

# Ukraine's cause is ours

Finns call for Russia to  
withdraw from Ukraine



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- Fifty-seven per cent of Finns consider it essential and a quarter (26%) consider it necessary that Russia loses the war and is forced to withdraw from Ukraine in order for the conditions for a more permanent ceasefire or peace agreement to exist.
- The perceptions of Finns towards Russia have deteriorated further since the spring of 2022, as 84 per cent have a negative perception of Russia and only 7 per cent have a positive perception.
- A majority (62%) of Finns believe that ordinary Russians are also partly to blame for the war of aggression in Ukraine, because they have not been standing up in opposition to the war.
- A majority of Finns would welcome Ukraine as a member of both the European Union (56%) and NATO (55%). Three out of four (75%) are satisfied with the way state leadership has handled issues related to the war in Ukraine.

It is now more than a year and a half since Russia's large-scale invasion of Ukraine, and there is no end in sight.

In EVA's Values and Attitudes Survey that was conducted in autumn 2023 respondents were asked to look into the future and consider what matters and conditions should exist in the event of a permanent ceasefire or peace in Ukraine.<sup>1</sup>

The results (Figure 1) paint a clear picture. They reflect Finns' strong support for Ukraine and a strict line towards Russia, which launched the attack on Ukraine. The war must end in Ukrainian victory, and Russia must be held accountable for its actions.

A clear majority of Finns consider that it is at least necessary that twelve of the sixteen matters or conditions in the survey exist. A

**When a permanent ceasefire or peace agreement is reached in due course, in your opinion, how necessary is it that the following matters or conditions exist? (%)**

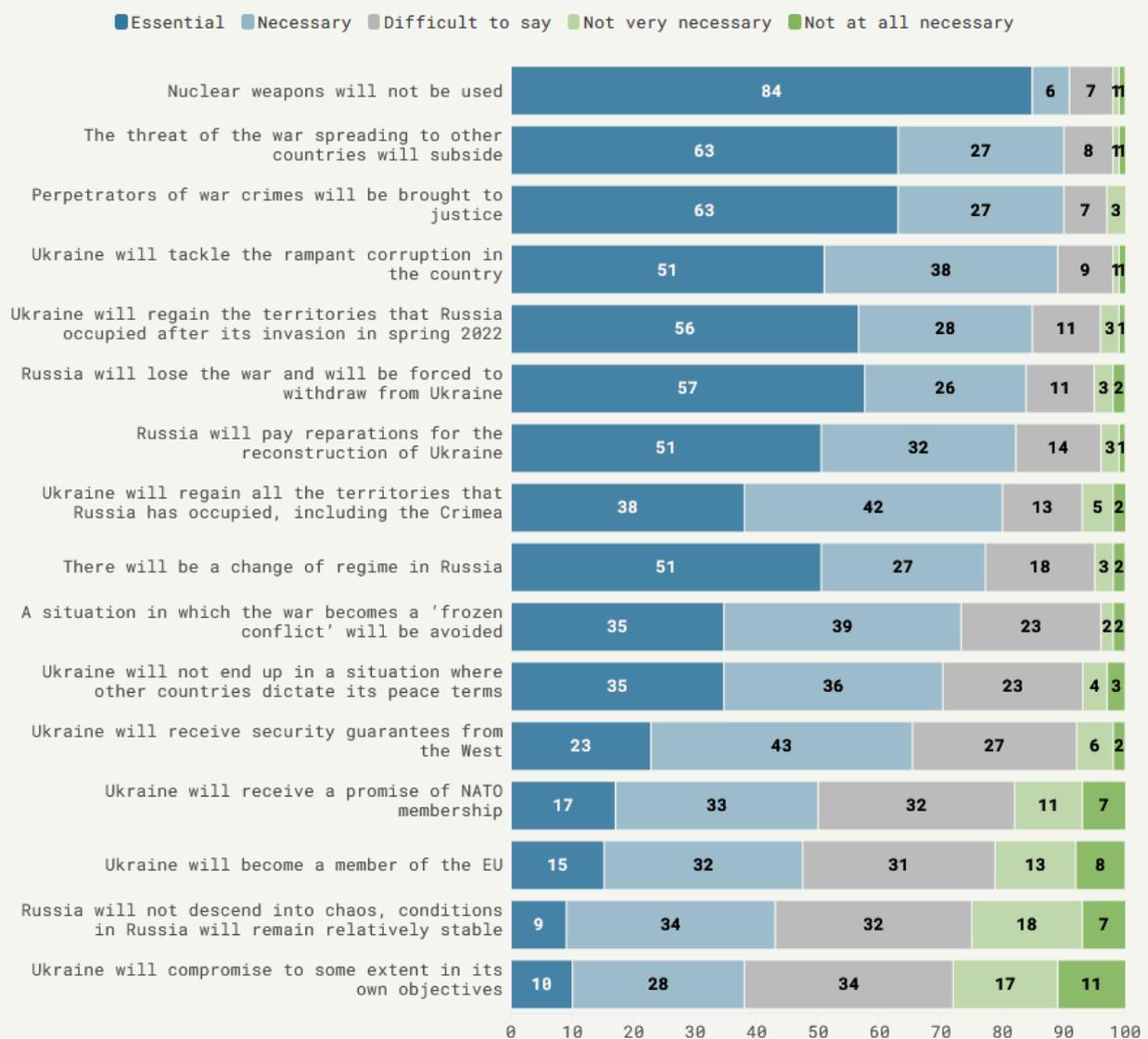


Figure 1. The most important thing for Finns is that nuclear weapons must not be used. Source: EVA's Values and Attitudes Survey, autumn 2023.

majority of Finns consider that it is essential that eight matters or conditions exist.

These eight matters or conditions that a majority consider to be essential deserve special attention, as they can be seen as decisive issues for Finns, which Ukraine and its supporters should hold on to (see Appendix figure 1 at the end of the analysis). A common feature in the decisive issues is a demand to return to compliance with international rules and agreements.

### Ukraine must win the war

Four of the decisive issues relate to the course and outcome of the war.<sup>2</sup> The overriding issue in the minds of Finns is that nuclear weapons must not be used. This is considered essential by 84 per cent of Finns and necessary by six per cent.

Respondents also consider it very important that the threat of war spreading to other countries subsides. Almost two in three (63%) consider this essential and just over a quarter (27%) consider this necessary.

The threat of escalation must therefore be prevented, but it is almost equally as clear to Finns that the war in Ukraine must end in Russian defeat.

Fifty-seven per cent consider it essential and a quarter (26%) consider it necessary that Russia loses the war and is forced to withdraw from Ukraine. Virtually as many (56%) consider it essential and 28% consider it necessary for Ukraine to regain the territories that Russia occupied after the invasion in spring 2022.

What happens after the war, once a peace agreement or a permanent ceasefire has been reached, is also important. Under international criminal law Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine is illegal<sup>3</sup>. The war has also been conducted in a very brutal manner and

in many cases the actions fulfil the constituent elements of war crimes.

Civilians and civilian targets have been ruthlessly attacked, and Russian forces have committed mass killings, torture, rape, looting and child abduction, among other things.<sup>4</sup> Russia's military command has also repeatedly used its own troops in combat in totally unethical ways with callous disregard for casualties.<sup>5</sup>

The other four decisive issues show that Finns feel it is very important that justice is served once the war is over.

Sixty-three per cent of Finns consider it essential and over a quarter (27%) consider it necessary to bring the perpetrators of war crimes to justice. One in two (51%) consider it essential and one third (32%) consider it necessary for Russia to pay reparations for the reconstruction of Ukraine.

Bringing war criminals to justice would undoubtedly mean that the Russian political leadership

that is responsible for the war would also be tried. Finns are aware of this, and half of them (51%) consider it essential and just over a quarter (27%) consider it necessary for a change of regime to take place in Russia.

The issue is a complex one, though, as the threat of being tried for war crimes<sup>6</sup> is also seen as a factor that makes it more difficult to exit the war, especially when this involves not only rank-and-file soldiers but also military and political leadership. Such a threat is already evident in the case of Vladimir Putin, as the International Criminal Court issued a warrant for his arrest in spring 2023.<sup>7</sup>

The last, but not least, of the eight decisive issues for Finns is related to Ukraine's internal affairs. When a permanent ceasefire or peace agreement is reached, one in two (51%)

Change of regime in Russia is necessary.



consider it essential and 38 per cent consider it necessary for Ukraine to tackle the rampant corruption in the country.

### The doors to the West are open

The fight against corruption has also been called the second front in Ukraine’s war<sup>8</sup>, and its eradication is also a prerequisite for Ukraine’s progress along its road to EU membership. The European Commission recently issued a recommendation that EU countries start membership negotiations with Ukraine and Moldova – but for both countries it set the implementation of fundamental rule of law reforms as a condition for the start of negotiations.<sup>9</sup>

For Ukraine, it is important that the road to European Union membership is open. On the other hand, gaining a fast track to membership is not realistic, as it will also require reforms from the current EU.<sup>10</sup> Perhaps that is also why Finns do not consider Ukraine’s EU membership to be particularly important from the perspective of a permanent cease-fire or peace agreement. Only 15 per cent consider it essential and a third (32%) consider

it necessary. A fifth (21%) do not think that Ukraine’s accession to the EU is very necessary from the perspective of peace.

