

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 Saturday-Friday, 3-9 October:

Since the beginning of the election campaign in May, 2020 authorities have arbitrarily detained close to 13,000 individuals, including peaceful protesters, presidential candidates, human rights defenders, and journalists. Most have been released, but around 300 people currently remain behind the bars, criminally charged.

Human Rights defenders added 20 new names on the list of political prisoners, at the moment 94 people are recognized as political prisoners.^{1 2}

Peaceful protests continued over the weekend, October 4-5. It was the eighth consecutive weekly protest held since August 9.

A total of **188** persons have been convicted of “illegal protesting” following their involvement in the March for the Liberation of Political Prisoners held on October 4.

63 demonstrators were sentenced to short prison terms of up to 15 days. **125** people were fined a total of 17485 EUR.

On October 5, the peaceful protests were attended by tens of thousands of protesters. The Interior Ministry stated that **317** persons were detained and **258** remained in custody.³

The administration of the detention center on Akrestsina Street in Minsk made a decision that parcels for prisoners can now be sent only once a week, and not every day as before.

COVID19 and Human Rights

On October 5, at the "March for the Liberation of Political Prisoners", officials of the Ministry of Interior addressed protesters in the center of Minsk. Over a loudspeaker, they said that at mass events one should not hide one's face under a mask.

According to the latest data from the US Johns Hopkins University, 80,696 people in Belarus have been tested positive, 862 have died because of COVID-19. According to the Belarusian Ministry of Health, the number of coronavirus cases in Belarus is increasing.⁴ Against this

¹ <http://spring96.org/en/news/99857>

² <http://czrt.by/notes/palitviazni-u-belarusi-2020/?lang=eng&s=09>

³ <http://spring96.org/en/news/99840>

⁴ <https://svabod1.azureedge.net/a/30884502.html>

background, the police forbid people to use necessary protection against the virus at public gatherings.⁵

Meanwhile, the health condition of the political prisoner Vitaly Shklyarov has worsened after he was sick with COVID-19. He is currently experiencing heart problems, including severe pain, arrhythmia and insomnia.⁶

NGOs, Activists, citizens and Human Rights

The Main Directorate for Combating Organised Crime and Corruption has “identified some persons who distinguish themselves by committing ‘illegal actions’ during the protest rally in Minsk on October 4”. **Three people** were detained.⁷

The Main Directorate of Internal Security of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Minsk has opened **19 criminal cases** against persons who published information about police officers and their relatives on the Internet, as well as against those who insulted and threatened security officials.⁸

The detention of activists continues: people disappear right from their workplace. Official information about the detention and location is not provided even to the family members.

- **Marina Dubina**, head of “Ecodom” NGO (woman human rights defender) was detained in the center of Minsk by unknown individuals. On October 8, Marina Dubina was sentenced to 13 days in detention in a trial marked by irregularities.⁹
- **Alexander Velitchenko**, the permanent author and videographer of the Green Portal, was detained in Minsk on the evening of October 8.¹⁰
- **Evgeny Dyatkovsky and Konstantin Nesterovich**, workers of the printing company “listovka” disappeared from their working place. Later on they have been sentenced to 15 days in detention.¹¹
- **Leamid Markhotka**, an activist of the Belarusian Helsinki Committee, has been sentenced to 10 days of administrative detention in Salihorsk.
- **Anatoly Lebedko** was detained for an administrative offense and sentenced to 15 days of administrative detention.^{12 13}

⁵ <https://www.the-village.me/village/city/news-city/284991-whaaat>

⁶ <https://www.interfax.ru/world/730089>

⁷ <https://belsat.eu/en/news/sunday-s-march-belarusians-demand-to-release-political-prisoners/>

⁸ <https://minsk.mvd.gov.by/ru/news/4334>

⁹ <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/case/woman-human-rights-defender-marina-dubina-administratively-arrested>

¹⁰ <https://naviny.media/new/20201009/1602228141-zaderzhannogo-nakanune-vecherom-zhurnalista-aleksandra-velitchenko-pomestili>

¹¹ <https://vk.com/listovkacoop>

¹² <https://www.dw.com/ru/zaderzhan-soratnik-svetlany-tihanovskoj-anatolij-lebedko/a-55203915>

¹³ https://interfax.by/news/policy/vnutrennyaya_politika/1284931/

- **Denis Kobrusev** (activist from Gomel) was detained and sentenced to 15 days of arrest.¹⁴
- At the Minsk Tractor Plant, milling machine operator **Miroslav Sobchuk** was detained. Previously, he participated in the creation of a video message from MTW workers against violence and for new elections.
- On October 4 the philosopher, professor and publisher **Olga Shparaga** was detained in Minsk together with her husband **Alexander Adamiants**, Director of European College of Liberal Arts in Belarus, according to sources. They've released on Monday October 5 after spending one night in prison. On October 9 **Olga Shparaga** was detained again.¹⁵
- **Evgeniya Dolgaya**, journalist, was detained in front of her 8-year-old daughter on the eve of October 9.

