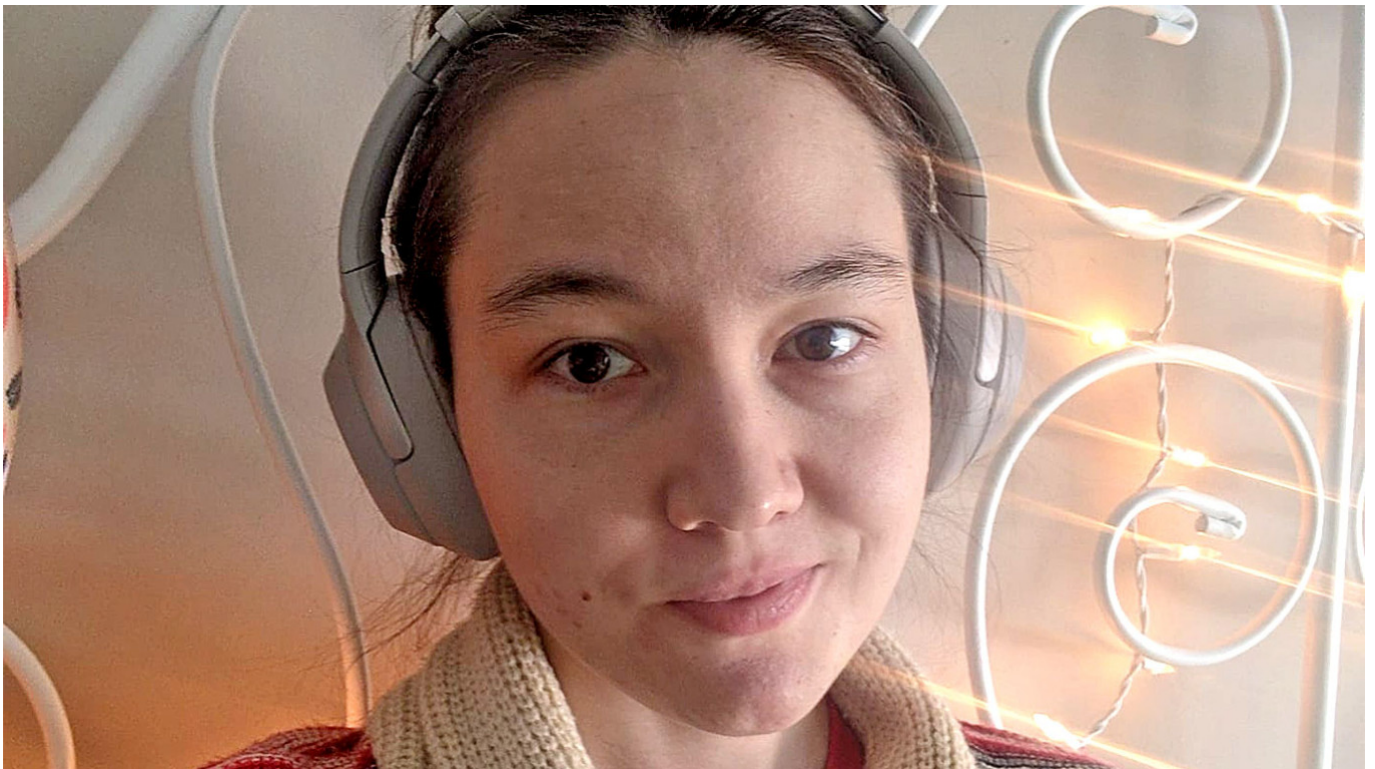


Exiled Russian Activist Granted Canadian Citizenship After ‘War Fakes’ Conviction Scandal

January 10, 2024



Maria Kartasheva. [Maria Kartasheva / Facebook](#)

Canada has granted Russian anti-war activist Maria Kartasheva citizenship, reversing an initial decision to block her from taking the citizenship oath due to her criminal prosecution in Russia for spreading “fake news” about the war in Ukraine, Canadian media [reported](#) Tuesday.

Kartasheva, 30, moved to Ottawa in 2019. After invading Ukraine in early 2022, Russia charged her with a felony offense over two blog posts where she expressed horror about the massacre of civilians in the Ukrainian town of Bucha.

A Moscow court in November found Kartasheva [guilty](#) of violating Russia’s wartime censorship laws and sentenced her to eight years in prison in absentia.

Canada’s immigration authorities prevented her from proceeding with the citizenship

ceremony in June after she notified them about the criminal case against her in Russia.

Related article: [Russia Seeks Extradition of Ukrainian Nazi Veteran From Canada](#)

Canadian immigration rules allow the authorities to refuse citizenship to foreigners who face charges in another country under laws that could be interpreted as indictable in Canada.

The Criminal Code of Canada has a “false information” law that lawyers argued was mistakenly equated to Russia’s “war fakes” law, which the Russian authorities have used extensively to silence anti-war dissent.

Canadian Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Marc Miller [acknowledged](#) Tuesday that Kartasheva was unfairly punished by immigration rules designed to prevent criminals from becoming citizens.

"You know, there can be situations where that rule doesn't work, this is one of them," he said in an interview with the Canadian broadcaster CBC.

On Tuesday, Miller [announced](#) on X (formerly Twitter) that Kartasheva “will not face deportation and has been invited to become a Canadian citizen.”

Kartasheva’s citizenship ceremony [took place](#) online later that day, according to CBC.

"I hope everyone will feel safe and understand that this is not going to happen to anyone else," the activist said.

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