It is not that the Finns do not want Ukraine to join the EU; a majority (56%) of Finns think that Ukraine would be well-suited for EU membership in the future, and only 16 per cent disagree on Ukraine’s suitability for the EU (Figure 2).

Finns’ perception of Ukraine’s suitability for the EU has not changed as the war has dragged on. It has remained virtually unchanged at the previous year’s figures, which it jumped to after Russia invaded Ukraine. The jump of almost 40 percentage points from the previous survey that was observed in spring 2022 is very similar to the change in Finns’ opinions of NATO that was observed at the same time.<sup>11</sup> This is one example of the major shifts in Finnish attitudes observed in the Values and Attitudes Survey during 2022. Russia’s invasion had a significant impact on Finns’ perception of the security environment in Europe and the world.

Paradoxically, Russia’s war of aggression can be considered the factor that has accelerated Western integration most effectively

**"Ukraine would be well-suited for EU membership in the future" (%)**

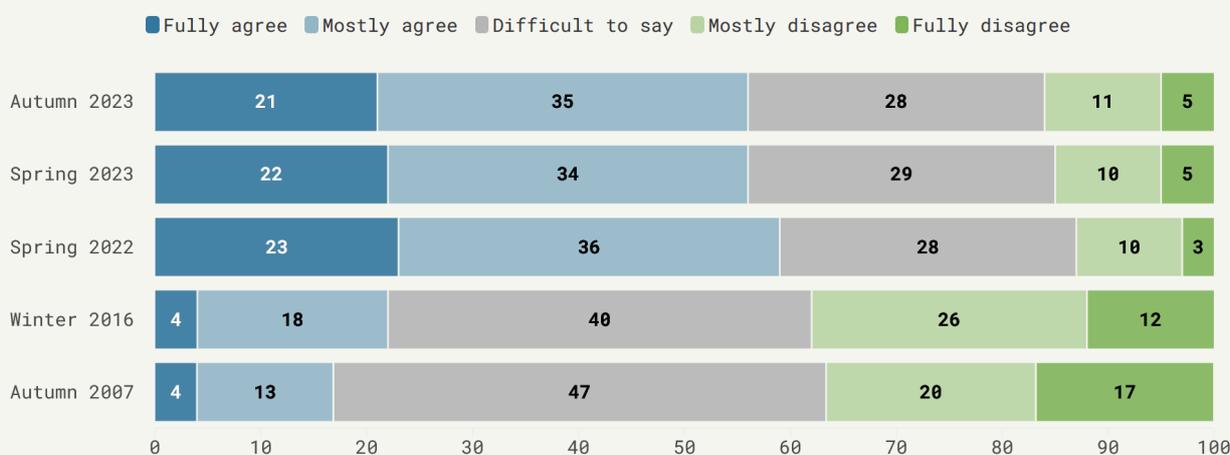


Figure 2. A majority of Finns would welcome Ukraine into the EU. Source: EVA’s Values and Attitudes Survey, autumn 2023.

### "Ukraine would be well-suited for NATO membership in the future" (%)

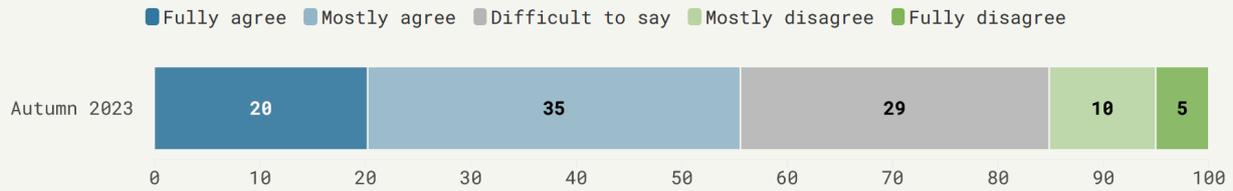


Figure 3. A majority of Finns think Ukraine would be a good candidate for NATO membership. Source: EVA's Values and Attitudes Survey, autumn 2023.

in recent times. If it were up to the Finns to decide, the doors would also be open for Ukraine to join NATO. The majority (55%) think that Ukraine would be suitable for NATO membership in the future, while only 15 per cent of Finns disagree with this (Figure 3).

Seventeen per cent of Finns consider it essential and one third (33%) consider it necessary that Ukraine receives a promise of a path to NATO membership as soon as a permanent ceasefire or peace agreement is achieved in Ukraine (see Figure 1, p. 3). Even if it is not possible to offer such a promise, almost a quarter (23%) consider it essential and 43 per cent consider it necessary that Ukraine receives at least some form of security guarantees from the West to back up its territorial integrity.

### Territories must be returned

However, the biggest consideration regarding a permanent ceasefire or peace agreement is what needs to happen to achieve this.

Ukraine has set itself the objective of liberating its entire territory up to the 1991 borders. This includes not only the puppet states established by Russia in eastern Ukraine, but also the Crimean Peninsula, which Russia annexed in 2014.

Finns share this view quite widely. Thirty-eight per cent consider it essential and 42

per cent consider it necessary for Ukraine to regain all the territories that Russia has occupied, including the Crimean Peninsula. Only 10 per cent consider it essential and 28 per cent consider it necessary for Ukraine to compromise to some extent in its own objectives.

On the other hand, 28 per cent think it is more or less unnecessary for Ukraine to compromise in its own objectives and a third (34%) are unable to say whether Ukraine should compromise or not. The relatively widespread uncertainty is probably partly based on the idea that it is up to the Ukrainians to decide on their own objectives. Still, it is possible that some Finns believe that Ukraine may eventually have to consider the painful option of ceding territory if it wants to agree on peace.<sup>12</sup>

Such doubts may be due to the way the war has progressed recently. There is currently no solution in sight on the battlefield. Quite the opposite, as the war has increasingly been developing into a positional war.<sup>13</sup>

A prolonged positional war of attrition is considered to benefit Russia, which in terms of resources is far larger than Ukraine and is increasingly shifting its economy towards a war economy. Ukraine has made huge sacrifices and taken the initiative in the war, but is largely dependent on continued economic and military assistance from the West.

Finland has delivered defence materiel packages to Ukraine almost every month since

**"Finland has not supported Ukraine sufficiently in the war launched by Russia" (%)**

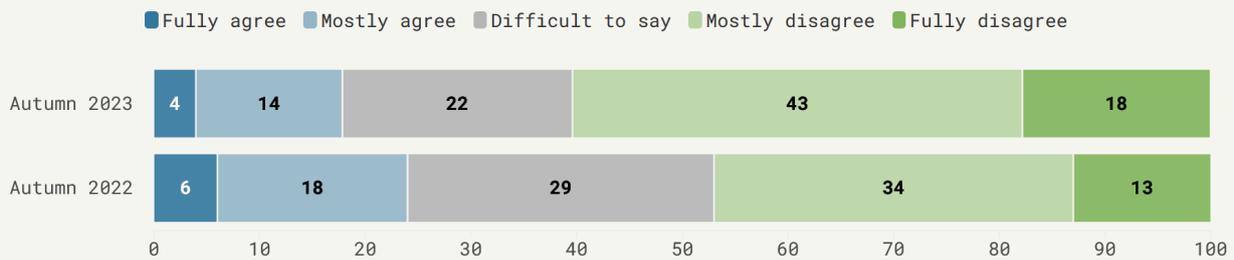


Figure 4. A majority now believe that Finland has given Ukraine sufficient support in the war. Source: EVA's Values and Attitudes Survey, autumn 2023.

the war started (nineteen times in total)<sup>14</sup> and Ukraine has also received humanitarian and financial assistance from Finland. The financial value of the assistance so far totals almost EUR 2 billion.<sup>15</sup>

The general public believes that Finland is doing all it can to help Ukraine. Only 18 per cent feel that Finland has not provided Ukraine with sufficient support in the war launched by Russia and the majority (61%) consider that Finland's various forms of support to Ukraine are sufficient (Figure 4).

Finns' own perception of the sufficiency of the support provided has clearly improved since last year, and there is also a high level of satisfaction with the state leadership's handling of matters related to the Ukrainian war. Three out of four (75%) are satisfied with the

way state leadership has handled the matters, and only a few (8%) consider the need for criticism (Figure 5).

While Finns are united in their support for Ukraine and Ukrainians in the war against Russia, signs of cracks in support for Ukraine are starting to be seen in many EU countries. The same applies to the United States, where support for Ukraine could become one of the pawns in the 2024 presidential election. In the big picture of global politics and economics, the war in Ukraine has caused considerable instability. It is therefore possible that not only on Russia but also Ukraine may face pressure to end the war.

Peace terms must not be dictated to Ukraine.