Sport and Human Rights

The chairman of the Belarusian ice hockey federation was dismissed due to the fact that he refused to participate in the Pro-Lukashenko rally.¹⁶

22 Belarusian sportsmen have lost their positions and titles due to their civil position. Among them is the case The chairman of the Belarusian ice hockey federation.¹⁷ The other forms of pressure against sportsmen are the termination of the rental agreement for the sport club of a famous swimmer Alexandra Herasimenya and administrative arrest of a basketball player, Alena Levchenka.^{18 19}

The IOC has started investigating the accusations levelled at the National Olympic Committee of the Republic of Belarus (NOCRB), including claims athletes have been tortured, beaten and arrested for protesting or criticising the President's regime. Belarus authorities have been warned that the country could face sanctions, including a ban on the country's flag at the postponed Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, if the investigation finds the NOCRB is in breach of the Olympic Charter.²⁰

Moreover, Belarus was deprived of the right to host the World Chess Olympiad in 2022.²¹

¹⁴ <https://t.me/flagshtok/864>

¹⁵ <https://www.iwm.at/chronicle-from-belarus/philosopher-olga-shparaga-detained-in-belarus/>

¹⁶ <https://by.tribuna.com/hockey/1089748178-savilov-lishilsya-dolzhnosti-predsedatelya-fxb-za-otkaz-uchastvovat-v-.html>

¹⁷ <https://by.tribuna.com/others/1089747594-sos-by-napravilo-pismo-v-mok-nok-belarusi-prizvannyj-nessi-idei-olimpi.html>

¹⁸ <https://www.svaboda.org/a/30828887.html>

¹⁹ <https://www.svaboda.org/a/30866607.html>

²⁰ https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1099320/world-players-ioc-action-belarus-noc?fbclid=IwAR3mgR_3t1k0aJ1fziEYW7AAAb4puOP_1wUuao6lIdSHcqrKLCnLP_pINlWA

²¹ <https://sport.tut.by/news/chess/702808.html>

Culture and Human Rights

Musicians, television hosts, actors, artists and other opinion-leaders, who support the protests or condemn the violence, face various forms of pressure - dismissals, non-prolongation of contracts, detentions and administrative arrests.

The famous television hosts - [Dzmitry Kahno](#), [Dzianis Dudzinkiy](#), [Dzmitriy Semchenka](#), and musicians - [Yuriy Stylskiy](#) and [Aliaksander Pamidorau](#), were sentenced to administrative arrests. Pamidorau was brought to liability for signing for the protesters in the street.

The famous artist of Yanka Kupala theatre [Andrey Drobysh](#) and director of Hrodna Regional Drama Theatre [Serhey Kurylenka](#) were detained. The colleagues of [Serhey Kurylenka](#) could not finish the play, when they learnt about his detention. Then the special police unit came to the theatre. Later, one of the actresses - [Yelizaveta Milintsevich](#) was dismissed because she refused to explain why she did not manage to finish the play.

Popular stage and film actor [Pavel Kharlanchuk](#), famous for his work at Kupalovsky Theater, was fined 405 Belarusian rubles (130 EUR) for "violation of the procedure for organizing and holding mass events".

New internal regulations are being introduced at the Belarusian State University of Culture and Arts. The most interesting point is the prohibition of the holding of events and the use of "unregistered" symbols at the University.

800 Belarusian cultural workers signed an open letter against violence and falsifications. The document will be sent to the Belarusian and world media. The signatories demand new elections, the release of political prisoners, an end to repression, the abolition of any blacklists, reinstatement of all cultural workers dismissed for political views at their workplaces, investigation of all cases of violence and a new dialogue with society.²²

New reports on Belarus

[Belarus after the 9 August Presidential Elections](#)

[The state's reaction and measures taken to investigate the mass torture of August 9-12, 2020](#)

Good news

[Hundreds of pensioners protested in Minsk](#) "Since we pensioners are not needed by the riot police, we must fight them in the forefront. Long live Belarus!" And they went for a walk around the city.

²² <https://news.tut.by/culture/703159.html>