

Local Politicians Want Russia's Prisoners Out of Siberia

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Ilya Naymushin / Reuters

Siberian officials are petitioning the Kremlin to halt the transfer of the Russia's criminals to the remote region, [the tayga.info news site reported Tuesday](#).

Politicians in Siberia claim that prisoners who resettle in the area after serving their jail terms are boosting crime rates and lowering life expectancy.

Deputies from the Irkutsk regional parliament are now appealing to Russia's Federal Assembly to introduce regulations that would see criminals serve out their prison sentences in the region where they were convicted.

"Tens of thousands of prisoners, including those who have committed serious and heinous crimes remain living in the Irkutsk region after their release," politicians from Russia's Civic Platform said in a statement to the Irkutsk parliament. "Given high reoffending rates, this leaves us with high crime rates."

Read more from The Moscow Times: Crime, punishment and more punishment in [Russia's struggling prison system](#)

Officials claim that prisoners who are released – particularly those with addiction problems – were affecting the health of local people, tayga.info reported.

The Irkutsk region has Russia's second highest rate of HIV and the fifth highest of tuberculosis related deaths.

"Why should Moscow or St. Petersburg live better at the expense of the Irkutsk Region?" officials wrote in their statement.

Other critics of the system have previously complained that the vast distances prisoners are sent within the penal system makes it difficult for relatives and activists to visit inmates.

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