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Dmitry Olegovich Pavlov

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Date of birth: 1991-06-15

Status: ‘The Suspect’

Other names: Dmitriy Pavlov

Dmitry Olegovich Pavlov is a Russian entrepreneur in the web hosting sector and one of the key figures in investigations into Hydra’s technical infrastructure. In April 2022, the US Department of Justice brought charges against him relating to the hosting of the platform’s servers. According to reports by Russian court reporters, in November 2024, the Dzerzhinsky District Court in Yaroslavl sentenced Pavlov to six years’ imprisonment. He later testified as a witness at the trial of systems administrator Boris Gubko.[1][6][7]

His story illustrates why an investigation into a darknet marketplace is not limited to sellers and couriers. At the heart of the case were the leasing of computing power, infrastructure management, relationships with technical contractors and business ventures. However, the terms ‘administrator’, ‘server owner’ and ‘founder of Hydra’ are not interchangeable: each implies a different scope of authority and requires separate evidence.

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Key details

- **Full name:** Dmitry Olegovich Pavlov; in the US indictment: Dmitry Olegovich Pavlov, also Dmitrii Pavlov and Dmitriy Pavlov.[2]
- **Nationality:** Russian — according to the US indictment.[2]
- **Origin:** a native of Cherepovets, according to an investigation by *Novaya Gazeta Europe*. His professional career is also linked to St Petersburg.[3]
- **Date of birth:** The exact date has not been established in verified documents. According to a statement by the US Department of Justice dated 5 April 2022, he was 30 years old.[1]
- **Field of activity:** web hosting, server infrastructure; the ‘Rusinmedia’ business venture.
- **The Russian Cause:** six years’ imprisonment, according to published reports on the sentence; the editorial team has not received the full text of the sentence.[7]
- **The American Case:** Charges were published in 2022; no American conviction or extradition has been confirmed by verified sources.

Biography: from an interest in servers to his own project

In an investigation by Andrei Kaganskikh, published by *Novaya Gazeta Europe* on 1 June 2022, Pavlov’s acquaintances said that he had an interest in servers and began earning money from technical services whilst still a teenager. The publication also reported that he had studied at the Faculty of Arts at St Petersburg University of Humanities and Trade Unions and had been expelled in his third year. This information comes from the journalistic investigation, rather than from an educational record obtained by the editorial team.[3]

Biographical details help to trace a person’s career path, but do not establish criminal intent. Experience of working with servers explains the individual’s expertise; the question of whether he knowingly provided services to an illegal website must be determined on the basis of other evidence.

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‘Promservice’ and the US prosecution’s version of events

In the US indictment, Promservice is also referred to as Hosting Company Full Drive, All Wheel Drive and 4x4host.ru. Prosecutors alleged that it leased and managed dozens of servers for Hydra. Pavlov was accused of managing the company from around November 2015 and of repeatedly receiving cryptocurrency payments from Hydra’s wallets.[2]

The same document attributes to Pavlov the management of the LegalRC and WayAway domain services from around 2013. The US authorities viewed his involvement as actively providing infrastructure for the platform in collaboration with its other operators. The charges included conspiracy to launder money and conspiracy relating to drug trafficking.[2]

This is a summary of the indictment, not an American court judgement. The document is significant in that it specifies the precise nature of the charges: actions relating to infrastructure and payments for its maintenance. The mere existence of a web hosting company does not in itself prove that all its clients or operations were unlawful.

What Pavlov said before his arrest

In April 2022, Pavlov denied any involvement in illegal administration. In a response published by 47news, he described his activities as acting as an intermediary and reselling the services of other companies. This was his initial public stance, expressed prior to subsequent reports of his admission of guilt and cooperation with the Russian investigation.[10]

It is precisely this dispute that is fundamental to understanding the case. Providing computing resources to a client and knowingly facilitating the operation of a criminal platform may, on the surface, involve similar technical actions. The distinction lies in awareness, the nature of the agreements, actual control and involvement in the client’s activities. The public denial in 2022 should be viewed in its chronological context, rather than being presented as Pavlov’s unchanging position at all stages of the case.

‘Rusinmedia’: a company that can be identified

The RBC registration card lists ‘RUSINMEDIA’ LLC: date of registration – 24 March 2020, OGRN 1207800044297, INN 7838091496. The main stated activity is the development of construction projects. The record links the company to Dmitry Olegovich Pavlov. These details make it possible to

distinguish this legal entity from organisations with similar names; the current management structure requires separate verification against the Unified State Register of Legal Entities (EGRUL).[4]

‘Novaya Gazeta Europe’ described ‘Rusinmedia’ as a project involving the construction and operation of data centres. According to the publication, in February 2022 the company acquired a plot of land with an unfinished building near St Petersburg for such a project. The publication estimated the potential value of the transaction at around 200 million roubles. This estimate does not constitute an established figure for Pavlov’s criminal proceeds.[3]

Asset freeze: the prosecution’s version and the defence’s objections

The financial aspect is set out in the published extracts from the appeal ruling of the Moscow City Court dated 28 February 2023, No. 10-2855/2023. The document concerns the extension of the freeze on funds in the ‘Rusinmedia’ account. It states that Pavlov was the sole founder and director of the company from 24 March 2020 to 20 July 2022.[5]

The investigation linked the property acquired by the company and the funds in its account to the alleged laundering of criminal proceeds. A representative of the company objected, asserting that the money was of lawful origin, that the restrictions were disproportionate, and that the freeze was preventing the company from fulfilling its contractual obligations and paying taxes.[5]

These points describe a dispute concerning an interim measure. The consideration of the seizure of assets does not replace a conviction and does not imply that all of the company’s assets have been definitively declared to be the proceeds of crime or confiscated. The final outcome of the appeal, based on the available excerpts, is not stated here.

