

Russian NGO Director Briefly Detained by FSB

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Anna Sharogradskaya, the director of the Regional Press Institute, was detained by the Federal Security Service on Thursday.

The director of a St. Petersburg organization geared toward the development of independent media in Russia was briefly detained by the Federal Security Service ahead of a trip to the U.S. on Thursday.

Anna Sharogradskaya, the director of the Regional Press Institute, told Radio Free Europe's Russian service that she was let go after her computer and USB drives were confiscated. She was detained before she could board a scheduled flight to the U.S., where she was set to deliver a series of lectures.

The detention had many human rights activists up in arms, however, with many citing her age as a worrying factor.

"The FSB has had 73-year-old Anna Sharogradskaya in custody for three hours at Pulkovo Airport," Pavel Chikov of the rights group Agora wrote, adding that "they're not letting her lawyer in."

Sharogradskaya could not be reached for comment but had been in touch with Tanya Lokshina of Human Rights Watch, who wrote on Facebook: "Sharogradskaya was about to board her flight when an announcement was made on a loudspeaker that she needed to immediately proceed to the third floor of the terminal for an additional inspection."

Then she was met by FSB agents who, Lokshina wrote, "provided no explanation in response to Sharogradskaya's questions regarding the reasons for holding her ... and referred to a directive they allegedly received from some higher-ups at the FSB."

Sharogradskaya told BaltInfo that the detention may have been connected to a lawsuit her institute had filed against a prosecutor.

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