

The information is aggregated from open online resources and our own practice. In these newsletters, we will shortly update you on everyday human rights violations in numbers and facts.

Summary Friday-Sunday, September 25-27:

Belarus passes 50 days of ongoing protests. On Saturday and Sunday, citizens of Minsk and other Belarusian cities went to peacefully protest on the streets again.¹ At least 340 persons were detained on Sunday across Belarus, 250 demonstrators from the 340 were detained in Minsk. There were detentions in Mahilioŭ, Hrodna, Vitebsk, Brest, Salihorsk, Maladziečna, Žodzina, Orša, Baranavičy and other cities.

Excessive force was widely used by riot police in uniforms and by unidentified people in civilian clothes. In recent days, police have increasingly used flash bangs, tear gas, and warning shots into the air. Also, unknown people without identification marks and uniforms are increasingly appearing with weapons on the streets of Minsk. Some of the detainees were minors. Several protesters were injured during arrest.²

Activists of the “European Belarus”, Yegor Litvinko, Andrei Voynich, Anastasia Kirik, Pavel Yukhnevich and Yevhen Afnagel were detained. A criminal case was initiated against them under Part 2 of Art. 293 of the Criminal Code (Participation in riots).³

The lawyer (advocate) Maxim Znak has been on a hunger strike for 10 days expressing his disagreement with the charges brought against him.⁴

The lawyer of Maria Kolesnikova, Lyudmila Kazak, was found guilty of disobedience to the police, she has been fined 675 rubles (225 EUR).^{5 6}

Freedom of speech and Journalists

At the women's protest march on September 26, at least six journalists were detained, three were sent to the detention center on Akrestsina Street. Thus, 12 journalists are now behind bars in Belarus. In total, journalists have been detained over 200 times in Belarus this year.⁷

¹ <https://news.tut.by/economics/701941.html>

² <http://spring96.org/en/news/99711>

³ <http://spring96.org/be/news/99701>

⁴ <https://news.tut.by/economics/701862.html>

⁵ Article 23.4 of the Administrative Code (Disobedience to a lawful order or request of an official in the exercise of his official powers)

⁶ <https://news.tut.by/economics/701822.html>

⁷ <https://baj.by/be/analytics/represii-suprac-zhurnalistau-u-belarusi-u-2020-godze-tablica-abnaulyaecca>

At the same time, the participants of the march noted that the journalists of the state TV channel "Belarus 1" worked on the march without identification marks. They also noted that some police were on the march wearing "Press" vests.

A police officer advised journalists to keep their distance and warned journalists (at a peaceful protest on September, 27) that if they came closer than 50 meters to the Interior Ministry officers, they would be detained under Article 23.4. He did not explain how to distinguish plainclothes policemen from non-policemen. He also added that black clothes and a covered face could be considered as a uniform.⁸

In less than two months, Belarusian portal TUT.by received four warnings from the Ministry of Information. The Ministry of Information has applied to the court with a claim to terminate it as a media outlet. The hearing is scheduled for October 8 at the Economic Court of Minsk. "This means that, by a court decision, Tut.by may lose its status as a mass media, but it will be able to continue its work as an Internet resource without a media status," writes Tut.by⁹.

Ministry of Internal Affairs and its communication methods

On the official YouTube channel of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the department posted audio recordings of the calls from the population. In one of the excerpts, a man suggests using firearms against the protesters: "...A couple of shots in the head - and everyone will sober up." Lawyers and human rights activists believe that this can be regarded as a call to violent actions and incitement to hatred. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Internal Affairs does not consider such calls to be a violation of the law.¹⁰

Cultural rights

On the march on Saturday, September 26, five musicians of the BEST SOUND BAND cover-band, who were playing in the underpass, were detained. Three of the five musicians were sent to the detention center in Akrestsia Street until the trial.¹¹

The musician from the Tornado group and the organizer of charity concerts Angus, who was detained during the protest on Wednesday, September 23, was fined for 810 rubles (260 EUR).

Another street musician from Brest, Alexander Ivachev, who during the protests played in his apartment "Holy War", was forced to leave Belarus because of the persecution of the authorities.¹²

⁸ <https://youtu.be/O9wyJqgLy6M>

⁹ <https://people.onliner.by/2020/09/25/mininform-isk-tut-by>

¹⁰ <https://www.kp.by/daily/217187.5/4293749/>

¹¹ <https://svabod1.azureedge.net/a/30860390.html>

¹² <https://news.tut.by/society/701836.html>

On September 20, the actors of the drama theater were detained in Grodno. On September 25, it became known that the actors began to be fired and deprived of awards, and the theater canceled all performances, citing the epidemiological situation¹³. Nevertheless, the actors decided to show on September 26 the performance of 451 degrees Fahrenheit, staging it in the courtyard of the cultural space.¹⁴

Sport and Human Rights

On September 26, a charity run almost took place in Minsk, in which both experienced half marathon runners and beginners took part.¹⁵ After the first round, arrests began - two people were arrested.

Svetlana Kudelich, silver medalist of the European Athletics Championships and Belarus' record holder in the 3000m sprint, was dismissed from the Emergencies Ministry after she condemned the violence and electoral fraud and signed a letter with demands, including for new elections. She worked as an inspector for professional training and sports of the ideological work and staffing sector of the Ministry of Emergencies. She is also threatened to be removed from the national team and has already been removed from the list of athletes who were supposed to participate in the half marathon in Gdynia.¹⁶

Also, the head coach of the youth hockey team lost his job, refusing to withdraw the signature from the letter with demands of fair elections.¹⁷

After the athletes' statements, the Minister of Sports and Tourism Sergei Kovalchuk signed amendments to the order "On contracts", according to which athletes must use exclusively state symbols during the competition and will not be able to appear on the media without the consent of the employer. Also, the clause on the right to strike, which is guaranteed by Article 41 of the Constitution, has been deleted from the contracts.¹⁸

Good news

Solidarity - 274 transatlantic legislators from 29 countries signed [an open letter](#) to support the Belarusian people.

¹³ <https://news.tut.by/culture/701790.html>

¹⁴ <https://svabod1.azureedge.net/a/30859691.html>

¹⁵ https://youtu.be/7uSKqMAE_GA

¹⁶ <https://sport.tut.by/news/athletics/701797.html>

¹⁷ <https://telegra.ph/Mne-luchshe-iskat-rabotu-chem-promolchat-Baskov-hotel-obyazat-trenera-podderzhi-vat-vlast--tot-uvoliilsya-09-25>

¹⁸ <https://telegra.ph/Odnoznachno-protivorechashchie-Konstitucii-polozheniya-Advokat--o-prikaze-ministra-sporta-vyuchit-gimn-i-otmene-prava-na-zabasto-09-25>