



Pro Bono Practices and Opportunities in the Russian Federation

INTRODUCTION

While the Russian Federation (“**Russia**”) does not have a legacy pro bono culture, a professional environment that accepts pro bono as part of a lawyer’s role in the community is slowly developing. The government is also taking new steps to expand its role in the provision of free legal aid. There is still much to be accomplished in terms of developing legal infrastructure in Russia and transforming how the local legal community thinks about pro bono. Nonetheless, there are a growing number of pro bono opportunities, both for litigators and transactional attorneys, available in Russia.

OVERVIEW OF THE LEGAL SYSTEM

Constitution and Governing Laws

The Constitution of Russia (the “**Constitution**”) was adopted by national referendum on December 12, 1993 and came into force on December 25, 1993. According to Article 15 of the Constitution, it has the supreme legal force, direct application¹ and is in force across the whole territory of Russia. Laws and other legal acts adopted in Russia may not contradict the Constitution of Russia.² The governing laws of Russia are comprised of federal constitutional laws, federal laws, laws of the constituent entities of the Russia and the universally-recognized norms of international law and international treaties and agreements of Russia. Local (municipal) governments are authorized to adopt local (municipal) laws within the areas of their competence. Court decisions are not officially recognized as having legal force equal to the force of statute, although in practice they play a critical role in its application.

The Courts

The Russian judicial system consists of federal courts (the Constitutional Court of Russia, courts of general jurisdiction, and state “*arbitrazh*” (commercial) courts) and the courts of Russian constituent entities (constitutional courts and magistrates). The Constitutional Court of Russia decides questions of constitutional law, statutory interpretation and allocation of powers; the arbitrazh court handles commercial matters; and the general court hears civil cases, criminal cases and disputes between individuals and state authorities. Recently a specialised court for intellectual property rights (the IPR Court) has been instituted within the system of commercial (‘arbitrazh’) courts of Russia.

The greatest need for pro bono assistance is at the regional court level. Unlike courts in the United States and many European countries, which frequently encourage pro bono representation of amicus curiae at the appellate level, few such opportunities exist in Russia, although Russia maintains a system for provision of free legal aid through state-licensed advocates in criminal matters.

Judges are appointed by the Federation Council, and serve for life. Candidates are recommended by the Qualification Collegia or Supreme Qualification Collegium to the President, who in turn recommends candidates to the Federation Council.³

¹ Provisions of the Constitution can be applied directly without adoption of additional implementing legal acts.

² The English translation of the Constitution of the Russian Federation is available at <http://www.constitution.ru/en/10003000-01.htm> (last visited on September 4, 2015).

³ The Law of the Russian Federation No. 3132-1 of June 26, 1992 on the Status of the Judges in the Russian Federation.



The Legal Profession and Practice of Law

Education

The one-degree (specialist) coexists with the two-degree (bachelor's – master's) scheme due to reforms to bring the domestic educational system in closer compliance with the Bologna accords. Specialist jurist degree is awarded in Russia after five years of study at a university. A bachelor jurist degree is awarded after four years of study at a university and Master degree is awarded after two years. Universities are not a subject to pro bono specific rules and requirements.

Licensure

The legal profession in Russia is comprised of state-licensed attorneys (called “**advocates**”) and unlicensed lawyers (called “**jurists**”). Broadly speaking, the key distinction between these two types of lawyers is that advocates are allowed to represent clients in all matters, whereas jurists cannot represent clients in criminal cases. Jurists do not need to meet the same licensure requirements as advocates and may still provide a broad range of legal services to the public.⁴ Advocates, on the other hand, must successfully complete an examination and application process administered by regional bar chambers. Thereafter they are subject to regulation by the Russian Bar. Given that it is possible to practice law without obtaining advocate status, many attorneys, particularly those practicing in commercial areas, do not ultimately become licensed.

