

Medvedev Seeks to Lure More Yachts to Crimea

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has instructed the government to support the development of yachting along Russia's coastlines as part of an effort to boost Crimea's economy, according to an order posted on the government's official website Tuesday.

The order instructs government ministries such as the Transportation; Economic Development; Sports, Tourism and Youth Politics; Culture; and Foreign Ministries to begin submitting proposals to create favorable conditions for yachtsmen sailing off Russian coastlines.

The decision to support Russian yachting — which applies to both traditional sailing and motor-powered leisure boating — was taken as part of a series of initiatives to support Crimean small businesses at a meeting in the coastal resort town of Yalta on June 15.

Crimea's economy has struggled since Russia annexed the peninsula from Ukraine last year. Tourism, one of Crimea's main industries, was down to an estimated 4 million visitors this year from an pre-annexation average of 6 million, according to data from Crimea and Russia's tourism ministries.

The sunny region's warm-water ports make it ideal as a place for yachting, however. Prior to the region's annexation, Russian yachting was only possible during spring and summer on certain lakes and in the Baltic sea around St. Petersburg.

Yachting in Russia is still a sport at the embryonic stage. Sailing in the Soviet Union was limited to promising sportsmen training to compete in summer Olympic games. With the fall of the Soviet Union the sport has become increasingly popular, but is not as widespread as in other nations with large coastlines.

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