

Pussy Riot Activists Granted Asylum in Sweden

May 01, 2019



Daniel DeSlover / ZUMA / TASS

Sweden has granted asylum to two members of the anti-Kremlin activist group Pussy Riot, the country's media reported on Wednesday.

Artist Lusine Dzhanyan and her partner Alexei Knedlyakovsky have [sought](#) asylum for themselves and their two children in Sweden since 2017, saying they had received harassment and death threats in their home country. Their initial request was [denied](#) in December 2018.

Related article: [Russia Agrees to Compensate Jailed Pussy Riot Members After ECHR Ruling](#)

Dzhanyan and Knedlyakovsky appealed and were given asylum by a Swedish migration court on Tuesday, the country's SVT national broadcaster [reported](#).

"I am very happy that my children will be able to grow up in security, in particular in view of what has been going on [in Russia]," Dzhanyan was [quoted](#) as saying by Germany's Deutsche

Welle.

On Twitter, the artist scorned an unnamed Russian FSB anti-extremism lieutenant colonel for “loitering around my house” and “threatening to orphan” one of her children.

“[My son] now has a brother and your paws won’t be able to reach them,” she [wrote](#) after news of the Swedish ruling emerged.

Knedlyakovsky was [jailed](#) for 15 days in 2016 for hanging a cross on a statue depicting the head of the FSB, Russia's security service.

In 2012, Pussy Riot participated in an improvised concert in Moscow's Christ the Savior Cathedral to protest against the election of President Vladimir Putin. Three of its members spent almost two years in a prison colony for the controversial performance and were [awarded](#) damages by a European human rights court last year.

It reclaimed notoriety last year after four of its members stormed the field during the FIFA World Cup final in Russia dressed as police to demand freedom of expression. One of them, Pyotr Verzilov, was [hospitalized](#) in Moscow and flown to Germany after suddenly losing his sight, hearing and mobility. Verzilov says he was meant to receive a report into the deaths of three Russian documentary filmmakers in the Central African Republic in July 2018 on the day he fell ill.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/05/01/pussy-riot-activists-granted-asylum-in-sweden-a65459>