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Putin's Rating at 3-Year High

By The Moscow Times

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President Vladimir Putin's approval rating has reached a three-year high amid Crimea's plans to join Russia and the nation's historic triumph at the Sochi Winter Olympics, a state-run pollster said Thursday.

Putin's rating has risen to 71.6 percent from 68.8 percent in May 2012, when the he began his third term in office, a poll conducted by the Russian Public Opinion Research Center, or VTsIOM, last week revealed.

The president's popularity has risen 9.7 percent since mid-February, a surge connected with the president's handling of the ongoing crisis in Ukraine and the country's recordbreaking results at the Sochi Games.

The Russian Olympic team topped the medal count, winning 13 gold medals and 33 overall, its best all time result.

Another poll by the Public Opinion Foundation published Wednesday showed that some 53

percent of respondents said they would vote for Putin if presidential elections were held this week, as opposed to 48 percent a week ago.

Thursday's survey was conducted among 1,600 people across Russia on March 8 to 9 with a margin of error of 3.4 percent.

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