

National Unity Day Still Just a Day Off for Most

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Only 16 percent of Russians will celebrate National Unity Day this weekend, while for most other people the holiday is little more than a day off work, according to a poll released Wednesday.

Despite its growing popularity since 2005, when the Nov. 4 holiday was instituted, a quarter of respondents could not name the holiday correctly, the independent Levada Center pollster said in results carried by Interfax.

People often confused it with another post-Soviet holiday — the Day of Unity and Reconciliation, which itself replaced the anniversary of the October Revolution, a Soviet holiday celebrated on Nov. 7.

But a record 43 percent knew that Russia celebrates National Unity Day on Nov. 4, an increase from 41 percent last year and 36 percent in 2010, the poll said.

The holiday commemorates Russia's defeat of Polish invaders in 1612.

The poll of 1,600 respondents also indicated that more than half (61 percent) would not participate in any festivities to mark National Unity Day, while just over 18 percent said they would continue to stick to the old tradition of celebrating October Revolution Day on Nov. 7.

Nine percent had not made any plans on how to spend their time during the holiday, which falls on a Sunday and means that Monday will be a nonworking day for the country.

Other polls showed even less enthusiasm for the upcoming holiday. Just 10 percent of those asked in a poll conducted by the Superjob.ru portal said they considered National Unity Day a real holiday, while 55 percent said they treated it as just another day off. A further 17 percent could not identify the date correctly, Interfax reported.

In recent years, National Unity Day was marked by nationalist marches in Moscow and other Russian cities.

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