**"I am satisfied with the way our leaders have handled issues related to the war in Ukraine" (%)**

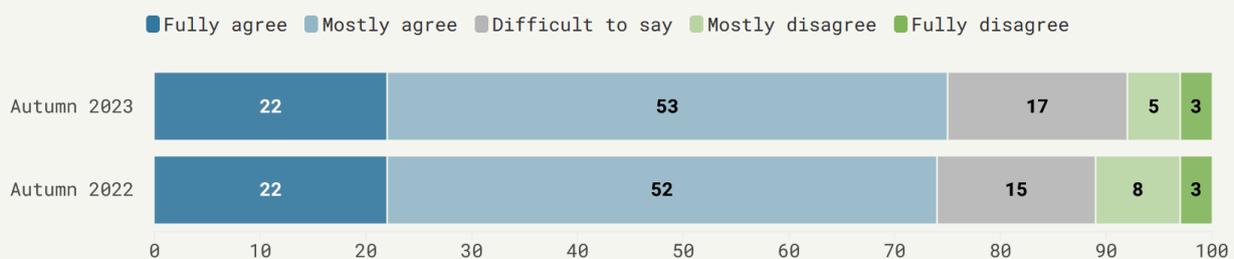


Figure 5. Three out of four are satisfied with the way the government has handled issue related to Ukraine. Source: EVA's Values and Attitudes Survey, autumn 2023.

Finns believe that this would be an undesirable scenario. Just over a third (35%) feel it is essential and just as many (36%) feel it is necessary to prevent Ukraine from ending up in a situation where other countries dictate its peace terms. Only a very small proportion (7%) would allow the superpowers to negotiate peace terms over Ukraine’s head.

In practice, respondents were equally against another possible scenario, in which the war turns into a ‘frozen conflict’. This would end the fighting, but no political solution for a permanent ceasefire, let alone a peace agreement, would be achieved. Pre-

venting this kind of scenario is considered essential by more than a third (35%), while 39 per cent consider it necessary.

The development of the war into a frozen conflict would be, at the very least, an intermediate victory for Russia in the war in Ukraine, and such a development may even be its objective at the moment. Russia is also currently engaged in similar conflicts – albeit on a smaller scale – with Georgia (South Ossetia and Abkhazia) and Moldova (Transnistria).

A frozen conflict could block Ukraine’s path to EU and NATO membership. It would also give Russia time to gather its strength and

**"Even though Russia has its own problems, Finns have no reason to take a negative attitude towards its big neighbour" (%)**

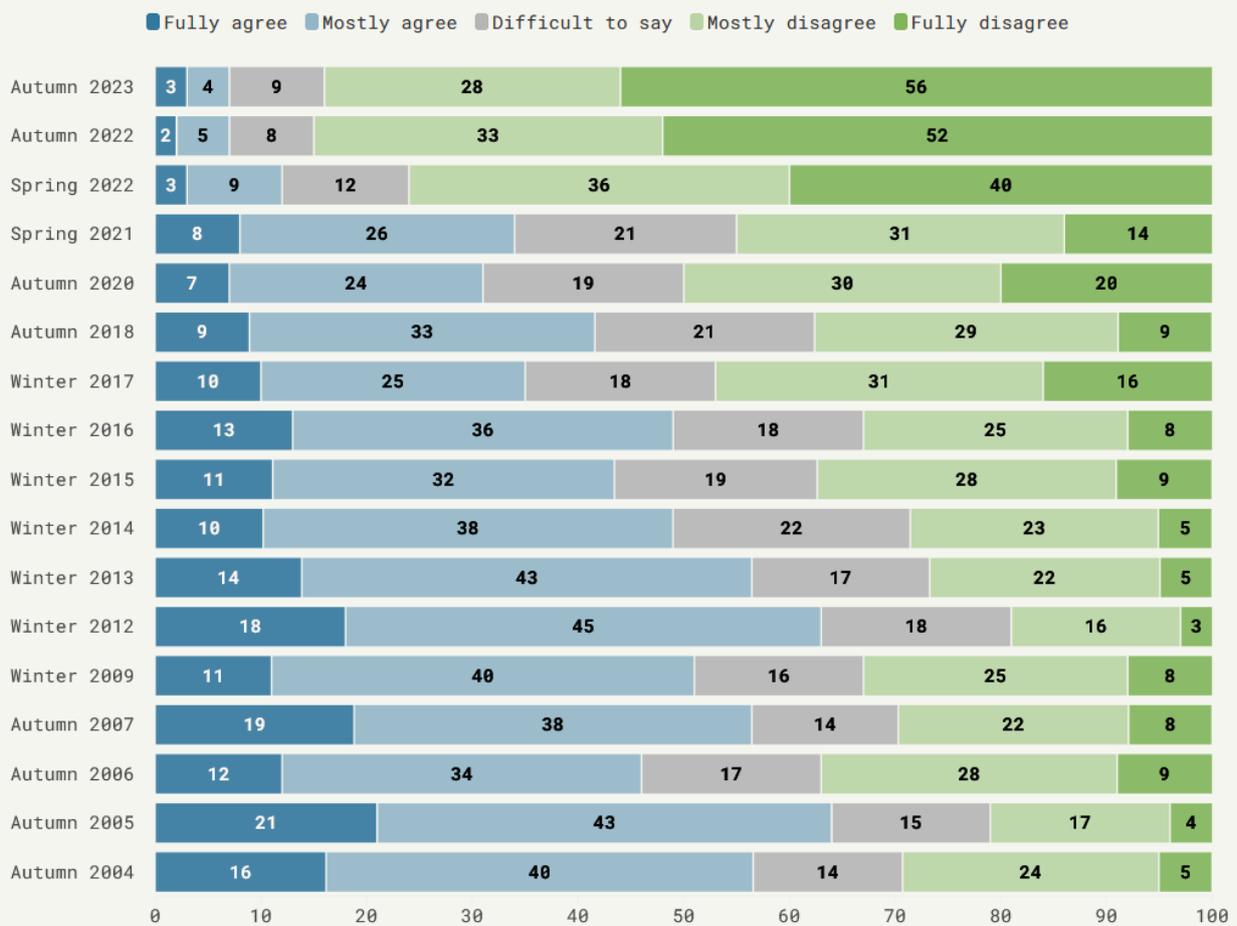


Figure 6. The vast majority of Finns now have a negative perception of Russia. Source: EVA’s Values and Attitudes Survey, autumn 2023.

prepare for the next stage in the war. Moreover, a pause in fighting would provide Russia with breathing space to work on undermining Ukraine's development and the unity of the EU and the rest of the West.

### **The attitude towards Russia is cold**

It is perhaps precisely for these reasons that the majority of Finns consider it essential that Russia loses the war and is forced to withdraw from Ukraine (see page 4 above). The fate of Russia in such a development is not entirely unimportant to Finns, but it is clearly less important than the outcome of the war itself.

In the event of a permanent ceasefire or peace agreement, only 9 per cent consider it essential and 34 per cent consider it necessary that Russia does not descend into chaos and for conditions in Russia to remain relatively stable. A quarter (25%) do not think it is necessary for Russia to remain stable, and a third (32%) are unable to comment on the need for Russia to remain stable.

In this case it seems to be a question of assessing whether it is even possible for Russia to maintain its stability.

The uncertainty regarding Russia's future is also based on the fact that Finns have largely lost hope in the Russia of today. The views of Finns clearly reveal deep disappointment with the development and behaviour of the neighbouring country.

Only seven per cent feel that there is no reason for Finns to take a negative attitude towards its big neighbour, even though Russia does have its own problems (Figure 6). A very large majority (84%) feel there is good reason for this negative attitude towards Russia.

The main reason for the strong negative attitude is obvious. Russia's invasion of Ukraine in spring 2022 resulted in the collapse of Finns' sympathy towards Russia. As

the war of aggression has continued, the most negative views (the 'fully disagree' response) have only increased.

However, Finns' perceptions of Russia had continuously been becoming more negative throughout most of the 2010s. The turning point in attitudes was 2012. In a survey carried out at the beginning of that year, a clear majority of Finns saw no reason to have a negative attitude towards Russia. In the following years, however, the trend in the perception went on a downward path.<sup>16</sup> In the 2015 survey, the perception of Russia had already gone in a more negative direction by twenty percentage points.

### **A bleak view of modern Russia**

The series of questions (Figure 7) on Finns' perception of Russia, which has been included in the EVA Values and Attitudes Survey for several decades, illustrates a bleak view.<sup>17</sup> The perception of Russia was already very grim back in spring 2022. During the war of aggression, which has lasted more than a year and a half, perceptions have become even more negative in some respects (see Appendix figure 2 at the end of the analysis).

Almost all Finns consider Russia to be unstable and unpredictable (93%), an expansionist superpower (89%) and a significant military threat (85%). In practice, no one believes that Russia safeguards world peace (4%), and the perception of its role in the world is unambiguously seen as one that jeopardises peace. The threat posed by Russia is further underlined by the fact that around half (48%) believe the country is on the brink of civil war.

