

Most Russians See Putin Era as Positive, Poll Says

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Most Russians believe that the Vladimir Putin era has brought positive changes, although Putin's approval ratings are far from uniform across the country, a poll released Monday said.

Five months into Putin's third term as president, sixty-four percent of respondents told the state-run VTsIOM pollster that his work as president has brought improvements, with 83 percent of United Russia supporters and 74 percent of those in midsize towns backing the country's leader.

But Communist Party faithful and inhabitants of Moscow and St. Petersburg reacted less favorably to Putin's time as head of state. Thirty-five percent and 20 percent of those polled in these two groups said life under Putin had noticeably deteriorated.

Respondents said Putin had achieved the most in international relations (45 percent) and in raising people's standard of living (44 percent), while they were ambivalent toward his efforts to decrease unemployment and policies in the troubled North Caucasus republics.

Among areas where Putin should focus future efforts, respondents said he should concentrate on further raising people's standard of living (18 percent); tackling corruption and providing good-quality, free medical care (14 percent); and boosting industrial and agricultural output (13 percent).

VTsIOM questioned 1,600 people for the survey, which was carried out Sept. 29 to 30 in 46 Russian regions. The pollster gave a margin of error of 3.4 percent.

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