Information about all advocates must be recorded in advocate’s registers, maintained by regional bodies of the Russian Ministry of Justice. As of June 30, 2015, there are 70,953 advocates practicing in Russia.⁵ The number of advocates varies dramatically in different regions: as of June 30, 2015 there were 9,061 advocates in the city of Moscow (0.07% of the total population of more than 12 million residents),⁶ and 19 advocates in the Chukotka Autonomous District (0.04% of the total population of approximately 50,540 inhabitants)⁷.

Advocates are only allowed to practice in the following four ways: (i) in solo practice; (ii) as part of a collegium of advocates; (iii) within a bureau of advocates; or (iv) though a legal consultation office.

According to the Federal Bar Chamber, as of December 31, 2013, 20,215 (29.6%) of Russian advocates had chosen solo practice. Where an advocate aims to provide legal services as a solo practitioner, he or she must set up an advocate parlor.

Collegia and bureaus are both collective forms of practicing law. A bureau is a partnership providing legal services on behalf of all partners who bear joint responsibility whereas a collegium is a loose association of individual advocates who bear individual responsibility for their own cases. In the most recent report of the Federal Bar Chamber, 44,123 (62%) advocates joined collegia, and 3,373 (4.8%) advocates set up bureaus.

Legal consultation offices must be set up by regional bar chambers in court districts where the number of advocates is lower than two per judge. Therefore, the legal consultation office is a tool designed to secure sufficient legal aid for remote and sparsely populated regions with. According to official statistics, there are currently 129 legal consultation offices operating in Russia, with only 581 (0.82%) advocates supporting their work.

⁴ Federal Law No. 63-FZ, On Attorney’s Activity and the Bar in the Russian Federation, May 31, 2002.

⁵ See <http://lawyers.minjust.ru/lawyers-portal/Lawyers> (last visited on September 4, 2015) (in Russian).

⁶ See http://moscow.gks.ru/wps/wcm/connect/rosstat_ts/moscow/ru/statistics/ (last visited on September 4, 2015) (in Russian).

⁷ See http://chukotstat.gks.ru/wps/wcm/connect/rosstat_ts/chukotstat/ru/statistics/population/ (last visited on September 4, 2015) (in Russian).



According to the program “Justice”, developed by the Ministry of Justice and approved by the Government of Russia on April 15, 2014, a market for legal services will be reformed and there are plans to establish an “advokate monopoly”, so that only advocates are allowed to represent clients in court.

In contrast, jurists are not subject to registration. As a result there are no official statistics on unregistered lawyers in Russia. As a rough estimate,⁸ there are over 800,000 people in Russia who have a law degree.

Legal Regulation for Lawyers

Advocates have an obligation under the Federal law to provide free legal aid. The mandatory legal aid that advocates provide is free to clients; however, the advocate is paid a minimal fee by the federal or regional governments in accordance with federal laws and local ordinances.⁹

As a professional institute acting independently of the state, the advocates’ society is the most significant link in the chain of legal aid providers in Russia. According to a report prepared by the Federal Chamber of Advocates,¹⁰ in 2014 approximately 9,052 advocates provided free legal aid to 206,924 low-income citizens.¹¹ Such pro bono services included legal advice on various legal issues, drafting legal documents and providing representation in court in civil proceedings.

Legal aid in criminal cases is administrated chiefly by the judiciary and the investigators’ office through an assigned-counsel system in which courts or investigators appoint counsel for criminal suspects and defendants from a regional registry of licensed advocates.¹² In 2014, 29,480 advocates represented suspects in criminal cases as the assigned counsels. While there are few formal exceptions to providing such services when called upon by the government, in practice many advocates find ways to avoid providing the required legal aid.

The Russian advocates’ society does not have sufficient human resources to meet the legal aid requirements of Russian citizens. This is particularly the case in sparsely populated regions and remote areas of Russia. Presently, demand for free legal aid exceeds the number of advocates, and the government has struggled to address this shortage through the assigned-counsel system and by launching the legal consultation offices. As a result, one advocate may be involved in a number of cases for only minimal fees, and consequently the quality of free legal advice frequently suffers.