Opinions regarding security were already at rock bottom in spring 2022. The growing pessimism is also threatening to completely engulf the opinions on Russia's democracy

**How well do the following statements and descriptions reflect your perception of Russia today? (%)**

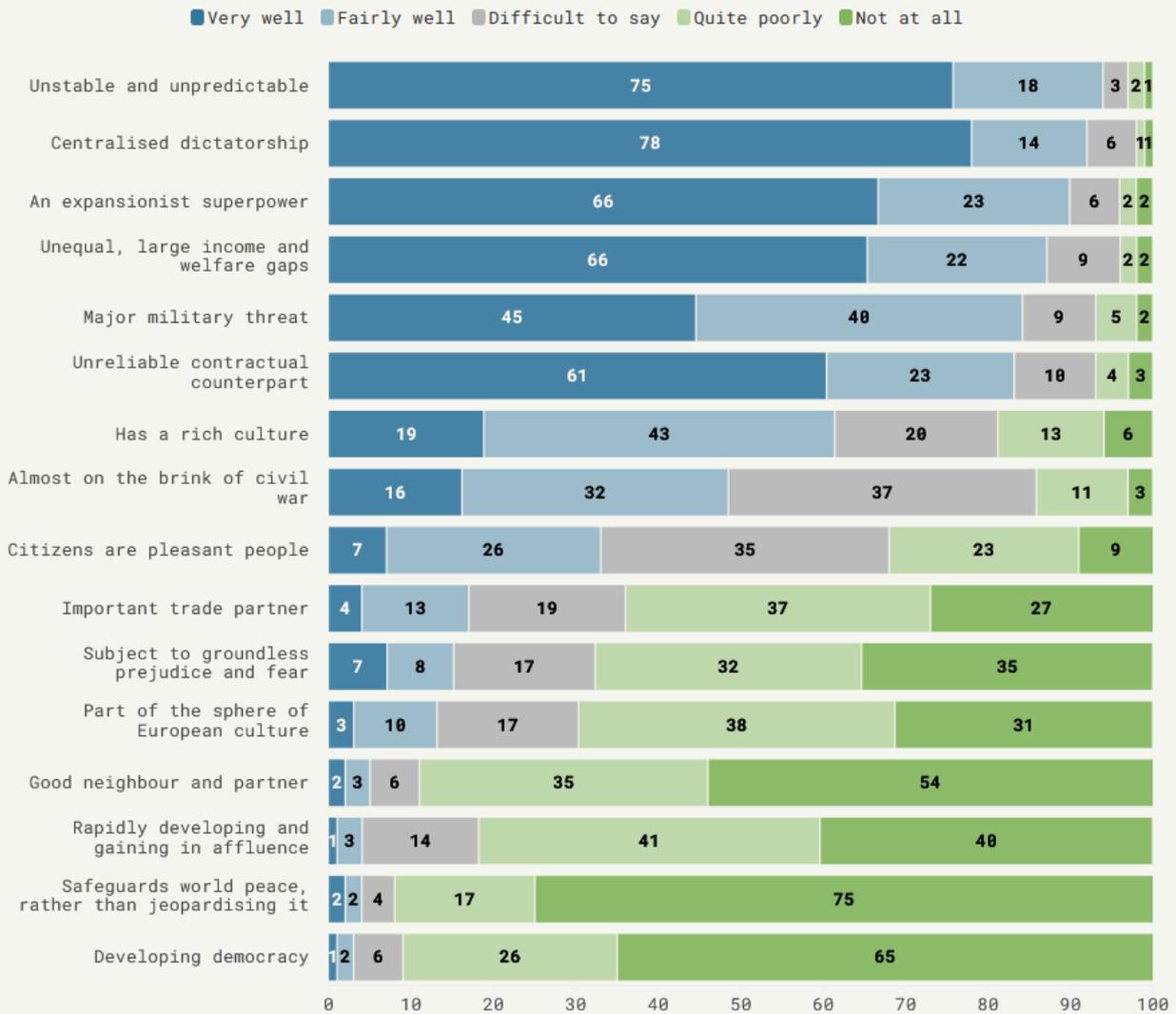


Figure 7. Finns believe that Russia is a centralised dictatorship.  
Source: EVA’s Values and Attitudes Survey, autumn 2023.

and economy. Although presidential elections will be held in Russia next spring, Finns know that they are in no way an exercise of democracy.

Only three per cent of Finns believe Russia is a developing democracy, and 92 per cent consider Russia to be a centralised dictatorship. Opinions regarding its economy are equally bleak. Only four per cent consider Russia to be a rapidly developing country that is becoming more affluent. Nearly all respondents (88%) see Russia as

an unequal society with large income and welfare gaps.

There have been more considerable changes in the perception of Russia being Finland’s partner (see Appendix figure 2). Perceptions of both neighbourly relations and Russia's reliability have deteriorated further since spring 2022. Now, only five per cent of Finns consider Russia to be a good partner and neighbour, and a large majority (84%) consider Russia to be an unreliable contractual counterpart.

However, the biggest change has been in the perception of Russia's importance as a trade partner. Whereas in spring 2022 a majority still considered Russia an important trade partner for Finland, only a fifth (17%) of respondents are of this opinion now. A clear



There is not much left of the bilateral relationship.

majority (64%) no longer consider Russia to be important for Finland in terms of trade.

The change in attitudes corresponds to the change in the relationship between Finland and Russia. Finnish companies have largely withdrawn from the Russian market, and Finland no longer buys energy from Russia, which was previously imported on a large scale. Trade is currently limited mainly to individual commodities not subject to EU sanctions.

Finland has also seized the assets of people on the EU sanctions list that are in Finland, while Russia has seized power plants owned by Fortum in Russia, for example. Russia has terminated the cross-border cooperation agreement with Finland and Finland,

like other EU countries, has restricted the entry of Russian citizens.

Finland is now a 'hostile' country in Russia's rhetoric. In July 2023, Russia expelled nine Finnish diplomats and announced the closure of Finland's Consulate General in St Petersburg, to which Finland later responded by closing Russia's Consulate General in Turku.

As the bilateral relationship with Russia has weakened and the remains of the relationship is clouded by a sense of acrimony, there is little left of the bilateral relationship with Russia that was perceived as important in past decades.

Reflecting this situation, quite a few Finns (42%) believe that in future it would make more sense to manage relations with Russia through the EU rather than bilaterally (Figure 8). However, a quarter (24%) would still keep bilateral channels open with Russia, while a third (33%) were unable to say.

The share of those who would prefer to manage relations with Russia through the EU rather than bilaterally has increased only slightly since the last survey. The share

**"Finland should increasingly manage its relations with Russia through the EU, rather than bilaterally" (%)**

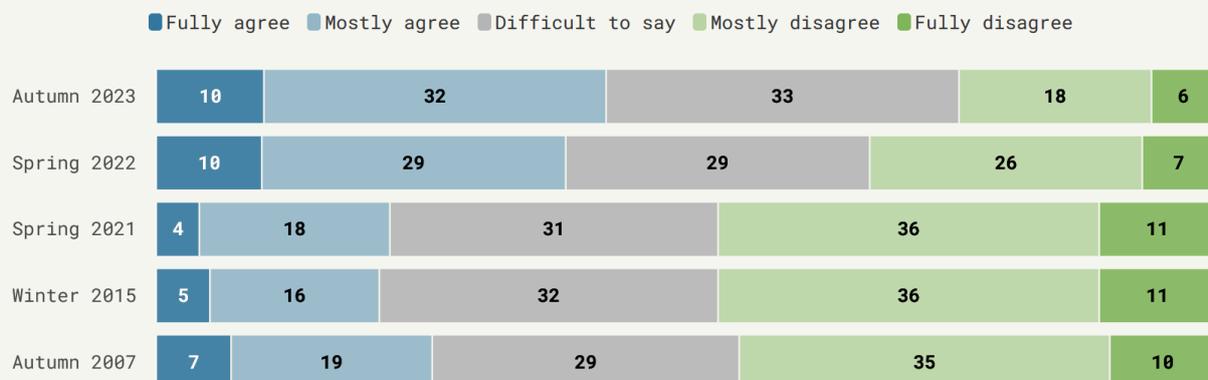


Figure 8. Support for maintaining bilateral relations with Russia is waning. Source: EVA's Values and Attitudes Survey, autumn 2023.

of those in favour of bilateral relations has decreased more markedly (9 percentage points), while the share of those unsure about the right way to manage relations with Russia has increased.

### Cracks in the understanding of Russians

The continuation of Russia’s war of aggression has also changed Finnish attitudes towards the Russians. Up to now, the Finns’ strongly negative attitude has been directed primarily at the Russian state and its political leadership, and attitudes towards Russian culture and ordinary Russians have, on average, remained quite appreciative.

However, the responses now show that cracks are beginning to appear in Finns’ understanding of Russians (see Appendix figure 2). A clear majority (62%) still value Russian culture, but only a third (33%) consider Russian citizens to be pleasant people. Another third (32%) reject the idea that Russians are pleasant people and a third (35%) do not know what to think about Russians at the moment.

