



## Russian PMC Project

**(Multi-annual cooperation project to support effective  
public monitoring of places of detention in the Russian Federation)**

*A joint activity  
of the Human Rights Commissioner of the Russian Federation  
and the Directorate of Human Rights and Antidiscrimination of the Council of Europe*

*funded by  
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## Activity Report 2012

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1. Resource centers in eight Federal Districts have been established. The heads of the resource centers are the Project regional coordinators. The functions of the centers are to monitor the human rights situation in places of detention; to provide PMC members and representatives of regional ombudsmen with information and advice; to conduct seminars and trainings; to collaborate with local authorities, the Federal Penitentiary Service, the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Resource centers unite and support the PMC members of the region, and help lines have been established for that.
2. To date the help lines in the North-Caucasus Federal District (FD) and Far-Eastern FD are functional. It is possible to contact them by fax, e-mail or mobile phone. In the North-Western FD a help line with the prisoners and their relatives is organized using the mobile phone of the regional coordinator. In the Central FD Andrey Babushkin, vice-chairman of Moscow's PMC, and PMC Project expert organized a help line for PMC members and other stakeholders using additional funding. In the Southern FD, Rostov-on-Don, Volgograd and Novocherkassk the reception of citizens on the issues of human rights in places of detention is organized. The reception of citizens is also organized in the resource centers of Far-Eastern FD (Vladivostok) and Ural FD (Perm).
3. The PMC Project web site is now on-line and is rapidly developing (<http://www.antipytki.ru/>) with a large collection of documents, including the recommendations of Russian and foreign NGOs on detention issues, international standards, UN and CoE principles and conventions, PMC reports, problems relating to the implementation of public control in Russia. It is planned to establish a section "Questions and Answers" which will serve as another sort of help line.
4. The PMC Handbook was published. It contains information about all the Russian PMCs, regional ombudsmen and local heads of the Federal Penitentiary Service and Ministry of Internal Affairs departments. 1000 copies of the Handbook were printed and for the most part distributed among PMC members, Ombudsmen's offices, NGOs and authorities.
5. A number of Working Group and Supervisory Board meetings took place (16 February, 20 April and 17 May) in order to organize the Project implementation and the work in the regions and to give shape to the team work. A meeting of the Working Group with the regional Commissioners for Human Rights (Ombudsmen) was held on 18 May to organize a closer cooperation and coordination.
6. A two-day discussion seminar took place in Moscow on "Security and dignity in places of detention" (27-28 June) with the participation of international experts. As a result of the seminar four working groups were created in order to develop recommendations and procedures on the most topical issues that emerged from the seminar.
7. During the Summer and early Fall educational and methodical work began in the regions. In four FDs seminars and workshops were held following requests by and with the help of the respective resource centers for the benefit of the local PMCs, ombudsmen, independent experts as well as representatives of relevant authorities..

8. A round table on “Current problems of human rights in places of detention in the Siberian Federal District” was conducted on 31 July in Barnaul with the participation of the representatives of the Governor of Altay Kray, the Federal Penitentiary Service and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The PMC members exchanged experiences and discussed the most promising practices for PMC work, cooperation with regional ombudsmen and with the representatives of the relevant authorities

October 2012 was the most active phase in terms of regional activities.

