

OPINION MONITORING: MARCH—APRIL 2023

VCIOM-Sputnik daily survey results. The survey method is stratified dual-frame sample consisting of telephone interviews. The sample is based on a complete list of landline and mobile phone numbers operating in Russia and involves 1,600 persons aged 18 and older. The data were weighted for the probability of selection and reflect social and demographic characteristics. The margin of error at a 95% confidence level does not exceed 2.5%. In addition to sampling error, minor changes in question wording and different circumstances arising during fieldwork can introduce bias into the survey.

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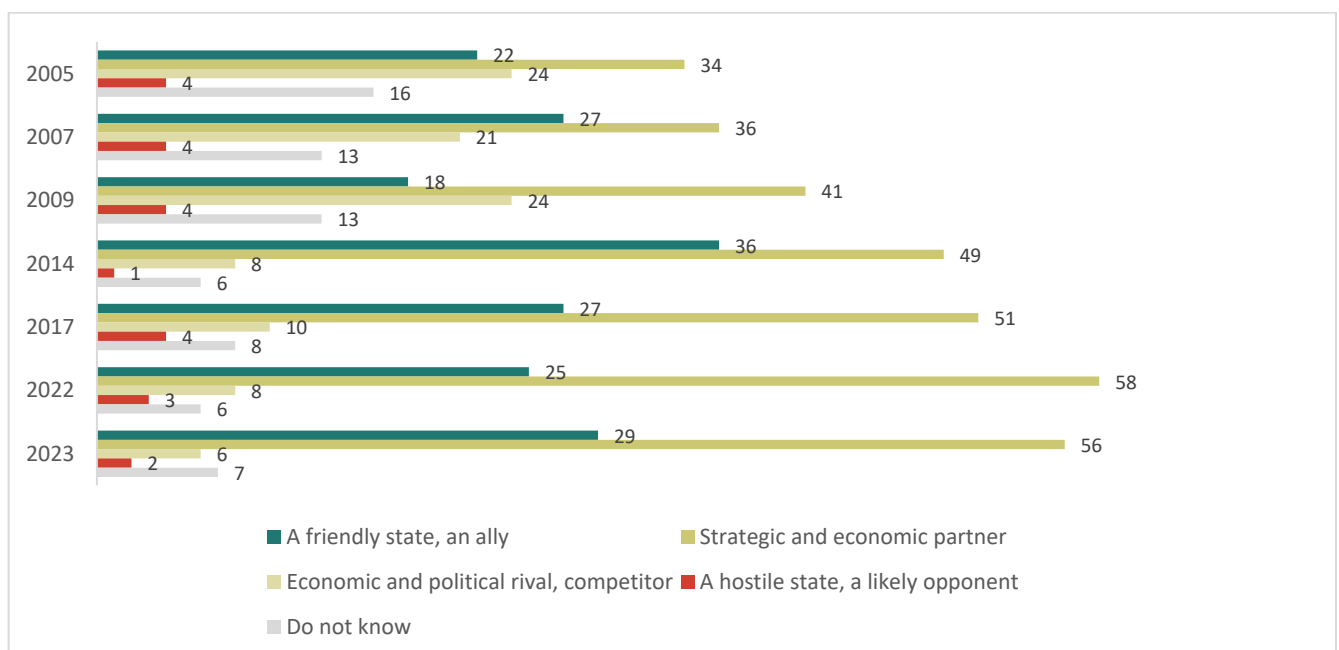
RUSSIA AND CHINA: MONITORING

RUSSIA AND CHINA: MONITORING

March 19, 2023

The rapprochement with one of the leading world powers and the accompanying information agenda are reflected in public opinion. To date, the positive prevails in the responses of Russians about China, and the topic of Russian-Chinese relations dominates in the associative series. The most frequent associations with China are a country friendly to Russia (32%), our partner and ally (21%), whereas in 2007 and 2009, Russians primarily recalled Chinese goods, consumer goods and markets (27% and 25%, respectively). The second most popular answer in those years was the current demographic situation in the country — “many people” / “a large population” (in 2007 — 18%, in 2009 — 17% vs 5% in 2023). Currently, 11% of Russians have an image of China associated with one of the largest trading platforms in the world — Aliexpress — and cheap goods; 9% recall its internal policy and order in the country. Other answers include leadership in the international arena (8%) and China’s economic and technological might (“high technology” — 8%, “world leader” — 8%, “rapidly developing country” — 7%, “industrial center” — 6%). There are also negative connotations, but their share in the general pool of responses is small (“we need to be careful with them”, “they are doing for their benefit” — 9%, “they are seizing our lands in the Far East” — 3%, “China wants to use our resources” — 2%). The change in personal attitude towards China over the past year was noted by every fourth Russian (25%), including 22% — for the better and only 3% — for the worse. 71% did not change their perception of the neighboring state during this period.