LEGAL RESOURCES FOR INDIGENT PERSONS AND ENTITIES

Legal Aid

The Constitution guarantees Russian citizens the right to qualified legal counsel and, in the circumstances specified by law, the right to free legal aid.¹³ However, before 2012 this guarantee was not accompanied by any meaningful implementing legislation. Previously, the regulation of legal aid and the provision of free legal services in the Russian Federation were based predominantly on the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Federal Law “On Attorney’s Activity and the Bar in the Russian Federation.”

⁸ See <http://www.mos360.ru/mneniya/98059/> (last visited on September 4, 2015) (in Russian).

⁹ Under the Criminal Procedure Code and the Federal Law No. 63-FZ advocates’ fees for the provision of legal aid are paid from the federal budget, save for the provision of legal aid in remote and sparsely populated areas. In these areas, advocates’ fees are financed from regional budgets.

¹⁰ See http://www.fparf.ru/documents/council_documents/council_reports/13947/?print=Y (last visited on September 4, 2015) (in Russian).

¹¹ In 2013, 3,873 advocates provided free legal support to 47,127 law-income citizens.

¹² See The CRIMINAL PROCEDURE CODE, art 5. The investigators’ office is part of the executive branch but separate from the prosecutors’ office. Investigators are officers authorized to conduct pretrial investigations in criminal proceedings.

¹³ CONST. RUSSIAN FEDERATION art. 48.1.



At the beginning of 2012, after two years of debate, the Law “On Free Legal Aid” came into force.¹⁴ This document is the first federal law dedicated specifically to regulating free legal aid across Russia.

Since the adoption of the Law “On Free Legal Aid” both the list of recipients of legal aid and the scope of free legal assistance in noncriminal proceedings have been expanded significantly. Free legal aid is provided at governmental (state) and nongovernmental (private) levels.

State (Governmental) Legal Aid System

State legal aid is administered by federal and regional executive authorities, non-budgetary funds, state legal offices (bureaus in the form of government institutions), advocates or notaries. Under the Law “On Free Legal Aid,” local bar associations are responsible for providing lists of advocates who will participate in the free legal aid program for the next calendar year. These advocates are obliged to render free legal services on a contractual basis and each year submit free legal aid reports to the relevant state authorities.

The right to free legal assistance under the state system is available for the following recipients:

- low income citizens
- disabled people
- the Great Patriotic War veterans; Heroes of the Russian Federation; Heroes of the Soviet Union; Heroes of the Socialist Labor; Labor Heroes of the Russian Federation
- disabled children, orphans, and children left without parental care,
- persons who are willing to care for a child left without parental care regarding the issues relating to the placement of a child in the family
- adoptive parents regarding the issues relating to the protection of adopted children’s rights
- elderly and disabled people who live in social establishments¹⁵
- minors residing in state institutions with respect to child neglect and those imprisoned
- people with psychological disabilities¹⁶
- individuals without legal capacity
- persons affected by an emergency situation

The above mentioned groups are entitled to oral advice and assistance with drafting legal documents, claims and petitions in the following areas of practice:

- transactions in relation to real estate and title registration
- consumer rights related to housing utilities provision
- some labor and employment issues
- claims in respect of damages caused by the death of a family provider, as well as death, injury or other health problems caused by working conditions or an emergency situation
- welfare and pension benefits, state-funded social assistance, etc.
- maternity/paternity and alimony
- adoption of children, guardianship and custody
- protection of rights and interests of orphans, children left without parental care
- rehabilitation of the politically repressed
- limitation of legal capacity
- mistreatment of psychiatric patients
- administrative review of acts issued by governmental agencies, local self-governance bodies and public officials
- infringements of rights caused by an emergency situation

¹⁴ Federal Law No. 324-FZ, On “Free Legal Aid” in the Russian Federation, Nov. 21, 2011.

