

# Russian Political Prisoner Dies in Belarusian Jail

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Andrei Podnebenny. **Social Media**

A Russian man serving a prison sentence in Belarus on what government critics call politically motivated charges has died, the rights group Viasna [said](#) Monday.

Andrei Podnebenny, 36, was arrested in late 2021 during a sweeping crackdown on dissent after President Aleksandr Lukashenko claimed victory in a disputed election the year before.

A Belarusian court [sentenced](#) him to 16 years and eight months in 2022 for running an “extremist” Telegram channel, vandalizing dozens of trolleybuses and setting fire to a prison authority’s car.

His mother, Valentina Podnebennaya, said he died last Wednesday in a prison in the eastern city of Mogilev. “Some bastard took away his freedom and then his life,” she [wrote](#) on Facebook. The cause of death was not disclosed.

Podnebenny is thought to be the ninth political prisoner to have died in Belarus since 2020,

according to Viasna, which had [recognized](#) him as a political prisoner. The group [says](#) nearly 1,200 such prisoners remain behind bars.

“Most of these deaths resulted from a lack of medical help amid inhumane, cruel, dangerous, illegal treatment of political prisoners,” Belarusian opposition figure Valery Kavaleuski [wrote](#) on X.

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