

MONITORING OF OPINIONS: MARCH–APRIL 2026

Results of the daily surveys “VCIOM–Sputnik”. Survey methods: (1) Telephone interviews based on a stratified dual-frame random sample of landline and mobile numbers, with a total of 1,600 respondents aged 18 and older (the sample was drawn from the complete list of phone numbers used within the Russian Federation); (2) Online survey using a structured questionnaire administered through the probability-based panel “VCIOM-Online.” Participants of the panel are recruited during the daily nationwide telephone (CATI) survey “Sputnik,” conducted with a random digit dialing (RDD) sample of mobile numbers drawn from the complete list of phone numbers used within the Russian Federation. The data are weighted by selection probability and socio-demographic parameters. The maximum sampling error with a 95% confidence level does not exceed 2.5–3.1%. In addition to sampling error, question wording and various circumstances arising during fieldwork may also introduce bias into the survey data.

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POLITICS

RUSSIA — CHINA: YESTERDAY AND TODAY

RUSSIA — CHINA: YESTERDAY AND TODAY

August 19, 2026

According to the findings, Russians' image of China is dominated by positive and neutral associations. At its core are perceptions of a strong economy and industrial power (60% of responses). Only a small minority associate China with cheap, low-quality goods, reflecting an outdated stereotype rather than the country's contemporary image. Despite China's growing popularity as a travel destination among Russians, its image as a tourist destination remains far less prominent in the public mind than that of an industrial powerhouse (just 8% of responses). The second most common cluster of associations relates to culture and history (47% of responses). For many Russians, China is seen as an ancient civilization with a rich cultural heritage and widely recognizable symbols, including the Great Wall of China, national cuisine, Chinese tea, dragons, and others. Local people occupy a relatively peripheral place in Russians' image of China (19% of responses). At the same time, Russians generally tend to view Chinese people positively, describing them as hardworking, friendly, and admirable. The personalized image of China centers on two political leaders: the current President of the People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping, and Mao Zedong, the principal symbol of China's revolutionary past and the founder of the PRC. A consistently favorable image of China has taken shape in Russian society. More than half of Russians have a generally positive attitude toward the country, while about one-third remain neutral. Over the past two decades, Russians have increasingly reported that their opinion of China has changed for the better; by the mid-2020s, this view is shared by every second respondent. In 2026, indifference toward China fell to its lowest level over the entire observation period, indicating, among other things, growing public interest in the country.

Fig. 1. Overall, how do you feel about China? (closed-ended question, one response, % of all respondents)

