

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

Summary: Saturday 21 November to Monday 23 November 2020

For the past three months, Belarusians have continued to actively express their disagreement with the election results and protest against serious human rights violations.

Peaceful protests against the presidential election results continued on Sunday 22 November. Protesters gathered in several small cities and towns, as well as in numerous neighbourhoods and residential areas in Minsk.¹ Even though the numbers of protesters were small and the protests were clearly peaceful in nature, the rallies were dispersed. Reportedly 384 people were detained, most of them in Minsk.² Volunteers report at least six cases of detainees requiring emergency medical assistance.³ Again, there is evidence that the detainees are kept outside, facing a wall with their hands up.⁴

Criminal prosecution of journalists

Independent journalists face persecution and harassment. Dozens have served short-term administrative arrests just for doing their job. This alarming new trend is filing criminal cases against them. Kaciaryna Barysievich (TUT.by), the journalist who wrote about Raman Bandarenka's death, was arrested and taken to the KGB pre-trial detention facility.⁵ Journalist Kaciaryna Andrejeva (Belsat) has been arrested for at least two months; she is accused of organising actions breaching public order.⁶ Camera operator Darja Chulcova (Belsat) worked with Andrejeva on a livestream on 15 November. She served administrative arrest after the event but wasn't released, which suggests Chulcova will also face criminal prosecution.⁷

According to the Belarusian Association of Journalists, repressions against more than 500 journalists have been documented since the beginning of 2020, with 360 journalists being detained.⁸

¹ Sunday's rally was special due to its decentralised nature. Small groups gathered in several parts of Minsk and marched through their districts. This tactic was chosen after several weeks during which police officers prevented people from getting together and forming one large column for a march.

² See Viasna: <https://spring96.org/be/news/100542>

³ See Volunteers Telegram chat: https://t.me/spiski_okrestina/11653

⁴ See TUT,by Telegram chat: https://t.me/tutby_official/19793

⁵ See TUT.by: <https://news.tut.by/society/708750.html?tg>

⁶ See BAJ:

<https://baj.by/be/content/zhurnalistka-belsata-kacyaryna-andreeva-aryshtavanaya-na-dva-mesyacy>

⁷ See RFE: <https://www.svaboda.org/a/30963340.html>

⁸ See BAJ: <https://baj.by/be/analytics/represii-suprac-zhurnalistau-tablica-spis-aryshtavanyh>

Digital rights

On 22 November, mobile companies “in accordance with the order of the authorised state bodies” reduced mobile phones internet bandwidth from 12.40am to 4.00pm. This led to a significant deterioration in data transmission quality and/or temporary unavailability of the service.⁹ Since August, the internet for mobile phones has been blocked in Minsk for several hours every Sunday.

Health workers and human rights

Official statistics provided by the Ministry of Health show COVID-19 infection rates of between 1,100 and 1,500 people per day.¹⁰

With a high load of several thousand infected people per day, doctors are at a high risk. Health workers issued an ultimatum to the authorities, having promised mass layoffs if their demands are not heard. The doctors demand an end to the violence against demonstrators, the release of all political prisoners, and invalidation of the presidential election result.¹¹

Recommended links

[Overview of the situation](#) with oppressed Belarusian students.

Good news

[@BFreeTheatre](#) wins the Courage Under Fire prize.¹²

⁹ See TUT.by: <https://42.tut.by/708725?tg>

¹⁰ The doctors' association White Coats has published data according to which an increase in COVID-19 cases across the country ranges from 6,000 to 12,000 people per day.

¹¹ <https://www.voiceofbelarus.com/live-feed-16-nov/>

¹² <https://www.britishtheatreguide.info/news/belarus-free-theatre-wins-cour-12635>