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TIME Agrees With Readers: Putin Is One of World's Most Influential People

By Eva Hartog

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Russian President Vladimir Putin.

TIME magazine has included Russian President Vladimir Putin in its annual list of the world's 100 most influential people, just days after the leader topped a similar poll among its readers.

The Russian head of state was one of 20 people to feature in the magazine's Leaders category, according to the results published Thursday on TIME's website. The other four categories were Titans, Icons, Artists and Pioneers.

Putin featured on the Leaders list "thanks to his gravity-defying ability to confront the West in ways that boost his popularity in a country suffering through an economic meltdown for which his own policies are largely responsible," wrote TIME foreign affairs columnist Ian Bremmer in comments accompanying his listing.

"No one in the world has amassed greater political authority in a country so important to

international politics and the global economy," added Bremmer, who is also president of the Eurasia Group political-risk consultancy.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras were among the other politicians to feature on TIME's list of the world's most influential leaders.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel also featured on the list, and Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko — asked by TIME to discuss her inclusion — praised his German counterpart for the manner in which she has dealt with Putin throughout the crisis in Ukraine.

"When many attempts to agree with Vladimir Putin on a badly needed cease-fire turned out to be in vain, it was Angela Merkel who would go on, calmly saying, 'OK, but why shouldn't we go back to discussing?' so that no one could doubt she would walk out with a result," Poroshenko wrote.

TIME's list comes just days after its readers named Putin as the most influential person in the world "for better or for worse," after he beat off competition from pop stars Lady Gaga, Taylor Swift and Rihanna.

The only non-entertainers in the readers' top 10 apart from Putin were the Dalai Lama, Pakistani feminist activist Malala Yousafzai and Pope Francis.

TIME named Putin its "Person of the Year" in 2007, though the Russian leader only placed as a runner up on last year's list.

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