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More Russians Support Annexation of Crimea, Poll Shows

By The Moscow Times

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People spend time at a quay, with a Russian warship seen in the background, in Sevastopol in Crimea.

The number of Russians who support Crimea joining Russia has grown to 73 percent from 64 percent in March when Moscow annexed the peninsula, a recent poll has shown.

The survey, conducted by independent pollster Levada Center, indicated the number of respondents who think Crimea should be part of Ukraine has dropped to just 4 percent from 14 percent in March, the Interfax news agency reported Tuesday.

Another 15 percent of respondents believe Crimea should be an independent state, compared to 11 percent in March, the report said Tuesday.

Following Russia's annexation of Crimea and its perceived support of separatists in the east of Ukraine, Western nations have bought several rounds of sanctions against Moscow.

Among those questioned, 58 percent blamed Western criticism of Crimea's annexation on a

"hostile attitude toward Russia" and a desire to use the case to "put pressure on" their country, the report said. The number was the same as during a poll conducted by the Levada Center in late March, according to the pollster's website.

The latest Levada poll was conducted on Aug. 22-25 among 1,600 people in 134 cities and towns around Russia. No margin of error was provided, though Levada Center polls typically give a margin of error no more than 3.4 percentage points.

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