Finns’ perception of Russians as pleasant people has decreased by 25 percentage points since the early days of the war of aggression, when it actually increased compared to previous surveys. At that time, the Finns appar-

ently considered ordinary Russians as pawns of their derailed political leadership and wanted to show solidarity with them.

This sense of solidarity is now disintegrating. It is clearly difficult for Finns to understand why there is no more widespread resistance in Russia to the political leadership and the destructive war of aggression that Russia is waging in its neighbouring country.

As seen above (p. 9), Finns know that Russia is an authoritarian country, where disinformation is difficult to avoid and where it is not only difficult but also dangerous to show opposition. Even so, Finns do not widely accept this as a reason for apathy and passivity in influencing the war.

Thirty-eight per cent of Finns believe that ordinary Russians should not be blamed for their country’s reprehensible actions, as they have virtually no opportunities for influencing the policies of the Russian leadership, but almost half (47%) disagree (Figure 9).

Indeed, Finns believe that the Russians bear at least some kind of collective responsibility for their country’s war of aggression and its continuation in Ukraine. A clear majority (62%) of Finns believe that ordinary Russians are also partly to blame for the war of aggression in Ukraine, because they have not been standing up in opposition to the war (Figure 10). A fifth (22%) believe that ordinary

**"Ordinary Russians should not be blamed for the reprehensible actions of their country, as they have virtually no opportunities for influencing the policies of the Russian leadership" (%)**

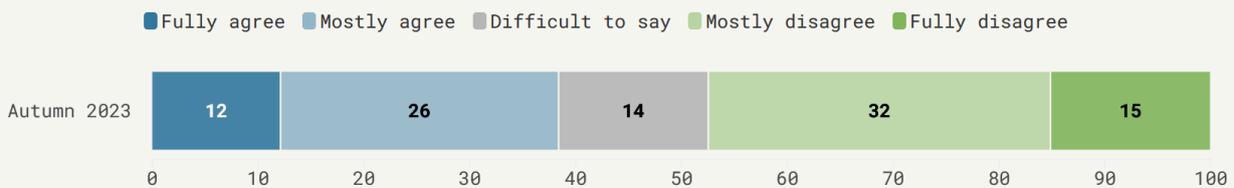


Figure 9. A minority of Finns think that Russians have no opportunities to influence their country’s politics. Source: EVA’s Values and Attitudes Survey, autumn 2023.

**"Ordinary Russians are also partly to blame for the war of aggression in Ukraine, because they are not standing up in opposition to the war" (%)**

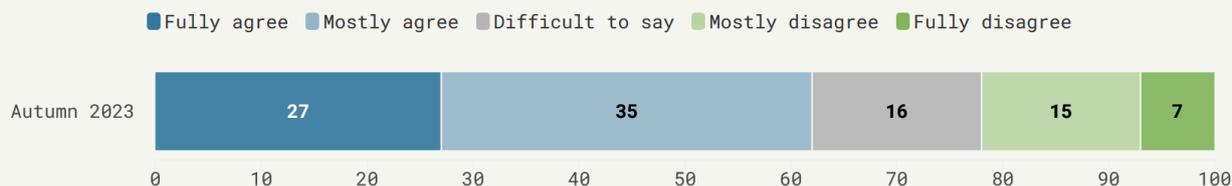


Figure 10. A majority of Finns believe that Russians are collectively responsible for the war. Source: EVA's Values and Attitudes Survey, autumn 2023.

Russians cannot be expected to stand up in opposition to the war.

The results show that as the war in Ukraine has continued, Finns have inevitably become alienated not only from Russia but also, to some extent, from Russians. However, these results can also be interpreted as the Finns' wish that the Russians would take more responsibility for changing the direction of their country for the better.

At the moment, the Finnish opinion is that Russia is moving in an increasingly worrying direction. Only 15 per cent think that Russia is the target of unjustified prejudices and fears, and two out of three (67%) think that a cautious attitude towards Russia is justified. The

figures are more or less the same when considering whether Russia is part of a shared cultural sphere: thirteen per cent consider Russia to be part of the sphere of European culture, but seven out of ten (69%) do not.

Both in terms of cautiousness and cultural contact, attitudes have gone from open curiosity to a clearly negative attitude in recent decades. However, the overall results show that Russia is important for Finns. Events in Russia and the development of Russia are followed closely. The figures from the early years of the millennium show that there is no reason to give up hope of a brighter future, even though things are now looking exceptionally bleak.

## References

- 1 The exact wording of the question in EVA's Values and Attitudes Survey: "The war in Ukraine, which began with the Russian invasion, has lasted a year and a half. If and when a permanent ceasefire or peace agreement is reached in due course, in your opinion, how necessary is it that the following matters or conditions exist?"
- 2 The views of Finns on practically all issues concerning the war in Ukraine and Russia are exceptionally similar in most respects.
- 3 Bellinger (2022).
- 4 United Nations (2023).
- 5 The New York Times (2023).
- 6 Hamilton (2023).
- 7 International Criminal Court (2023).
- 8 Rudolph, Eisen and Berton (2023).
- 9 European Commission (2023).
- 10 Karjalainen (2023).
- 11 Haavisto (2022a).
- 12 This is indicated by the fact that the proportion of those (38%) who consider it essential for Russia to also withdraw from the Crimean Peninsula is significantly lower than the proportion of those (56%) who consider it essential for Russia to withdraw from the territories it occupied in spring 2022.
- 13 The Economist (2023).
- 14 Ministry of Defence (2023).
- 15 Ministry for Foreign Affairs (2023).
- 16 The factors that may have influenced the change in attitudes between 2012 and 2022 are described in more detail in EVA's Values and Attitudes Survey of spring 2022, Haavisto (2022b).
- 17 The exact wording of the question in EVA's Values and Attitudes Survey: "Questions about Russia and its nature and significance for our country have always divided opinions in Finland. How well do the following statements and descriptions reflect your perception of Russia today?"

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### How the survey was conducted

The results are based on the responses of 2,045 people. The error margin of the results is 2–3 percentage points in each direction on the level of the entire population. The data were collected from 15 to 27 September 2023. The respondents represent the population aged 18–79 across all of Finland (excl. Åland). The material was collected in a Taloustutkimus Oy internet panel, from which the survey sample was formed through random sampling. The material has been weighted so as to represent the population according to age, gender, place of residence, education, profession or position, sector and party affiliation. The statistical further analysis of the material was carried out by Pentti Kiljunen at Yhdyskuntatutkimus Oy. The results and their more detailed itemisations by population group are available on EVA's website. EVA has conducted the Survey on Values and Attitudes since 1984.

### This is EVA's Values and Attitudes Survey

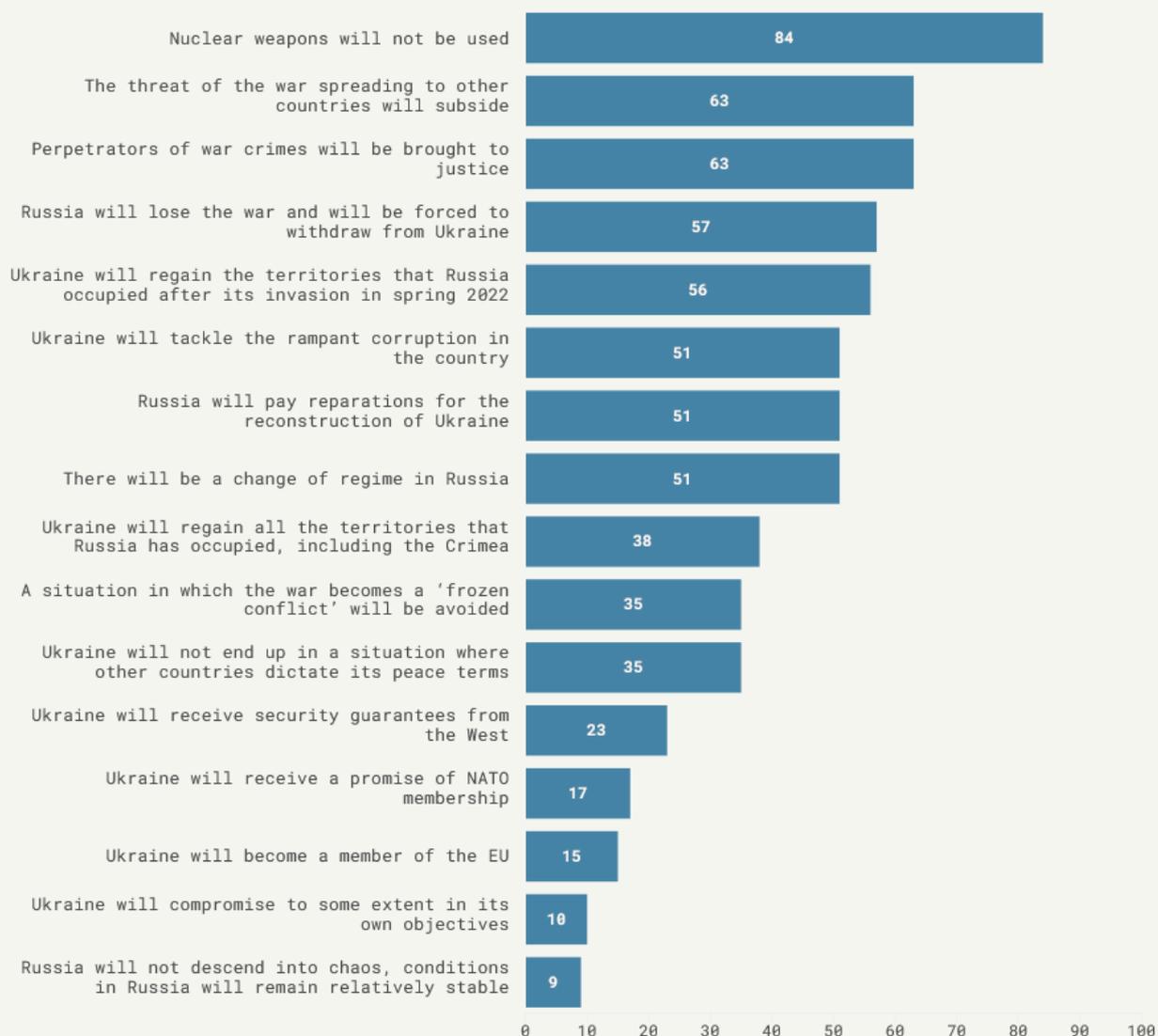
EVA's Survey of Values and Attitudes, conducted twice each year, is Finland's leading regular and broad opinion survey on social issues. EVA has conducted its surveys since 1984 and their topics cover the key themes in politics, economics, foreign relations, the environment and well-being. The aim has been to keep the question context and method of conducting the Surveys of Values and Attitudes as uniform as possible from year to year in order to ensure comparable results and to monitor changes in attitude that take place over time. Each survey contains a number of questions on each theme. The format of the recurring questions has been kept as uniform as possible from year to year. For many topics, trends in the Finns' attitudes and values can be systematically monitored over decades.