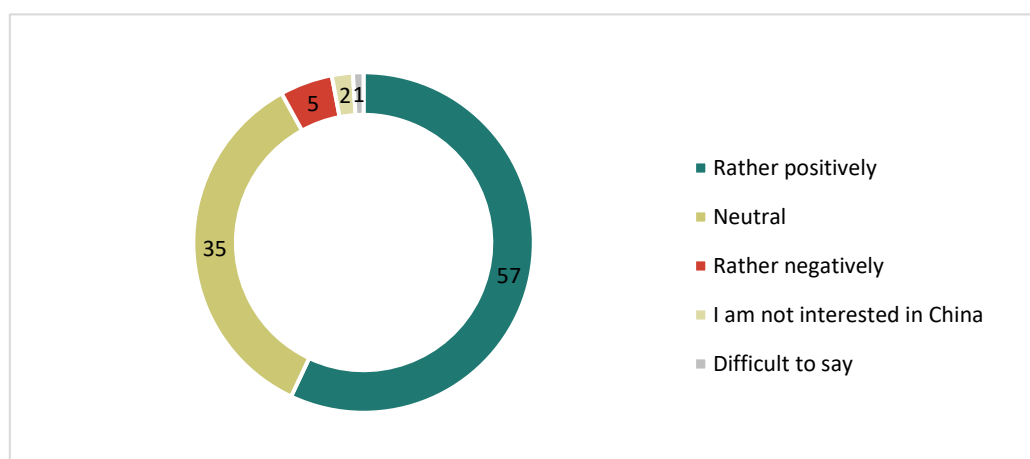
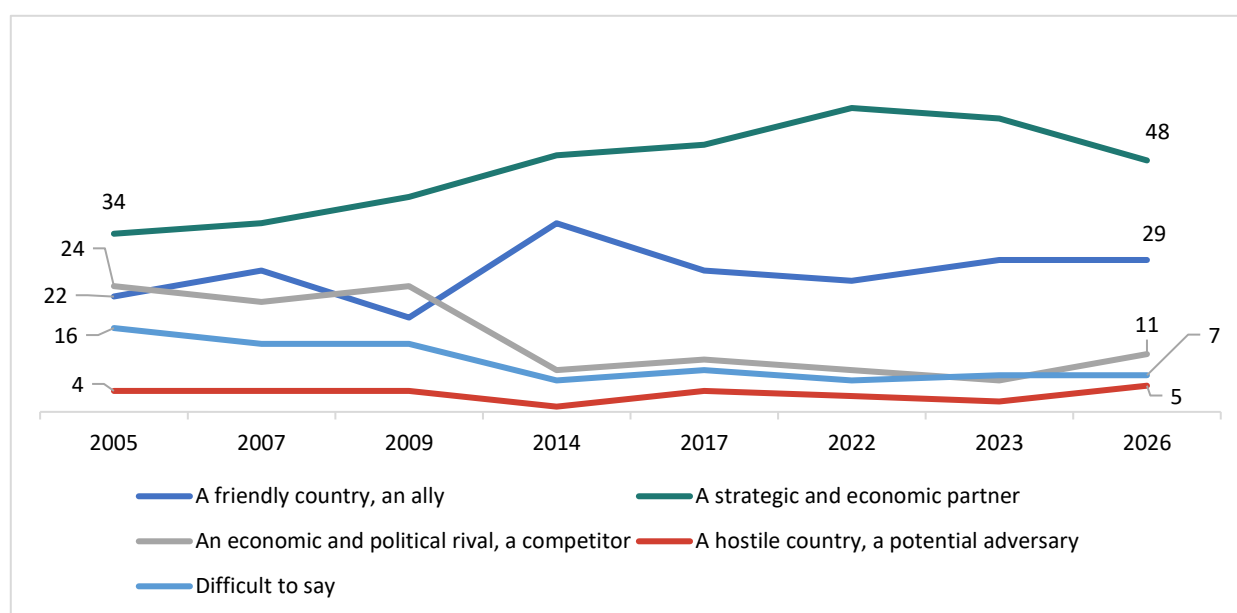


Fig. 2. In your opinion, what is China to Russia today? (closed-ended question, one response, % of all respondents)



SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES

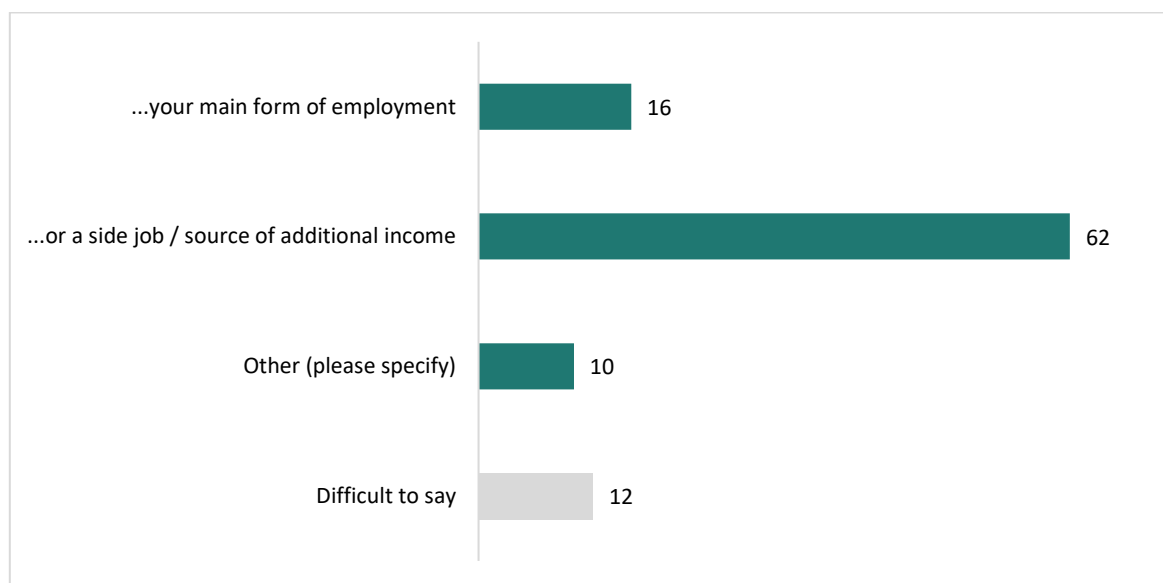
PLATFORM EMPLOYMENT IN RUSSIA

PLATFORM EMPLOYMENT IN RUSSIA

July 21, 2026

Platform employment appeals to almost one in two Russians (44%). However, there is currently little reason to suggest that it is displacing traditional employment relationships: 56% of Russians do not see themselves working through various online platforms. Among those who consider platform work a possible part of their employment trajectory, 62% view it as a way to earn extra income or take on a side job, while only 16% see it as their main form of employment. Importantly, these figures do not reflect respondents' actual current experience and instead indicate their willingness to work in this format in the future. Interest in platform employment varies considerably by age. It is most attractive to younger people: 65% among those aged 18–24 and 57% among those aged 25–34. Interest declines with age, falling to just 29% among respondents aged 60 and older. Differences are also evident across other socio-demographic groups. Platform employment is more attractive to men than to women (47% vs. 41%) and to residents of cities with populations over one million (56%; 48% in Moscow and St. Petersburg) than to residents of medium-sized and small towns (45%) and rural areas (34%). The characteristics most commonly associated with platform employment are convenient (40% of Russians), temporary (28%), undertaken out of necessity (22%), and a compromise option (20%). Only 14% consider this form of employment optimal.

Fig. 1. Do you see working through online platforms primarily as...? (closed-ended question, one response, % of those considering platform employment)



LIFESTYLE

THE ROAD TO THE ONLINE CHURCH

THE ROAD TO THE ONLINE CHURCH

August 13, 2026

Compared with 1993, the personal importance of religion has increased: the share of Russians who consider it important in their lives has risen by 9 percentage points. The highest level was recorded in 2023, when 40% described religion as important. The role of religion in people's lives increases with age. Among younger Russians, religion is important to only about one in four (24% among Gen Z and younger Millennials), compared with one in two (50%) in the oldest generation. Russians most commonly learn about religion through conversations with relatives, friends, and colleagues (28%). This channel is particularly important for younger people and remains the principal means through which religious ideas are transmitted. Television news and programs rank second (26%), followed by social media and messaging apps (18%). Other sources include books and religious texts (14%), other websites (11%), and videos and podcasts (10%). Church-related sources also play a notable role, although they reach a narrower audience. Personal communication with priests and other religious figures was mentioned by 17% of respondents, and the same share cited visits to religious sites and events. Another 10% receive information through communication with believers and members of religious communities, while 7% use official websites and online groups run by churches, monasteries, and religious organizations.

Russians remain cautious about religious life online. A majority of respondents (61%) believe that taking part in a religious service or other religious practice online cannot replace being physically present or provide the same sense of spiritual involvement. Another 14% believe that such an experience is possible, but in a weaker form, while only 6% are confident that the internet can fully provide the same sense of participation as in-person attendance.

Fig. 2. *In your opinion, can taking part in a religious service or another religious practice online provide the same sense of spiritual involvement as being physically present? (closed-ended question, one response, % of all respondents)*

