

# Missing Kremlin Critic Located in Prison Known for Torture

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Andrei Pivovarov, the former head of the Open Russia pro-democracy movement. **Natalya Kazhan / TASS**

Jailed Kremlin critic Andrei Pivovarov has been transferred to a notorious penal colony where inmates have accused prison officials of torture, independent media [reported](#) Monday after his associates raised concerns over his unknown whereabouts.

Pivovarov's associate Tatiana Usmanova told the Novaya Gazeta Europe news site that he has been inside Penal Colony No. 7 in the republic of Karelia in northwestern Russia for nearly a month.

Prison wardens there placed Pivovarov inside a cell-type facility until April 30 immediately after he arrived there on Jan. 24, the outlet said.

“First they hid Andrei from everyone for 30 days and without telling his relatives where he is,” Usmanova told Novaya Gazeta. “Then they sent him to this facility where calls and visitations are banned.”

**Related article:** [Amnesty Demands to Know Whereabouts of Jailed Kremlin Critic Andrei Pivovarov](#)

Pivovarov, 41, was sentenced to four years in prison in July 2022 on charges of “undesirable” activities.

He denies the charges against him.

A court in southern Russia upheld the verdict in November 2022.

Russian security services detained Pivovarov in May 2021 after removing him from a flight bound for Warsaw amid a nationwide crackdown on opposition activists.

Pivovarov headed exiled Kremlin critic Mikhail Khodorkosky’s Open Russia organization.

Authorities labeled Open Russia “undesirable” in 2017, a designation that subjects anyone working with it to criminal prosecution.

The pro-democracy movement’s members continued to operate as a separate legal entity until May 2021, when it disbanded to protect its staff from prosecution.

Penal Colony No. 7 gained notoriety after a number of its high-profile inmates [accused](#) its chief warden of abuse, slave labor, extortion and creating a system of violence.

The chief warden was sentenced to two and a half years in prison in 2019 on abuse-of-power charges.

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