

## **ANALYTICAL REPORT ON UnMode MONITORING WITHIN THE PHRC PROJECT (2024)**

*In 2024, UnMode conducted monitoring of prisoners' rights in Georgia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, and Russia. The monitoring was carried out through the documentation and support of individual cases of human rights violations based on an analysis of work conducted in 2023.*

The monitoring was implemented within the framework of the “Prison Health and Rights Consortium” project, with financial support from the Robert Carr Fund (2021–2024).

### **Key priority areas of monitoring in 2024 included:**

- Identifying and documenting cases of violations of the right to release from detention on medical grounds for individuals who use or have used drugs, those living with HIV, and/or other serious illnesses;
- Recording cases of denial of access to civilian healthcare for individuals who use or have used drugs;
- Documenting instances of inadequate medical care for individuals experiencing withdrawal syndrome from the moment of their detention.

### **Additional monitoring areas included:**

- Violations of the rights of Ukrainian citizens forcibly transferred to correctional facilities in the Russian Federation from the Kherson region of Ukraine;
- Violations of the rights of Ukrainian citizens residing temporarily or permanently in Georgia regarding access to addiction treatment.

### **In 2024, a total of 13 strategic cases were documented:**

- 10 cases in Georgia concerning the lack of access to addiction treatment for Ukrainian citizens forcibly residing in the country, leading to negative consequences;
- 3 cases in Russia involving violations of the rights of Ukrainian citizens forcibly transferred to Russian correctional facilities.

Additionally, work continued on six strategic cases documented in previous periods:

- 4 cases in Russia – submission of individual complaints to UN bodies;
- 2 cases in Ukraine – legal consultation and support.

### **Outcomes of the Monitoring**

*The monitoring efforts resulted in the formation of strategic cases concerning the right to release from detention due to severe illness among prisoners in Russia and Ukraine. Three complaints were submitted to UN committees and special procedures. The committees issued urgent recommendations to the Russian Federation, leading to court rulings for the*



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*release of affected prisoners. This achievement is a unique experience for Russian human rights organizations.*

One notable example of successful work is the case of Maksim (name changed), whose story became a symbol of resilience and the fight for justice. Despite significant obstacles, he was able to secure his right to life and medical care.

## Participation in International Advocacy Events

UnMode human rights defenders took part in several international advocacy events:

- **December 2–4, Warsaw** – Participation in the VI European Harm Reduction Conference, where a report on the social and legal support project for Ukrainian prisoners illegally transferred to Russia was presented;
- **October 29, 2024** – Participation in the presentation of the **Global Harm Reduction Report 2024**, organized by Harm Reduction International;
- **October 21, 2024, Lisbon** – Participation in the **4th European Conference on Prison Health**, where a report on the project for returning illegally transferred Ukrainian prisoners was presented.

## UN Special Rapporteur Submission

*In June 2024, UnMode submitted a statement to the **UN Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers**, calling for attention to the suppression of judicial independence in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.*

**The main points of the statement included:**

- The need to protect judicial independence;
- A call for international intervention to safeguard lawyers' rights;
- Documentation of pressure and harassment against judges and attorneys.

## Media and Awareness Campaigns

*As part of its awareness-raising work, UnMode released a series of educational videos aimed at increasing public knowledge about self-defense and personal safety. These materials helped inform the public about recognizing threats, building support networks, and showcasing successful human rights cases.*

A video titled "**Simple Guide to Documentation**" was created to highlight the importance of documenting human rights violations and using this evidence in legal proceedings and advocacy efforts.

## Objectives of the Video Project

- Educating citizens on their rights and legal protections;
- Gathering critical evidence for future legal proceedings;
- Raising public awareness and strengthening human rights protection mechanisms;
- Holding perpetrators accountable for human rights violations.

## Country-Specific Monitoring Findings

### Ukraine

As of 2023–2024, **48,038 prisoners** were held in Ukraine's correctional facilities. However, obtaining accurate statistics is challenging due to the presence of prisoners in occupied territories and the **forced transfer of approximately 2,500 individuals to Russia**.

#### ***Systemic issues identified:***

- Interrogation of suspects experiencing withdrawal syndrome, often under coercion to extract confessions;
- The spread of Russian propaganda among prison administrations in de-occupied territories;
- Worsening prison conditions due to the ongoing humanitarian crisis;
- Limited access to rehabilitation programs, medical care, and legal assistance.

### Russia

By the end of 2024, **approximately 459,000 prisoners** were held in Russian detention facilities, of which **40,000 were living with HIV**.

#### ***Critical issues observed:***

- Coerced confessions extracted under duress;
- Lack of effective legal protection, particularly for Ukrainian prisoners;
- Limited access to adequate medical care, especially for those with chronic illnesses;
- Widespread administrative prosecutions for drug use.

### Georgia

As of 2024, **9,857 prisoners** were held in Georgia's correctional system, including **887 foreign nationals**, among them **53 Ukrainian citizens**.

#### ***Key issues identified:***

- Denial of access to opioid substitution therapy (OST) for foreign nationals;
- Challenges in obtaining legal status for former prisoners from Russia, leading to marginalization and criminalization.

*A critical example of systemic failures is the case of a **former prisoner from Russia** who, after securing release, was unable to access medical care in Georgia and was subsequently re-arrested under questionable circumstances.*

## Conclusions

The findings of this monitoring report highlight the urgent need for reform in national and international mechanisms for protecting the rights of prisoners. UnMode continues its human rights work to ensure compliance with international legal standards in the prison systems of Eastern Europe and Central Asia.