

# Russia's Penitentiary System Introduces Exciting New Vocational Innovation: Prison Labor

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Russian businessmen will get the chance to move their production into penal colonies and prisons to take advantage of inmates' labor. According to officials, the new move will help convicts adapt to life on the outside, once they're released.

On Tuesday, the head of Russia's Chamber of Commerce and the head of the Federal Penitentiary Service met to sign an agreement on cooperation. The Federal Penitentiary Service's press office told the Interfax news agency that part of the document includes joint planning to hold a series of events on the development of entrepreneurial activity on the territory of penal institutions.

Department head Gennady Korniyenko said during the ceremony that "the agreements reached will be a basis for further consolidation of efforts in the area of private/public partnership, creating jobs for convicts, and increasing the economic efficiency of labor and

the return of citizens who find themselves in prison to normal life."

"The prospect of such a union is the employment of convicts; they receive a decent wage and vocational training, the ability to maintain social and useful connections, and to adjust to life after their release," Korniyenko added.

According to him, an attractive aspect for customers is also the fact that the Federal Penitentiary Service, as a direct manufacturer, has the ability to lower the selling price of the product by eliminating the costs involved in purchasing through intermediaries.

"In cooperation with the penal system, there is a direct benefit for entrepreneurs," said Sergei Katyrin, head of the Chamber of Commerce.

"There's the chance to be the sole executor for state procurement. There are a lot of real economic benefits to be gained by interacting with the system."

Meanwhile, the press office of the Federal Penitentiary Service plans to inform businessmen about the opportunities to host production within their facilities by organizing and participating in conventions and exhibitions.

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