¹⁵ Federal Law No. 122-FZ, On Social Services for the Elderly and Disabled People, Aug. 2, 1995.

¹⁶ Federal Law No. 3185-1-FZ, On Psychological Help for People and the Corresponding Guaranties, Jul. 2, 1992.



Non-governmental (Private) Legal Aid System

Non-governmental legal aid may be performed by law clinics and nongovernmental (private) centers of free legal assistance.

Law clinics are funded by state and private universities as well as public nongovernmental organizations (“NGOs”) as part of education programs. According to information published on the official web-site of the Center Of Development Of Legal Clinics,¹⁷ more than 208 law clinics have been set up across the country, where law students and young lawyers learn the practical skills of their profession by offering free legal assistance to people in need.

Private centers of free legal aid have the right to decide independently the types of legal aid they provide; the category of individuals to whom they will provide aid; and the scope of free legal aid offered. Nevertheless, the law emphasizes that individuals with low income and those in a difficult situation should be prioritized right for free legal aid.

Alternative Dispute Resolution

Mediation

In accordance with Article 10 of the Federal Law 193-FZ “On the Alternative Procedure for Settling Disputes with the Participation of an Intermediary (Mediation Procedure)” of July 27, 2010, mediation can be carried out free of charge. However, mediation is not yet popular in Russia.

Ombudsman

The Commissioner for Human Rights in Russia (the “Ombudsman”) is established with the aim of providing the guarantees of the protection by the state of civil rights and freedoms, their observance and respect by state bodies, institutions of local self-government and officials. In accordance with Federal Constitutional Law 1-FKZ , the Ombudsman considers the complaints of Russian citizens, aliens and stateless persons residing on the territory of Russia; investigates the complaints about decisions or actions (inaction) of state authorities or local self-government bodies and officials, in case the applicant had already appealed against decisions of court or an administrative body, but does not agree with the decisions made on their complaint. There are also specialised bodies such as the Commissioner for Rights of Entrepreneurs and the Commissioner for Rights of Students.

PRO BONO ASSISTANCE

Historically, there has been no culture of pro bono legal assistance in Russia. Under the communist regime that prevailed for many years in the USSR, legal aid, as well as most other social services, was exclusively the province of the state and was mostly free for individuals. Perhaps as a vestige of the former communist era, and partly because of the immaturity of local business society, Russia still lacks a professional environment that fully supports pro bono work. However, with Russia’s transition to a democratic government and capitalist economy, there has been an ideological shift from the expectation that legal aid be exclusively state-sponsored to an acceptance that private sector attorneys should also play a role in the provision of free legal services. A growing number of international and local firms and nongovernmental organizations are appearing in Russia, many of which seek to promote pro bono and give back to the community.

There have also been some positive steps taken at the federal level which aim to expand regulation of the free legal aid system in the Russian Federation. One of the more significant developments in establishing pro bono services in Russia was the adoption of the Law “On Free Legal Aid,” which provides the legal framework and key principles to both state and private legal aid systems. As a result, a pro bono culture in Russia is slowly developing.

¹⁷ See <http://codolc.com/clinics/> (last visited on September 4, 2015) (in Russian).



Barriers To Pro Bono Work And Other Considerations

Pro bono opportunities for international law firms located in Russia center largely around the representation of NGOs. While there is also a need for legal aid at the individual level, there are numerous barriers to taking on the representation of individuals in Russian courts – among them, the requirement of admission to practice law in Russia and a high degree of fluency in the Russian language.

International NGOs are still relatively new to Russia. These NGOs provide a variety of humanitarian services ranging from the provision of legal assistance to meeting the basic day-to-day needs of Russia's indigent population. The role of NGOs in Russia, however, is not nearly as well-established as it is in the United States or in other developed European countries. This is due, in part, to the Russian federal government not having taken a proactive interest in and has done little to stimulate or encourage the growth of NGOs.¹⁸

Moreover, Russian NGO legislation is complicated and is often applied by the government unevenly, making it difficult for NGOs to navigate the legal landscape.¹⁹ As a result, most of these organizations look to foreign and private sources, such as the New Eurasia Foundation,²⁰ for financial and other support. While such organizations are growing in Russia, their resources nevertheless remain limited.

