

Migration Service Head Rejects Report of 'Exploited' Workers in Sochi

By [The Moscow Times](#)

February 07, 2013



Konstantin Romodanovsky

The head of the Federal Migration Service, Konstantin Romodanovsky, on Friday rejected a report from Human Rights Watch saying the rights of migrant workers building objects for the Sochi Olympics are being violated.

"To blow the situation out of proportion in this way — that seems wrong and dishonest to me," Romodanovsky told Interfax.

"We monitor this very attentively. There could be some isolated mishaps and complications, we're not without those. But there have been no serious complaints. We haven't observed any mass delay in salary payments for workers building objects in Sochi," he said.

In a report released on Feb. 6, Human Rights Watch said migrant workers building the facilities for the upcoming Sochi games were being "cheated and exploited," and that

many had been "cheated out of wages." In addition, the report alleged that passports and work permits had been confiscated in a bid to force workers to stay at jobs where they were forced to work 12-hour shifts.

According to Romodanovsky, however, most of the workers building Olympic facilities are actually Russian nationals.

"Right now there are 74,000 people working on Olympic facilities. Of that number, 58,000 are Russian, and 16,000 are foreign nationals. Most of the foreign builders come from Uzbekistan, Turkey, Serbia and Belarus," he said.

The Federal Migration Service carried out 178 planned inspections of Olympic facilities in 2012. Over 1,000 administrative violations were uncovered in immigration documentation, Romodanovsky said.

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