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Latvian Court Overturns License Revocation of Exiled Russian TV Channel Dozhd

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Stanislav Krasilnikov / TASS

A Latvian court has overturned the 2022 decision to revoke the broadcast license of the exiled Russian television channel Dozhd, two and a half years after authorities in the Baltic country branded the outlet a threat to national security.

Dozhd, known in English as TV Rain, was among several Russian media outlets that relocated abroad after the Kremlin imposed wartime censorship laws amid the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. It briefly operated out of Riga.

Latvia's National Electronic Mass Media Council (NEPLP) stripped Dozhd of its license in December 2022, accusing it of depicting annexed Crimea as part of Russia and airing content that allegedly supported Russian troops. Dozhd denied the claims and relocated to the Netherlands, where it secured a Dutch broadcasting license in January 2023.

NEPLP chairman Ivars Āboliņš announced the administrative court ruling Tuesday on X and vowed to appeal, writing that Dozhd "will not return to Latvia."

Dozhd editor-in-chief Tikhon Dzyadko welcomed the court's decision and expressed hope the ruling would pave the way for the channel's return to cable networks in Latvia and other Baltic countries.

"Justice was restored two and a half years later," Dzyadko wrote on Telegram.

Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia have been among the Kremlin's loudest critics since Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

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