

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.

### **Saturday 16 July 2022 to Friday 22 July 2022**

Human Constanta expresses its [solidarity](#) with the people of Ukraine. We urge the international community to prioritize the voices and stories of Ukrainians, highlight violations of human rights and international law, call for accountability for the actions of the aggressor, and [support the most vulnerable groups fleeing the war without discrimination](#).

### **Persecution related to Russian aggression against Ukraine**

On 19 July 2022, it was reported that the Minsk Regional Bar Association reprimanded [lawyer Andrei Belokhvost](#) for signing an anti-war petition disagreeing with Russian troop deployment on Belarusian territory and the demand to immediately cease hostilities in Ukraine. According to the board, the petition contained false information about Belarus's participation in the war. It is known that Belokhvost tried to appeal his penalty in court, referring to the words of Alexander Lukashenko which confirmed the issues arising in the petition, but the court confirmed the legality of the punishment.

### **Repression of independent journalists on the rise**

On 20 July 2022, the Ministry of Internal Affairs recognized [the independent media organization 'Euroradio'](#) as an extremist formation. Now the employees of the publication and even its subscribers on social networks may face punishment of up to seven years in prison under Article 361-1 of the Criminal Code ("Creation of an extremist formation or participation in it.")

### **Repression of independent labour unions**

On 19 July 2022, according to the Prosecutor General's Office, [the Supreme Court has suspended the activities of five more independent labour unions](#):

- Free Labour Union Belarusian;
- Free Labour Union of Metalworkers;
- Belarusian Independent Labour Union of Miners, Chemists, Oil Refiners, Power Engineers, Transport Workers, Builders and other Workers;
- Belarusian Labour Union of Radio-Electronic Industry Workers; and the
- Association of Labour Unions 'Belarusian Congress of Democratic Trade Unions.'

The court stated that the members of the organization, instead of protecting the rights of workers and preventing illegal strikes and escalation in society, took an active part in destructive activities, unauthorized mass events and distributed extremist information products.

On 20 July 2022, the State Security Committee (KGB) included the non-profit organization [Professional Union of Belarusians in Britain](#) in the list of 'extremist formations'. The organization calls its goals to promote the establishment of personal, social, and business ties between Belarusian professionals working in Britain. It is also known that the organization raised funds to support the Kalinovskiy regiment, which is fighting against the Russian army on the side of Ukraine. The KGB stated that the organization allegedly carries out extremist activities aimed at harming the national security of Belarus.

### **Repression against organizations helping conscripts in the Belarusian army**

On 19 July 2022, information surfaced that employees of the Main Directorate for Combating Organised Crime and Corruption (GUBOPiK) detained [the heads of commercial organisations 'prizivnik.by' and 'armyHELP.by'](#) which help to find legal ways to defend their rights in the process of conscription or to get a reprieve from the army. In pro-government sources, "penitential videos" appeared, filmed under pressure from the security forces, in which employees "confess" to various kinds of offenses. In addition, information appeared on pro-government sources that the leaders "voluntarily" wrote statements about the liquidation of their organizations, and the websites of these services were blocked on the territory of Belarus.

### **ICAO publishes investigation into the forced landing of Ryanair plane**

On 20 July 2022, the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) published an [investigation into the forced landing of a Ryanair plane](#) with opposition bloggers Roman Protasevich and Sofia Sapega on board on 23 May 2021. The ICAO Council recognized that the information about the bomb on Ryanair flight FR4978 was deliberately false and threatened its safety, and the threat of an explosion on board the aircraft was brought to the attention of the flight crew "on the instructions of high-ranking officials of the government of Belarus." One of the main proofs of malicious interference in the flight by the Belarusian authorities was the recording of a conversation between an air traffic controller and a KGB officer who led the operation to land the plane in real time.

### **Political prisoners**

The total number of political prisoners in Belarus is [1260](#). The number continues to grow daily.