

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 25 September 2021 to Friday 1 October 2021

Two people dead after a KGB raid on activist's flat

During a raid conducted by State Security Committee (KGB) agents on the apartment of Andrey Zeltsar, an employee of EPAM Systems, Zeltsar and a KGB agent [were shot](#). According to the agency, the search was conducted on the grounds of investigating alleged “terrorist” activities by Zeltsar. The Investigative Committee of the Republic of Belarus [opened a criminal case](#) on charges of murder of a person acting in an official capacity, while Alexander Lukashenko said that the guilty will not be left unpunished. Zeltsar's wife [has been detained](#).

Pressure on labour unions

The crackdown on independent labour unions and their activists continues. After a public [statement](#) from Lukashenko, saying that there were “spies” in Belarusian factories, who intentionally harmed the Belarusian economy, “being sponsored by the secret services of the West”, a wave of searches and detentions followed.

At the moment, human rights activists have information about at least [16 people](#) subjected to searches and detentions:

- Syarhei Shelest, Hrodna Azot, placed in the KGB detention centre;
- Andrei Paherila, Hrodna Azot, put in the KGB jail;
- Uladzimir Zhurauka, Hrodna Azot;
- Valyantsin Tseranevich, Hrodna Azot;
- Ryhor Ruban, Hrodna Azot (released);
- Vadzim Yafimenka, Hrodna Azot;
- Dzmitry Ilyushchanka, Hrodna Azot (released);
- Alyaksandr Hashnikau, Belarusian Steel Works (BMZ), placed in the KGB detention centre;
- Hanna Ablab, Belarusian Railways, placed in the KGB detention centre;
- Syarhei Dzyuba, Belarusian Railways, placed in the KGB pre-trial detention centre;
- Artsiom Ruban, Hrodna Azot (released);
- Alyaksei Sidar, Hrodna Azot (released);
- Svyatlana Zyl, Hrodna Azot (released), former worker of Belarusian Machine Building Plant;
- Andrei Bashan, Hrodna Azot (detained on the morning of 23 September 2021);
- Dzmitry Yeliseyeu, BMZ, placed in the Homel pre-trial detention center;
- Dzmitry Zhylitski, BMZ.

According to available [information](#), they were detained on suspicion of high treason. The arrests are linked to the activities of the Rabochy Rukh (Labour Movement) group, which was

earlier labelled by the authorities as “[extremist](#)”. State TV channels aired [programmes](#) dedicated to the allegedly extremist activities of the Rabochy Rukh group.

Migration crisis at Belarusian border

The migration crisis continues to intensify at the Belarusian border with Lithuania, Latvia, and Poland. On 24 September 2021, Polish authorities reported finding a migrant [dead](#) at the border, the cause of death being a heart attack. On 29 September 2021, Polish authorities [banned](#) the entry of 473 migrants into the country and Lithuanian authorities banned entry for 63 migrants. On 27 September 2021, Latvian border control authorities reported 16 attempts to cross the border.

On 27 September 2021, the press secretary of the Minister-coordinator of Special Services of Poland, Stanislaw Zaryn, stated that the agency had [information](#) Belarusian law enforcement officers were giving drugs to migrants to ease border crossing. Deputy Minister of National Defense Wojciech Skurkiewicz [stated](#) that Poland was considering building Hesco Bastion fortifications on the border with Belarus.

Developments in politically motivated cases

As the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights condemned political repression in Belarus during the 24 September 2021 [session](#), some of the key developments in politically motivated cases include:

- On 24 September 2021, three peaceful protestors, who have already served jail sentences for participating in street marches, [were sentenced](#) to jail terms for “petty hooliganism”;
- On 29 September 2021, a criminal case was initiated against Belarusian politician in exile and former presidential candidate [Valery Tsapkala](#) for “calls to undermine Belarusian national security” through “calls to use violence against security forces on the Internet”;
- On 29 September 2021, it became known that someone jailed for having a white-red-white flag on their balcony [died](#) of COVID-19 in detention;
- On 29 September 2021, 19-year-old [Yulia Aleynik](#) was fined 90 basic units (2,610 BYN) for the inscription “Long Live WRW (white-red-white)” on a concrete pipe of a sewage collector in Vitebsk;
- On 29 September 2021, a 28-year-old Minsk resident [was charged](#) with hooliganism and desecration of historical and cultural values for “demonstratively sitting on the marble slab near the Victory Monument in Minsk in August 2020”.

Political prisoners

The total number of political prisoners in Belarus is [715](#). The number continues to grow daily.