They tend to think relations with Japan are stable (40%), though 26% say improving and 17% getting worse.
- On average Russians rate Chinese global influence a 6.2 on a 10-point scale, a bit less than they give Japan (6.4).