

Putin Orders Agency to Finalize Drug Addict Rehab Program

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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President Vladimir Putin has ordered the Federal Drug Control Service to complete work as soon as possible on an interagency program for rehabilitating of drug addicts, the Kremlin said Monday.

Viktor Ivanov, head of the Federal Drug Control Service, told Putin that his agency has held meetings in 30 regions with health care specialists, legal experts, community leaders and international specialists.

The program has been approved by all of the relevant agencies and the only issue yet to be resolved is funding, Ivanov said.

Several regions have already begun implementing such projects at local level, even though the program hasn't been finalized, Ivanov said.

Russia has been criticized by international NGOs for its scant drug rehabilitation and prevention programs, and in particular for a blanket ban on the use of methadone, employed in many countries to curb heroin use.

Ivanov said last March that almost 150,000 people had been convicted of drug-related crimes in Russia. The Federal Drug Control Service detected around one million drug users in Russia in a year “including 200,000 in night clubs and discos”, he said.

He added that the analysis performed by his agency found that up to 90 percent of all street crimes in Russia were committed by drug addicts.

Material from RIA Novosti is included in this report.

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