

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 16 October 2021 to Friday 22 October 2021**

### **Migration crisis at Belarusian border**

The migration crisis continues to intensify at the Belarusian border with Lithuania, Latvia, and Poland. On 13 October 2021, [428](#) attempts to cross the Polish border were made. On 12 October 2021, [23](#) migrants attempted to cross the Latvian border. It is also [reported](#) that a fence is being built at the Belarusian–Latvian border.

On 14 October 2021, a 24-year-old Syrian citizen [was found dead](#) at the Belarusian–Polish border. This is the fifth time that a person has been found dead at the border since the migration crisis started.

On 19 October 2021, a Georgian citizen who assisted in the movement of migrants at the Belarusian–Lithuanian border was [sentenced](#) to nine months of imprisonment by a Lithuanian court.

On 20 October 2021, the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs [summoned](#) a representative of the Embassy of Belarus in Lithuania and handed across a diplomatic note, expressing strong protest against repeated crossings of the Lithuanian state border.

German authorities have [suggested](#) adopting new sanctions against Belarus in connection with the organized transfer of migrants to the Belarusian border with the European Union. Meanwhile, the adoption of the fifth package of [sanctions](#) against Belarus is projected for November, while [Belgium](#) is reported to have pushed to ease the sanctions regime. The European Asylum Support Office [expressed](#) its doubt as to whether the migration crisis can be resolved in the short term.

### **Detention of Belarusian activists abroad on Interpol Red Notice**

In the past week, two notable extradition cases have been initiated by Belarus. In Hungary, law enforcement officers arrested Belarusian activist [Valiantsin Ulasik](#), acting on a Red Notice issued by Interpol. The activist was arrested in July 2021, but information has only now surfaced in the public domain. Belarusian authorities are requesting the extradition of Ulasik, as he remains in a detention facility. In Slovakia, Belarusian activist and blogger [Yauhen Malakhouski](#) was detained at the airport at the request of Interpol and released on 20 October 2021.

### **Conditions in Belarusian detention centers**

Conditions in Belarusian prisons and detention centers remain inhumane. The recently detained online commentators in the [‘Zeltsar’s case’](#) are facing harsh treatment from prison

authorities – the authorities refuse to accept food and essentials parcels; as a result, the prisoners do not even have spare underwear, to say nothing of warm clothes and hygienic products. They have not been given letters either; some are not allowed to meet with their defence lawyers. The official reason is quarantine due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, many detainees [report](#) contracting COVID-19 while in detention and being unable to receive treatment.

### **Belarusian authorities push to deprive activists of Belarusian citizenship**

On 18 October 2021, the head of the Main Department for Combating Organised Crime and Corruption (GUBAZiK/GUBOPiK, abbreviation in Russian), Vyachaslau Arlouski, [suggested](#) adding some clauses to this year’s amendments to the law on citizenship. He maintained that people who fled the country or who “served the interests of the West” should be deprived of Belarusian citizenship.

### **Developments in politically motivated cases**

Some of the key developments in politically motivated cases include:

- On 18 October 2021, a Minsk resident was [sentenced](#) to 1.5 years of restriction of liberty for leaving a critical comment about the former press secretary of the Belarusian Ministry of Internal Affairs;
- On 12 October 2021, a wedding photographer from Minsk, [Dzmitry Sonchyk](#), was sentenced to three years of imprisonment for “insulting police” for leaving comments in a Telegram channel;
- Belarusian lawyer [Natallya Matskevich](#), who has defended a number of political prisoners, is facing a disciplinary investigation by the Belarusian Ministry of Justice.

### **Political prisoners**

The total number of political prisoners in Belarus is [818](#). The number continues to grow daily.