

Norwegian Police to Release Russian Wagner Deserter

By [AFP](#)

January 25, 2023



Andrei Medvedev gulagu.net

The Norwegian police are planning to release a former member of the Russian mercenary group Wagner who was arrested for entering the country illegally after he fled Russia earlier this month, the National Police Immigration Service [told](#) local media on Wednesday.

Twenty-six-year-old Andrei Medvedev made a dramatic run for it across the Arctic border between the two countries in the early hours of Jan. 13, before seeking asylum in the Scandinavian country.

His lawyer told AFP last week that he was "willing to speak about his experiences in the Wagner Group to people who are investigating war crimes."

Jon Andreas Johansen of the National Police Immigration Service [said](#) that the release was planned as "the conditions for further detention ... are no longer present."

During his detention, Medvedev applied for asylum in Norway, according to [local media](#).

Related article: [Wagner Deserter Arrested in Norway](#)

Medvedev claims to have fought in Ukraine for four months as a member of Wagner before deserting in November when the paramilitary organization founded by Kremlin-linked businessman Yevgeny Prigozhin allegedly extended his contract against his will.

A potentially valuable witness able to shed light on Wagner's reported brutality in Ukraine, Medvedev was questioned by Norwegian authorities.

Many questions remain about Medvedev's past and the circumstances of his escape, with some experts saying he could not have made it across the heavily guarded Russian-Norwegian border without assistance.

Medvedev claims to have entered Norway by crossing the frozen Pasvik river, which forms part of the Russian-Norwegian border, after being chased by guard dogs and Russian border patrols who fired at him.

AFP has not been able to independently confirm his account of events.

Wagner has not denied Medvedev worked for the controversial fighting force.

AFP contributed reporting.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/01/25/norwegian-police-to-release-russian-wagner-deserter-a80042>