In addition, the Russian legal framework is not comprehensive. The Law "On Free Legal Aid" seeks to address some of the inherent weaknesses. In particular, by regulating the provision of free legal support to foreign nationals and people without citizenship, granting them the right to take free legal advice in certain circumstances provided for by Russian law and in accordance with legally established procedure. Before 2012 the right to receive free legal assistance was guaranteed exclusively to citizens of Russia – to the exclusion of a significant and growing numbers of foreign citizens, including refugees. Although Article 2 of the Law "On Free Legal Aid" declares that foreign citizens and people without citizenship have the right to free legal support, it does not provide any specific regulation.

As the Law "On Free Legal Aid" provides only a very basic framework and the key principles on legal aid in Russia, it requires the subsequent adoption of numerous laws and administrative ordinances establishing more detailed regulation on the free legal services granted.

The existence of "the loser pays" statute may also be considered as a barrier for pro bono development. As a general rule, a losing party shall reimburse litigation costs to a successful party. Certain categories of indigent parties (e.g. disabled, orphans) are released from the obligation to pay stamp duty for initiating an action. However, stamp duty costs are relatively small compared to overall litigation costs that mostly consist of lawyers' fees. The losing party can be fully released from the payment of litigation costs if so decided by the relevant court, but such decisions are taken on a case by case basis. The tax consequences of free legal services are also an issue. Until a legal services agreement defines free legal aid as support for a charity, NGOs are subject to VAT and income tax on the free legal services that they provide. Applicable Russian tax legislation does not contain any provisions in relation to pro bono work. Therefore when providing free legal aid, both lawyers and their pro bono clients must be capable of

¹⁸ Jeffrey Thomas, U.S. Says Russian NGO Law Does Not Meet Human Rights Commitments, available at http://www.pressmon.com/cgi-bin/press_view.cgi?id=509090 (last visited on September 4, 2015) (criticizing Russian NGO legislation which gives the executive wide latitude to determine the fate of NGOs); see also L.U. Grudtsina, History of Russian Bar, THE ADVOCATE (2006).

¹⁹ Alison Kamhi, The Russian NGO Law: Potential Conflicts with International, National, and Foreign Legislation, 9 INT'L J. OF NOT-FOR-PROFIT LAW 1, 34 (Dec. 2006), available at http://www.icnl.org/research/journal/vol9iss1/art_6.htm (last visited on September 4, 2015); see also Moscow Branch of the Salvation Army v. Russia, No. 72881/01, Eur. Ct. H.R. (2006), available at <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/> (last visited on September 4, 2015)

²⁰ The New Eurasia Foundation is a nongovernmental, noncommercial organization working to improve the lives of Russian citizens by consolidating the efforts and resources of the public, private and nongovernmental sectors and implementing social and economic development programs at the regional and local levels. See generally, NEW EURASIA FOUNDATION, homepage, <http://www.neweurasia.ru> (last visited on September 4, 2015).



proving to state bodies the charitable nature of the relationship established between them by presenting solid and scrupulously prepared documentation. Nonetheless, the risk remains that tax authorities will deem the free legal services to be taxable.

Recent developments

Recently, the Russian State Duma adopted several laws introducing the concepts of an “NGO serving as a foreign agent” and an “undesirable organisation”.

Federal Law No. 121-FZ “On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation as to Regulation of Activities of Non-Commercial Entities being Foreign Agents” dated July 20, 2012 introduced a notion of an “NGO serving as a foreign agent” which is a Russian NGO that is financed from abroad and participates in political activity in Russia. Such NGOs have more extensive reporting obligations and they must mark all information and materials distributed by them with a statement “distributed by an NGO serving as a foreign agent”, but there are no restrictions on their activities, except for restrictions on their participation in any elections or referendums.

