

Moscow Activists Jailed for Links to ‘Underground’ Navalny Group

March 14, 2024



Alina Olekhnovich. **Alina Olekhnovich / Facebook**

A Moscow court has sentenced two young activists to prison for their links to late opposition leader Alexei Navalny’s “underground headquarters,” the independent Mediazona news website [reported](#) Thursday from the court.

Higher School of Economics (HSE) student Alina Olekhnovich, 21, and HSE graduate Ivan Trofimov, 22, were sentenced to 3.5 years in prison each on charges of participating in an “extremist community,” the court’s press service told Mediazona.

It was not clear if the defendants pleaded guilty or not guilty.

Russia banned Navalny’s organizations as “extremist” groups in June 2021, prompting many of his allies and supporters to flee the country. The next year, Navalny’s team [announced](#) it would continue its activist work inside Russia through an underground network.

Related article: [Navalny Ally Leonid Volkov Attacked Near Lithuania Home](#)

Olekhnovich and Trofimov were detained in July 2023 and placed under house arrest.

At the time, leading Russian propagandist Vladimir Solovyov said they were activists from Navalny's "underground headquarters."

The activists were moved to a pre-trial detention center the next month. Mediazona said they have been held in solitary confinement since Aug. 9, 2023.

Investigators alleged that Olekhnovich and Trofimov were involved with Navalny's "underground" network that was "engaged in subversive activities on the territory of the Russian Federation," according to the Kommersant business daily.

Memorial, Russia's leading human rights organization, has [recognized](#) Olekhnovich and Trofimov as political prisoners.

It also recognized three other defendants in the case on Navalny's "underground headquarters" — Alexei Malyarevsky, Artemiy Perevozchikov and Sergei Streknev — as political prisoners.

Navalny, the Kremlin's most vocal domestic opponent, died last month in the Arctic penal colony where he was serving a 19-year sentence on charges widely seen as retribution for his political work.

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