In 2012, EVA began collecting data using an internet panel instead of carrying out the survey by mail. During the transition to the panel system, data was collected using both methods to verify the comparability of results. The data of EVA's Survey of Values and Attitudes are stored in the Finnish Social Science Data Archive (FSD, University of Tampere), which can release the data for scientific research and teaching purposes. EVA's materials have long been included among the most requested at the FSD. They have been and are currently being used in numerous academic research projects at different universities in Finland and abroad.

## Appendix figures

### Appendix figure 1.

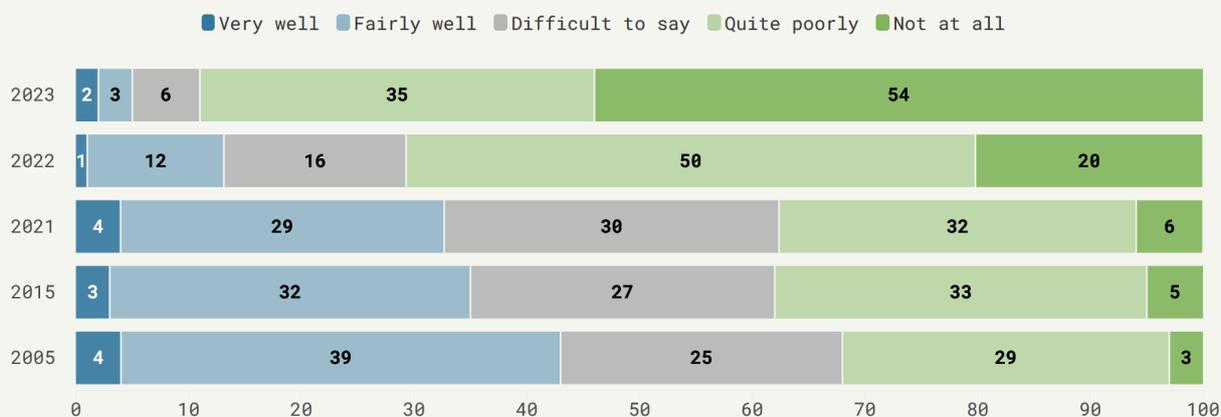
**When a permanent ceasefire or peace agreement is reached in due course, in your opinion, how necessary is it that the following matters or conditions exist? (share of 'essential' responses, %)**



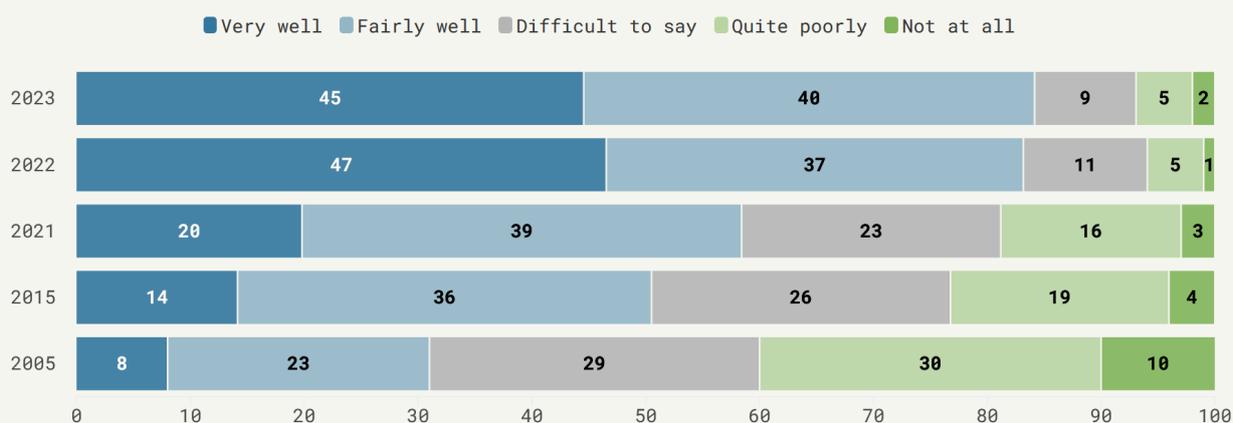
**Appendix figure 2.**

**How do the various statements and descriptions reflect your perception of Russia today: Assessments over the years 2005–2023 (%)**

