

Ex-Russian Official Seeks Asylum in U.S. After Receiving Draft Notice

August 16, 2023



Denis Sharonov. **Komi Ministry of Agriculture**

A former official in northwestern Russia's republic of Komi has sought asylum in the United States after fleeing Russia to avoid being drafted into the war in Ukraine, [according](#) to the Russian-language broadcaster RTVI.

Denis Sharonov, 48, served as the republic of Komi's agriculture minister between 2020 and January 2022, a month before Russia invaded Ukraine.

"When, in October 2022, military enlistment officers came to deliver a draft summons to my registration address, there was nothing left for me to do but leave the country," Sharonov told RTVI.

President Vladimir Putin's [mobilization](#) of 300,000 reservists last fall triggered a wave of emigration from Russia.

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Sharonov told RTVI that he works as a trucker while his asylum application is being processed.

The former official did not disclose how or when he entered the U.S., which has seen [skyrocketing asylum requests](#) from Russian nationals since the invasion of Ukraine.

Sharonov's first social media mention of being on U.S. soil is [dated](#) March 5, 2023.

In his interview with RTVI, Sharonov linked the draft notice to his "drawn-out conflict" with Komi region Governor Vladimir Uyba.

He accused Uyba of attempting to force him into corrupt schemes involving agricultural projects.

The Komi regional administration has not responded to RTVI's requests for comment.

Video of Sharonov, who was not identified by name at the time, [appeared](#) on a YouTube channel that interviews Russian-speaking migrants in the U.S. earlier in August.

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