

Russian Man Sentenced to 14 Years in Jail for Chopping Off Wife's Hands

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Maxim Grachov / TASS

A man has been sentenced to 14 years in a maximum-security prison for chopping off his wife's hands in a gruesome case highlighting the dangers women face following last year's decriminalization of domestic violence in Russia.

A 2017 law scrapped prison sentences for "first-time" domestic abusers whose beatings result in bruises and superficial wounds in what activists argued would lead to impunity. Human Rights Watch [criticized](#) the legislation as a "serious setback" that "put[s] survivors at even greater risk."

Related article: [Moscow Domestic Violence Appeals Skyrocket After Decriminalization Law](#)

Dmitry Grachyov stood trial on charges of inflicting grievous bodily harm, threat of murder and two counts of kidnapping after chopping off his wife's wrists with an axe last December.

Earlier that month, police ignored a statement written by his then-wife Margarita, who complained that he had forcibly taken her to a forest outside Moscow and threatened to kill her.

“Three days later, I was taken to the forest and my hands were cut off,” Margarita Grachyova said in a BBC interview [published](#) ahead of the verdict.

A court in Moscow region’s district of Serpukhov found Dmitry Grachyov guilty of kidnaping and inflicting grave bodily harm on his now ex-wife and sentenced him to 14 years in a maximum-security prison, Russian news agencies [reported](#) Thursday.

Grachyov was also ordered to pay his ex-wife 2 million rubles (\$30,000) in damages, TASS [reported](#).

Despite apologizing for “committing a very big mistake,” Grachyov said he plans to appeal the sentence, the state-run RIA Novosti news agency [reported](#).

Authorities [stripped](#) Grachyov of parental rights over their two children in September.

Meanwhile, the police officer who refused to register Grachyova’s initial complaint has reportedly been dismissed.

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