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Slovenia Expels Russian Couple Convicted of Spying

By AFP

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A Slovenia court on Wednesday sentenced two Russian nationals suspected of spying for Moscow to more than a year and a half in prison but then ordered their expulsion from the country.

The couple, who went by the names of Ludwig Gisch and Maria Rosa Mayer Munos, pleaded guilty at Wednesday's hearing on charges of "spying and falsifying documents," the Ljubljana regional court said in a statement.

The expulsion comes amid rumors that Moscow is preparing for a large-scale prisoner exchange after dissidents held in Russia were reported to have been moved to unknown locations in recent days.

Slovenian news website N1 Info, citing anonymous sources, reported that the convicted

couple would be part of an upcoming prisoner exchange between Russia, the United States, Germany and Belarus.

The two Russians, who are both about 40 years old and hold Argentinian passports, were detained in December 2022 over alleged spying for Russia, media reported. They were said to have used a business and an art gallery in Ljubljana as cover and used false identities.

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