9. A one-day seminar was conducted in St. Petersburg on 1 October for PMC members, ombudsmen’s offices’ staff members, representatives of the Federal Penitentiary Service and the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the North Western Federal District on “Parole and prevention of torture and degrading or inhuman treatment or punishment”. On the agenda were analytical reports on the institution of parole, norms and gaps in the existing legislation. Different practices of parole, “failure” to produce obligatory documents, the positions of the prosecutor’s office and the courts on a number of issues, as well as the conditions for the escorting of convicts by representatives of FSIN and MIA, the assessment of the local detention conditions in terms of international human right standards, the role of the European Court of European Rights for the improvement of prison conditions. Recommendations were made for the attention of PMC members who are members of administrative commissions of places of deprivation of liberty. As a result of the seminar there will be a publication on “Public control of the way in which parole is granted”
10. A thematic seminar on “Public control of the respect of human rights of foreign citizens in places of detention in the Far Eastern Federal District took” took place on 2-3 October in Vladivostok with the financial support of the Civic Chamber. Its main organizer was the PMC of Primorsky Kray, which became a training ground for the PMC members from the whole region. The activity began with the practical training in the colony-settlement № 37 in Dzerzhinets, October District, with the participation of representatives of the Consulate General of China and the heads of the regional Federal Penitentiary Service. The participants discussed the conditions in places of detention, including visits, leisure activities, the communication with prisoners, material support of detainees, their access to media, the possibility of parole. Special attention was paid to health care, availability of medicines and the medical records of Chinese citizens. In general, the participants identified the detention conditions as satisfactory and they didn’t find signs of discrimination. The participants noted the need for translation into Chinese of documents that set out prisoners’ rights and duties, including the Criminal Enforcement Code of the Russian Federation and the internal rules of the colony, and they requested access for inmates to dictionaries and books in Chinese.
11. A workshop on “Successful practices of the PMCs of the Ural Federal District” was held in Perm on 2-3 October following a request by and with the help of the regional resource center. Participants from Kurgan, Chelyabinsk, Sverdlovsk and Tumen regions, Khanti-Mansi and Yamal-Nenets districts, Perm Kray PMC members and representatives of Russian PMC Project discussed proposals to improve the efficiency of public control in places of detention and to minimize obstacles to PMC work. The issues discussed included the organization of monitoring visits to places

of detention and the effectiveness of PMC work, the pros and cons of PMC tactics which are used during visits to places of detention; regional experience in cooperation with agencies, supervisory organizations and regional ombudsmen; approaches which allow to remove confirmed facts of human rights violations; the role of mass media for PMC work and other means of ensuring the public control effectiveness.

12. The resource center of the Volga Federal District organized a seminar on the “Excessive use of disciplinary sanctions, violence and special equipment as factors that lead to the violation of prisoners’ rights” in Nizhny Novgorod on 8-9 October with the assistance of the regional FSIN. PMC members, ombudsmen’s office staff members, NGO members and FSIN representatives from the regions of the district took part. The topics covered included legal regulations that guide the security regulations in prisons, public monitoring of colony officers’ actions and the obligation to provide medical care to prisoners. Special attention was given to the need to document the use of disciplinary measures and of special equipment, medical records, prescription journals and other medical documents. On the second day of the seminar there was a discussion in colony №11 of Nizhny Novgorod FSIN of the issues arising in that colony and video materials gave the opportunity to jointly discuss real and specific examples of conflict situations in a place of detention. As a result of the visit to colony №11 recommendations were formulated concerning not only the regulatory framework but also practical measures that would help to ensure the respect of human rights and the obedience of law by all parties in places of detention.
13. A training-for-trainers was organized in Moscow from 22-26 October with a view to selecting trainers, setting-up of teams of trainers and preparing a basic training curriculum for PMCs. Basic training courses for PMC members and other the subjects of public control in all regions of the country should begin in 2013.
14. On 4-5 December an seminar on the “Protection of vulnerable groups of prisoners: Disabled persons and persons with mental disorders” was hosted by the Civic Chamber in Moscow. The Regional project coordinators, Russian experts including the Chief Psychiatrist of the FSIN and foreign experts from Poland, Slovenia and Ukraine discussed both the norms applicable in this area and the ways in which the PMCs can monitor the situation.
15. The annual meeting of the Project Team and the Project’s Supervisory Board is scheduled to take place on 6 December in Moscow in the premises of the Russian Federal Ombudsman to take stock of the project activities so far, examine proposals from the regional project coordinators for activities in 2013 and discuss funding perspectives.

All the Project activities have provided considerable experience in various specialized meetings, seminars and workshops; they have contributed to further development of the Project, to strengthen its network structure, to increase transparency; to reaffirm relations with regional ombudsmen and agencies responsible for human rights in places of detention.

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