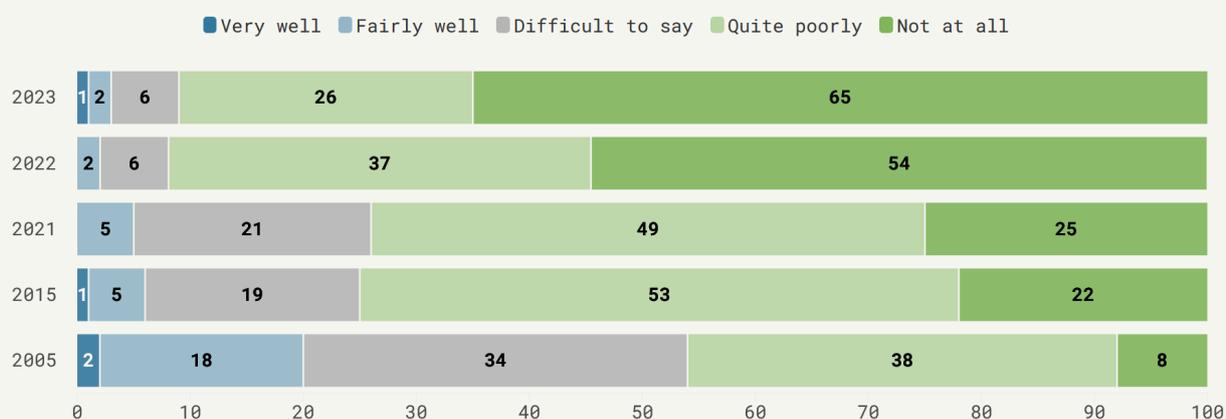
**Good neighbour and partner**



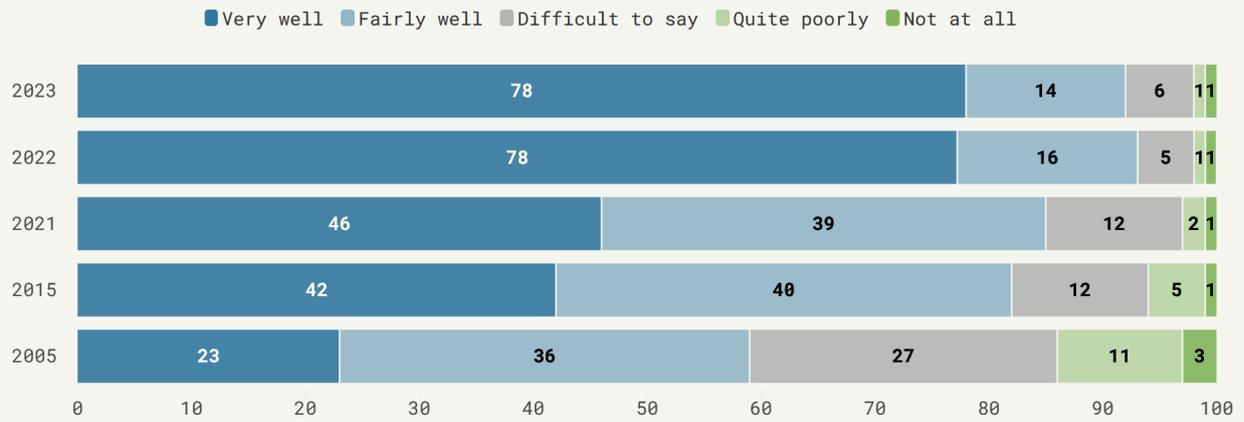
**Major military threat**



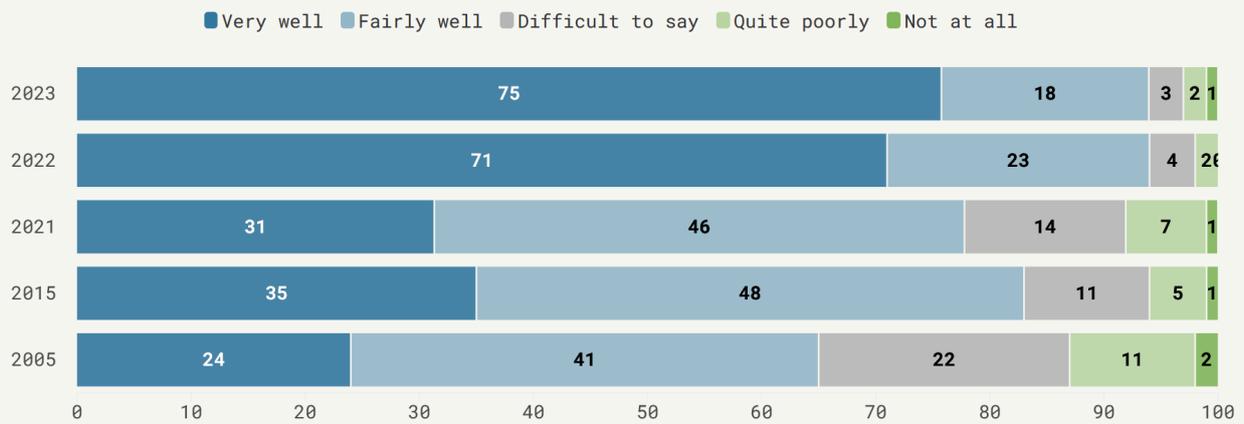
**Developing democracy**



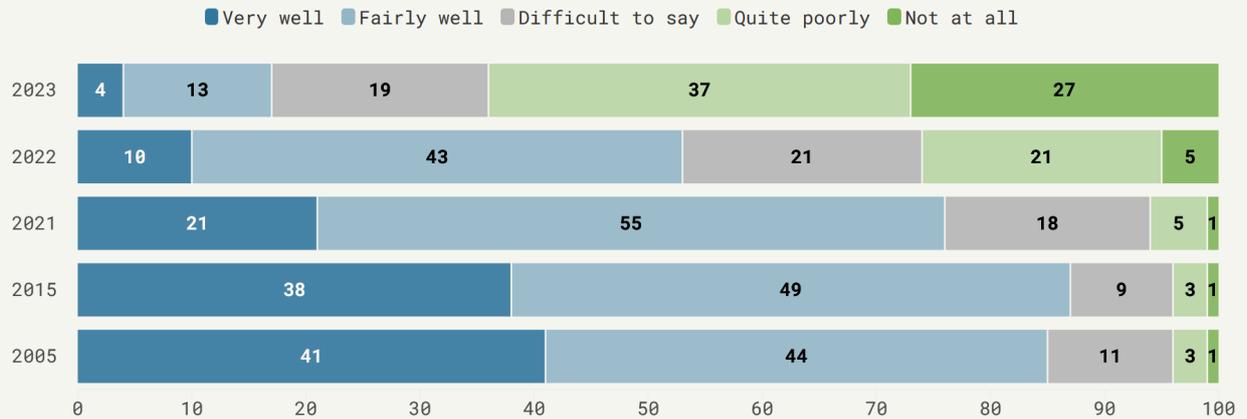
## Centralised dictatorship



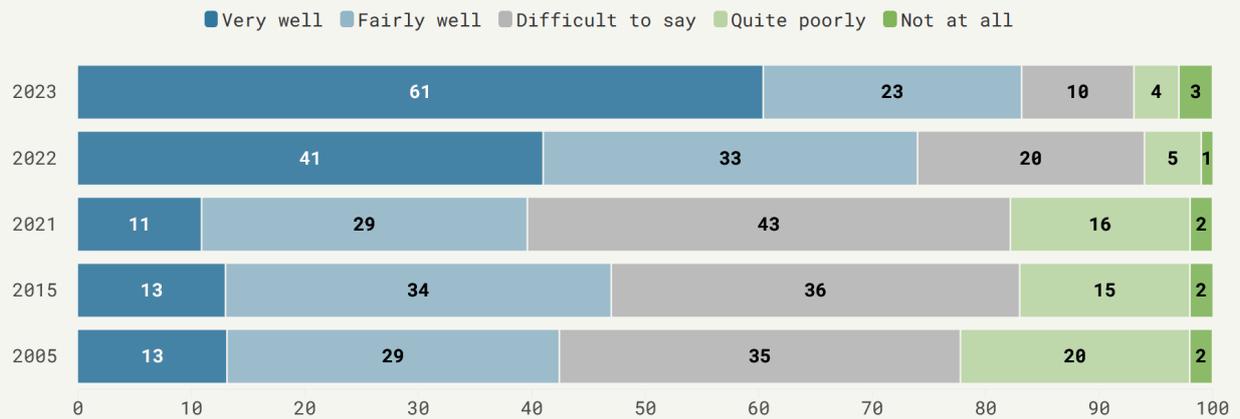
## Unstable and unpredictable



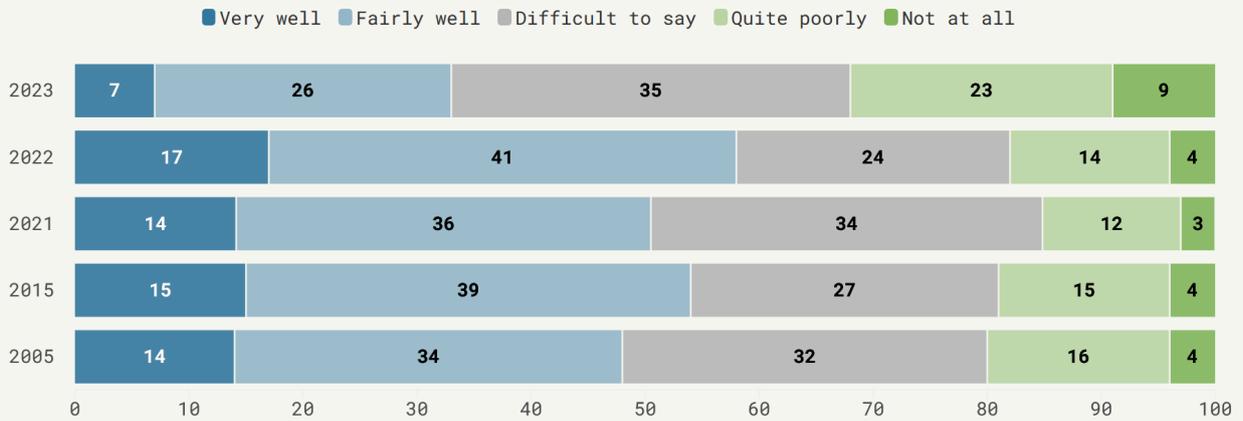
### Important trade partner



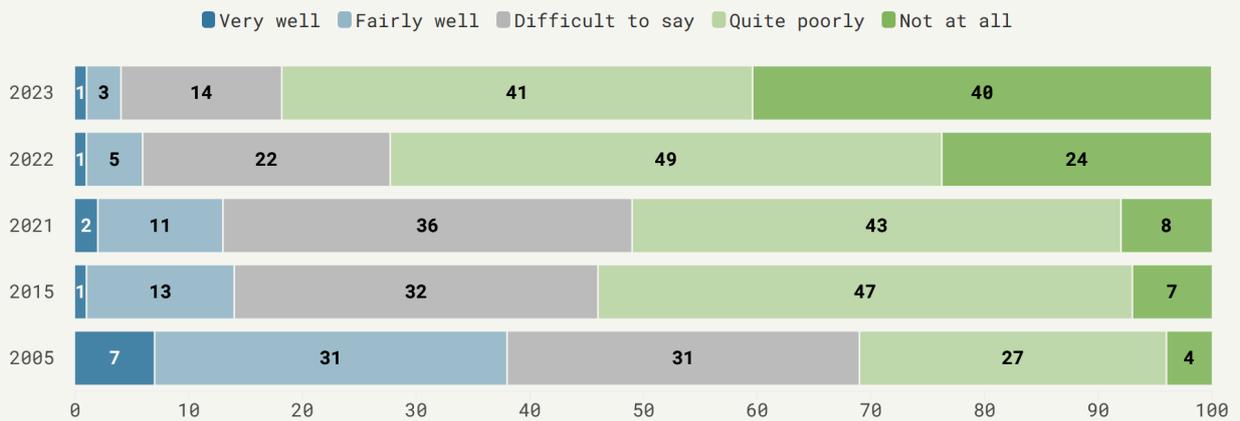
### Unreliable contractual counterpart



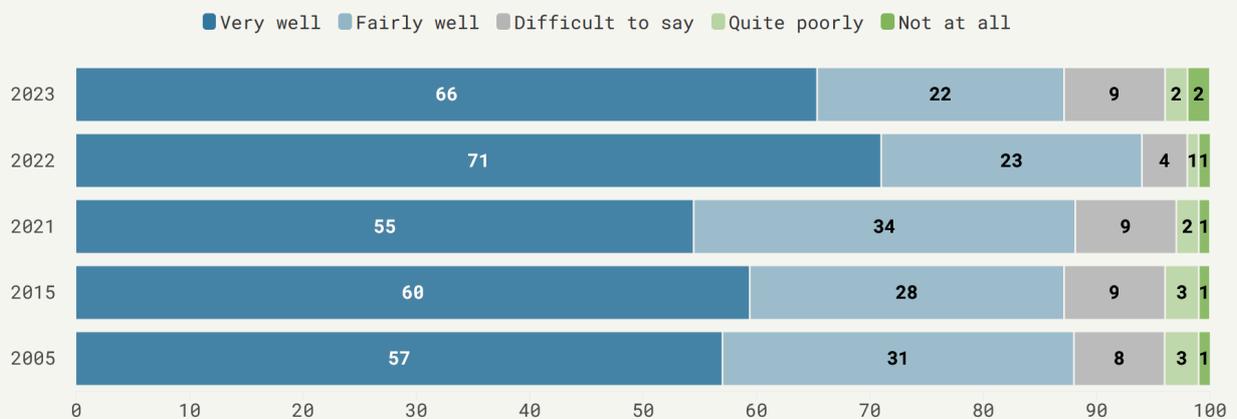