The concept of an “undesirable organisation” was implemented by the Federal Law No. 129-FZ “On Amending of Certain Legal Acts of the Russian Federation” dated May 23, 2015. The law provides that a foreign or international NGO can be declared undesirable if its activity threatens the foundations of the constitutional system of Russia, state defense or state security. Any activities of such NGOs in the territory of Russia are prohibited. The criteria for declaring an NGO to be undesirable is vague and does not specify any particular test for determining what constitutes a threat to the foundations of the constitutional system, national defense and security, so its interpretation allows a significant discretion by the responsible state authorities.

The uncertainty of legal environment and lack of stability aggravated by the adoption of these two acts may force many Russian and foreign NGOs to reduce or stop their activities in Russia which will impact negatively the provision of pro bono services in Russia.

Pro Bono Resources

NGOs in Russia have a substantial need for pro bono assistance. In recent times, international law firms located principally in Moscow and Saint Petersburg have provided legal aid to NGOs and other public or charitable institutions on a variety of different matters. Among the dozens of organizations that have requested and received pro bono assistance are the Hermitage Museum,²¹ the AIDS Foundation East-West,²² Doctors Without Borders,²³ the Danish Refugee Council,²⁴ Integra,²⁵ the Humanitarian

²¹ BAKER & MCKENZIE, Pro Bono and Community Service: The Rewards of Giving (2007).

²² AIDS Foundation East–West (“**AFEW**”) is an international, humanitarian, public health, nongovernmental organization whose mission is to contribute to the reduction of the impact of HIV/AIDS in the Newly Independent States (NIS) of the former Soviet Union. See generally, AIDS FOUNDATION EAST–WEST Homepage, <http://www.afew.org> (last visited on September 4, 2015).

²³ MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES, homepage, <http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org> (last visited on September 4, 2015).

²⁴ CHADBOURNE & PARKE LLP, Pro Bono Year in Review 2005, available at <http://www.chadbourne.com/files/upload/Pro%20Bono%20Year%20in%20Review%202005.pdf> (last visited on September 4, 2015).

²⁵ Integra is a nonprofit partnership whose mission is to alleviate poverty, reduce unemployment and help transform communities by supporting the development of small businesses. See generally, INTEGRA, homepage, <http://www.integrarussia.ru> (last visited on September 4, 2015).



Programs Support Charitable Foundation,²⁶ the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law,²⁷ and United Way Moscow.²⁸

In December 2007, the Public Interest Law Institute (“PILnet”) launched a pro bono clearinghouse in Moscow.²⁹ The clearinghouse attempts to bridge the gap between NGOs, which know the legal needs of the community but lack the ability to provide legal representation, and law firms, which possess the legal resources but lack a direct connection to local NGOs and individuals in need. PILnet identifies and screens potential pro bono clients and circulates a bi-monthly newsletter to participating firms that provides a description of clients in need of legal aid and a summary of the respective legal issues with which they need assistance.³⁰ The clearinghouse also provides Russian NGOs with training and know-how on a variety of issues related to the daily operation of non-profit organizations.³¹ A firm having expertise or an interest in a particular area can notify PILnet’s Moscow office and PILnet will then put the firm into direct contact with the relevant client. PILnet also holds quarterly meetings with participating law firms and NGOs in Moscow to discuss the clearinghouse and various topical themes and issues in the sphere of Russian pro bono services. PILnet is currently exploring ways to replicate its Moscow-based clearinghouse in other Russian regions. Dmitry Shabelnikov is the country director for Russia at PILnet.

