

Prosecutors Seek 9 Years for Journalist Accused of Spreading 'Fake News'

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RusNews journalist Maria Ponomarenko. **Evgeny Pavlenko / Kommersant**

Prosecutors asked for Russian journalist Maria Ponomarenko to be sentenced to nine years in jail on Tuesday, the Kommersant business daily [reported](#), citing Ponomarenko's lawyer.

Ponomarenko was arrested in St. Petersburg in April for publishing information about the Russian bombing of a theater in the Ukrainian city of Mariupol on the "No Censorship" Telegram channel.

Ponomarenko is due to appear in court again on Feb. 14 to give her final statement in the trial, her lawyer Dmitry Shitov said.

In September, Ponomarenko [attempted](#) suicide to protest her pretrial incarceration. In July, she was [hospitalized](#) and given an inpatient psychiatric examination.

Shortly after the start of the invasion, Russia passed a law criminalizing the sharing of information about the so-called "special military operation" in Ukraine that differed from the

Kremlin's narrative. The law also introduced jail terms of up to 15 years for the publication of "knowingly false information" about the Russian military.

On Monday, Ukrainian-born Russian journalist and blogger Veronika Belotserkovskaya was [sentenced](#) to nine years in jail in absentia for spreading "knowingly false information" about the invasion of Ukraine.

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