

# Reform Needed in Russia's Prisons, Says Human Rights Commissioner

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Russia's justice system needs desperate reform in order to tackle chronic overcrowding, the country's commissioner for human rights has urged.

Commissioner Tatyana Moskalkova said that the number of inmates in Moscow's pre-trial detention centers had risen to 47 percent above legal limits as of April 2016.

Moscow authorities would need to build a new, modern pre-trial detention center to combat the problem, Moskalkova wrote in an [article for Russian tabloid Izvestia](#) on Thursday.

Over-zealous judges, along with delays which stopped inmates from quickly meeting with lawyers, were also putting a strain on the system, she said.

"We need to open a new, modern prison and make greater use of electronic queuing systems [in existing prisons]," Moskalkova wrote. "We also need to ensure that people are only

deprived of their liberty [before trial] in rare cases."

"Many years of judicial practice have proven that those who do not pose a serious danger to society only need to be placed under parole or house arrest," she said.

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