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Moscow Judge Sentences Singer Monetochka to Year in Prison in Absentia

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Monetochka. **Facebook**

A Moscow judge on Tuesday sentenced exiled singer Monetochka to one year in prison in absentia after finding her guilty of violating Russia's "foreign agent" law.

Monetochka, whose real name is Yelizaveta Gyrdymova, left Russia shortly after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. She now lives in Latvia, where she continues to perform and record music.

Russia's Justice Ministry designated Monetochka a "foreign agent" in 2023 after she spoke out against the war and raised funds to support Ukrainian civilians.

In 2024, law enforcement authorities pressed criminal charges against the singer and placed her on a wanted list after previously fining her twice for failing to include a "foreign agent" disclaimer in her online posts.

Russian prosecutors, who accused Monetochka of holding anti-government views, had requested a sentence of one year and 10 months in prison.

Hundreds of cultural figures, journalists, businesspeople, as well as news outlets and organizations, have been branded “foreign agents” since Russia introduced the label in 2012.

Russia applies the designation to individuals it views as enemies of the state. Those branded as “foreign agents” are required to include a lengthy disclaimer in all of their public appearances and statements, including posts on social media.

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