

Putin's Ratings Drop on Ukraine Draft

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Gavriil Grigorov/POOL/TASS

Russian President Vladimir Putin's approval ratings saw their second-largest drop in his two decades in power as discontent brews over his call-up of reservists to shore up his thinning ranks in Ukraine, according to poll results [published](#) Wednesday.

According to the independent Levada Center polling agency, 77% of Russians surveyed this month said they approve of Putin's actions as president.

It marks a six-point drop from the previous share of 83%, which remained almost unchanged in the six months since Putin ordered a full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

It is also the biggest drop in Putin's approval since 2018, when he raised Russian workers' retirement age and sparked nationwide protests.

This week, thousands took to the streets in far-flung regions across Russia to protest Putin's mobilization of at least 300,000 reservists. Hundreds were arrested in the first days of anti-draft demonstrations.

Another 200,000 were estimated to have fled Russia in the week since the recruitment drive, slammed by both Putin critics and allies for its indiscriminatory nature, got underway.

Levada's survey recorded smaller drops in the approval of Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin, his cabinet and the Russian parliament.

Six out of 10 Russians said their country is going in the right direction, down from two-thirds in August. Another 27% said it was going in the wrong direction, up 3% from the previous month.

Levada, which Russian authorities have declared a "foreign agent," polled 1,600 people across 137 Russian towns and cities from Sept. 22 to 28.

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