Fig. 1. What do you think China is for Russia today? (close-ended question, one answer, in % of all respondents)



SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES

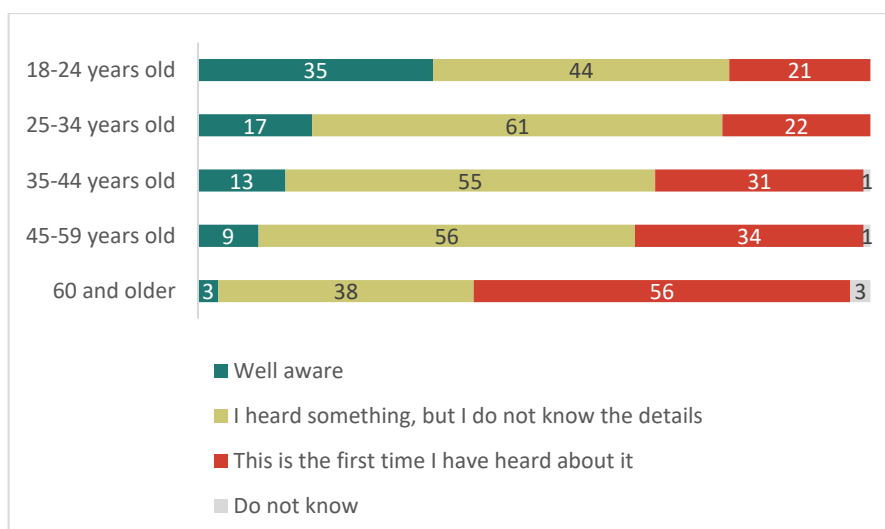
NEURAL NETWORKS AND PEOPLE: THE START OF THE JOURNEY

NEURAL NETWORKS AND PEOPLE: THE START OF THE JOURNEY

April 2, 2023

In total, 63% of Russians know about neural networks today, but 51% have only heard about them, and 12% of our fellow citizens are well-versed in neural networks, according to their estimates. 37% heard about neural networks for the first time during the survey. The study showed that a neutral-positive attitude to neural network technologies prevails in society: 40% treat them neutrally, and 35% — positively. Every fifth Russian perceives such technologies negatively (20%). To a greater extent, the attitude towards neural networks is due to how well the respondents understand this topic. The probability that in the next 50 years, such technologies as neural networks may get out of human control and a so-called machine uprising will occur is relatively low among Russians: 59% do not believe such a thing will happen; one in three believes (30%). 28% of Russians personally met with the results of neural networks. Most often, Russians came across images or photos created by neural networks on the Internet — 19%, in second place — generated texts (5%), 4% met examples of using neural networks to write educational papers, 2% each named voice assistants, images of cities, search programs, chatbots, videos and the ability to create with the help of a fake neural network. Despite the promising possibilities of neural networks, 69% of our fellow citizens do not believe that such technologies can take on creative work and replace artists, journalists, and screenwriters. The opposite point of view is shared by 19%. However, among those well versed in this issue, the indicator reaches 37% (vs 10% among those who know nothing about neural networks).

Fig. 1. Do you know, have you heard something or are you hearing about neural networks for the first time now? (close-ended question, one answer, in % of all respondents)



LIFESTYLE

ORTHODOX EASTER — 2023

ORTHODOX EASTER — 2023

April 9, 2023

Easter is a widely celebrated Christian holiday in Russia with centuries-old traditions. For our compatriots, Easter is among the three most important holidays (29%), behind the New Year (58%) and Victory Day (65%). For the entire period of observations since 2006, the indicator of the importance of Easter for Russians remained at approximately the same level, about 30%. The decrease to 25% occurred in the pandemic 2021, when mass events, including Easter celebrations, were limited, but last year the figure again reached 31%. Easter plays a significant role in the life of Orthodox Russians (37%). Representatives of other faiths consider this holiday important less than twice (17%), and even less often — non-believers (3%). Easter celebration remains for Russians a cultural and historical tradition of their ancestors (29%) and a family tradition (24%). Orthodox Russians also treat Easter more as a tradition — cultural and historical (32%) and family (28%); 12% call it a sacred rite. The popularity of the holiday in modern Russian society can be called high: 83% of Russians plan to celebrate Easter this year. During the observation period, the indicator remained in the range of 84%—88%. The exception was left in 2021 when covid restrictions were in effect (64%). Among Orthodox Russians, the figure reaches a maximum of 94%. Among representatives of other faiths, 58% plan to join the festivities, and among non-believers, every second (48%) will take part in the celebration. This year, every second Russian plan to prepare cakes, eggs or Easter for a holiday (54%), and 19% will consecrate them in the church. More than a third will visit, or host guests (38%), another 17% want to visit cemeteries on this day, and gift-giving practices have become less common (8%). An essential part of the celebration of Easter is the solemn temple service; 6% of Russians declared their intention to attend the All-Night vigil, among Orthodox Russians — 9%.

Fig. 1. Will you celebrate Easter? If so, how are you going to celebrate it? (close-ended question, one answer, %)