## Citizens are pleasant people



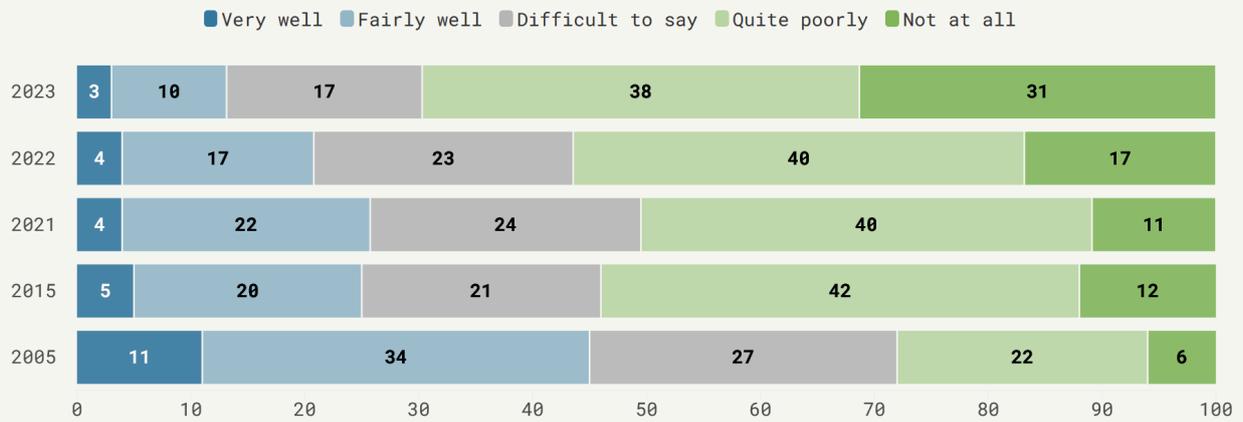
## Rapidly developing and gaining in affluence



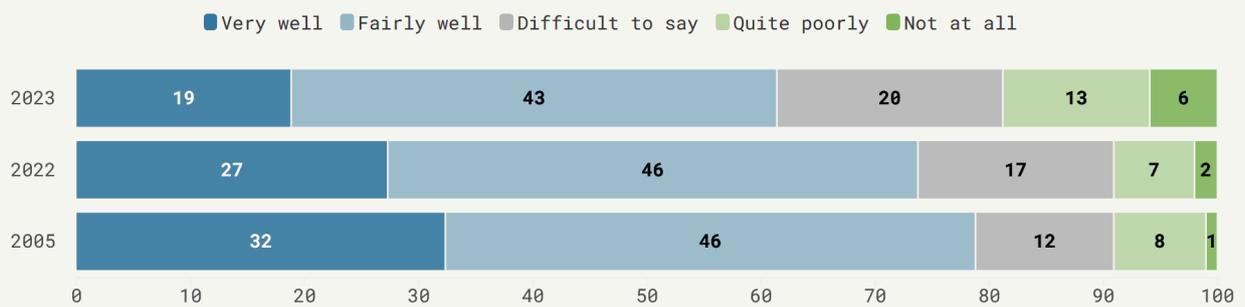
## Unequal, large income and welfare gaps



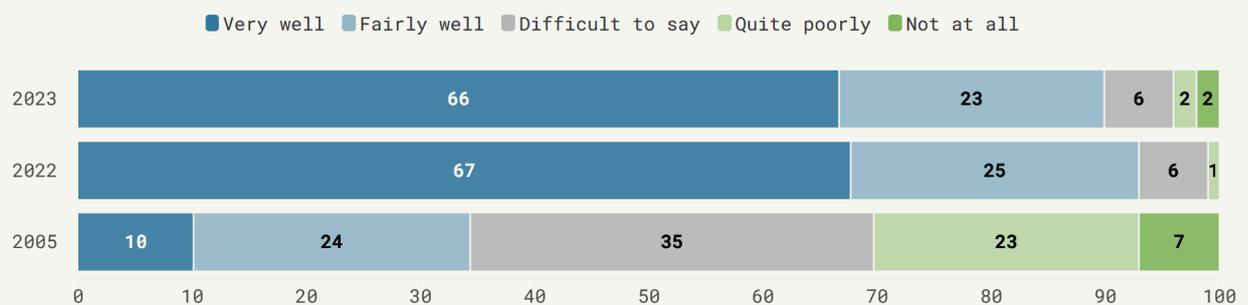
### Part of the sphere of European culture



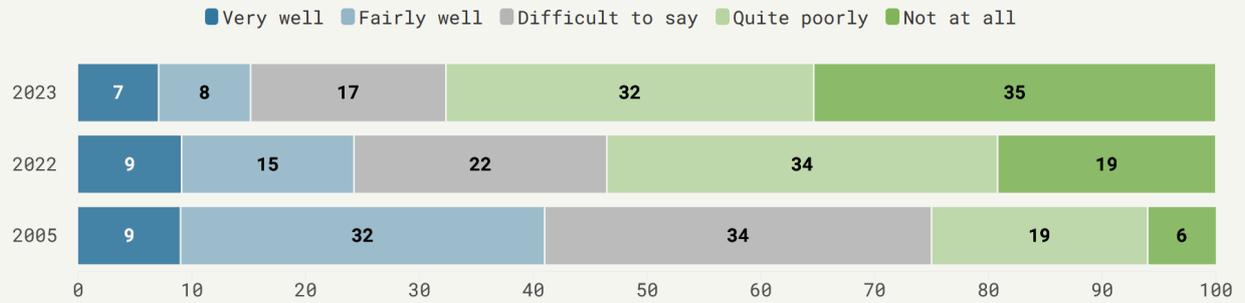
### Has a rich culture



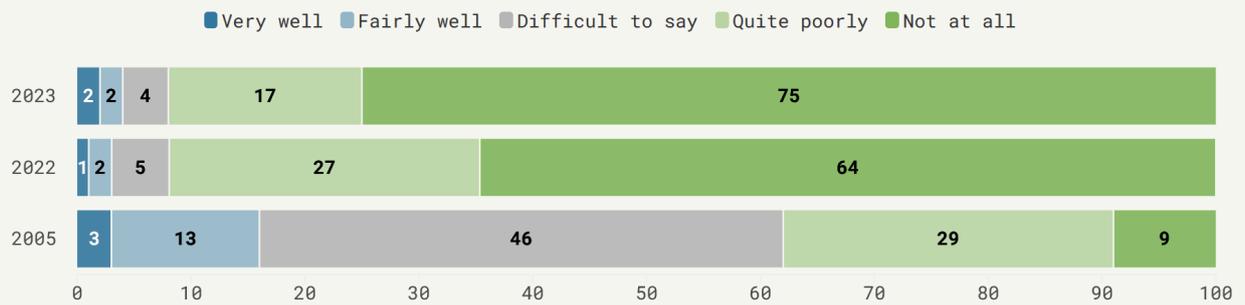
### An expansionist superpower



## Subject to groundless prejudice and fear



## Safeguards world peace, rather than jeopardising it





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