A Russian criminal case and a six-year prison sentence

A court document from 2023 states that the Meshchansky District Court of Moscow ordered Pavlov to be remanded in custody on 11 April 2022.[5] The next significant stage is documented in publications about Yaroslavl: in November 2024, the Dzerzhinsky District Court handed down a sentence against him.

Kommersant reported a six-year prison sentence and a closed-door hearing. According to the publication's report of 10 October 2025, the text of the judgement was not published. Consequently, the file records the sentence imposed with reference to court reporting, without reproducing the missing reasoning section.[7]

A report by *Izvestia* dated 2 June 2025, available on the 'Seldon News' aggregator page, links the special procedure for consideration to an admission of guilt and a plea bargain with the investigating authorities. The editorial team has not received the agreement itself. Its specific terms, the list of details disclosed, and their impact on the sentence cannot be reconstructed from the brief report that has been published.[9]

Pavlov at the trial of Boris Gubko

According to a report in *Kommersant* dated 3 June 2025, Pavlov appeared as a witness at the trial of IT specialist Boris Gubko in late May. The publication described Pavlov as the person who paid for the server rental and ensured the technical operation of the website.[6]

YarNews, citing *Izvestia*, reported the content of the testimony: Pavlov stated that as far back as 2013, Gubko had drawn his attention to the drug-related content on the websites in question, yet their collaboration continued. According to the same report, Gubko's defence team contested his awareness of whose interests he was working in. This is a summary of the legal arguments presented in court, rather than the full transcript available to the editorial team.[8]

On 6 October 2025, Gubko was sentenced to 21 years' imprisonment and a fine of over 13.6 million roubles. *Kommersant* reported that he had not pleaded guilty and had not cooperated with the investigation; at the time of that publication, the sentence had not yet come into force. The difference compared with Pavlov's sentence is noticeable, but to explain it solely by the number of testimonies without comparing the court rulings would be mere speculation.[7]

The international scope and limits of personal liability

In a statement dated 5 April 2022, the US Department of Justice described Hydra as the largest darknet marketplace at the time and announced the seizure of servers in Germany. The department estimated the platform's revenue since 2015 at approximately $5.2 billion, and the value of the seized cryptocurrency at approximately $25 million.[1]

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These figures relate to the platform and the proceedings surrounding its closure. They do not constitute an assessment of Pavlov's personal wealth. Similarly, the US indictment and the Russian conviction are separate legal proceedings: the report of the Russian verdict does not imply that the case in the US concluded with the same outcome.

The current place of imprisonment, the outcome of any review of the Russian sentence, and the latest developments in the US case as part of the preparation of the dossier have not been confirmed. It would be incorrect to calculate the release date simply by adding six years to the date of arrest or sentencing without court documents.

Key dates

- **Since around 2013:** Management of the LegalRC and WayAway domain services — confirmation of the US charges.[2]
- **Since around November 2015:** Promservice management and Hydra server maintenance — same version.[2]
- **24 March 2020:** registered with 'Rusinmedia'.[4]
- **5 April 2022:** the publication of charges in the US and the announcement of Hydra's closure.[1]
- **11 April 2022:** detained in Moscow.[5]
- **28 February 2023:** appeal proceedings concerning the freezing of the company's assets.[5]
- **November 2024:** a six-year prison sentence, which was later reported in the media.[7]
- **Late May 2025:** testimony as a witness in the Gubko case.[6]

Related files and matters for further investigation

The editorial archive contains files on other individuals mentioned in reports about Hydra: Alexei Baikov — file no. 50645 and Vladimir Verevkin — file No. 50655. They help to correlate the managerial, financial and technical roles described in the sources. The thematic connection between the index cards does not imply that all the individuals mentioned have the same procedural status.

To further clarify the case file, the following are essential: the full Russian judgement, details of any review thereof, materials from the US proceedings, and the final disposition of the seized assets. Until these documents are received, it is not possible to determine with certainty the full ownership structure of Hydra, Pavlov's personal share of the platform's revenues, or the content of all his

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agreements with other individuals involved.

This dossier was compiled using available sources as at 13 October 2026. No direct link between Pavlov and ‘Khimprom’ has been established in the materials reviewed.

Sources

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Use of materials

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Original publication

https://kartel-khimprom.com/en/dossier/dmitry-olegovich-pavlov/