In addition to working for locally established NGOs, there are also opportunities for Russia-based lawyers to take on broader pro bono work in the European Community. For example, PILnet operates a global clearinghouse out of their headquarters in Budapest, Hungary. The international clearinghouse is open to firms from all countries and generates work relating to Europe, predominately representing *amicus curiae* before European courts. Additionally, through organizations such as the European Human Rights Advocacy Center (“EHRAC”), there are litigation opportunities to work on cases that have been appealed to the European Court of Human Rights.³²

Finally, the American Bar Association (the “ABA”), through its Rule of Law Initiative program, has made significant inroads in advancing pro bono and developing legal infrastructure in Russia.³³ Among other

²⁶ Humanitarian Programs Support Charitable Foundation (“HPSCF”) is a nonprofit organization aimed at implementing programs that contribute to the improved quality of life of children with disabilities and their families. See generally, HPSCF homepage, <http://www.fpgp.ru> (last visited on September 4, 2015).

²⁷ The International Center for Not-For-Profit Law (ICNL) is an international not-for-profit organization that seeks to promote an enabling legal environment for civil society, freedom of association, and public participation around the world. See generally, ICNL, homepage, <http://www.icnl.org> (last visited on September 4, 2015).

²⁸ United Way Moscow is a community based nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of people in Moscow and fostering the concepts of modern philanthropic giving in Russia generally. See UNITED WAY MOSCOW, homepage, <http://www.unitedway.ru> (last visited on September 4, 2015).

²⁹ See generally, PUBLIC INTEREST LAW INSTITUTE, homepage, <http://pilnet.org/> (last visited on September 4, 2015). The clearinghouse was opened with the assistance of the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative and several private law firms. Since 2007, PILnet’s Russian clearinghouse has grown from partnering with four international law firms to more than 20 local and international firms and 2 corporations, and has taken on over 85 matters for more than 40 NGOs.

³⁰ PILnet connects with civil society networks, working through umbrella organizations such as the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, Charities Aid Foundation, Lawyers for Civil Society, United Way Russia and UNHCR.

³¹ See UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT, Alliances in action: Pro Bono clearinghouse in Moscow, <http://idea.usaid.gov/node/241> (last visited on September 4, 2015).

³² See <http://www.ehrac.org.uk/about-us/> (last visited on September 4, 2015). Established in January 2003, EHRAC (based at London Metropolitan University) works in Russia in partnership with the Memorial Human Rights Center through a dedicated project office in Moscow. EHRAC’s primary objective is to assist individuals, lawyers and NGOs within the Russian Federation in taking cases to the European Court of Human Rights.

³³ Significant projects have included: assisting in the reintroduction of jury trials in Russia; assisting in drafting a new criminal procedure code based on select adversarial principles; founding clinical legal education programs throughout Russia and publishing Russia’s first clinical legal education textbooks; providing training to social



things, the ABA facilitates a series of public events aimed at publicizing and fostering a commitment to pro bono service within the Russian legal community. The ABA seeks to engage lawyers, judges and academics to publish works on pro bono as well as to attend, speak or otherwise participate at ABA conferences in Russia.

CONCLUSION

Despite the adoption of the specific Law “**On Free Legal Aid**,” the current regulatory regime, is still limited both in terms of the categories of people that may avail themselves of free legal aid and the scope of services available to them. Funding from the federal and regional budgets remains limited and the fees awarded to lawyers who provide legal aid are minimal, making it difficult to attract lawyers and provide high quality legal aid. In addition, a significant portion of the population is often denied access to legal aid by virtue of their residence in remote and sparsely- populated areas with an inadequate number of legal offices and lawyers. Furthermore, the adoption of the laws on “NGOs serving as a foreign agent” and “undesirable organisations” puts significant pressure on many NGOs operating in Russia.

September 2015

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advocates to assist victims of domestic violence; and assisting in the adoption of judicial and legal profession codes of ethics. Telephone interview with Anton Alferov, Deputy Country Director, ABA/ROLI in the Russian Federation (Feb. 6, 2008); see also AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION, homepage, <http://www.abanet.org> (last visited on September 4, 2015).