

Poll Shows Approval for Medvedev at Low

August 25, 2011

The  Moscow Times

Public approval of President Dmitry Medvedev fell in August to its lowest level since he took office, an independent polling agency said Thursday.

The gap between Medvedev and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin has widened seven months before a March 2012 presidential election, in which one of the two is expected to run for a six-year term.

Medvedev's approval rating fell to 63 percent in August from 66 percent in July, the Levada Center poll showed, its lowest since Putin, facing a constitutional bar on a third straight term as president, steered him into the Kremlin in 2008.

Putin's approval rating held at 68 percent, near record lows during his decade in power and the same as in July, according to the monthly poll of 1,600 adults nationwide.

"Putin continues to be seen as a more authoritative figure," said Lyudmila Sergeyeva, a sociologist at Levada.

Both leaders' ratings are far higher than most politicians in the West can expect, but analysts say ordinary Russians' concerns about their economic prospects two years after a big downturn have undermined support for the authorities.

According to the poll, 36 percent of Russians believed in August that the country was moving in the right direction, down from 40 percent in July and 48 percent in August 2010.

Some Russians blame Putin for the country's problems, and analysts say signs of unhappiness might encourage him to stand for election.

"In circumstances of the slow recovery from the economic crisis, many Russians want a firm hand," Sergeyeva said.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2011/08/25/poll-shows-approval-for-medvedev-at-low-a9140>