

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 4 December 2021 to Friday 10 December 2021**

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

The migration crisis continues at the Belarusian border with Lithuania, Latvia, and Poland, having reached its peak in mid-November 2021. On 8 December 2021, another migrant was [found dead](#) on the Belarusian–Polish border. On 7 December 2021, [116](#) attempts to cross the Belarusian–Polish border were made. [A thousand](#) migrants remain in the temporary facility in the vicinity of Bruzgi border control point – 150 of whom are children. More than [3,000](#) migrants have already left Belarus on [evacuation flights](#). Meanwhile, Lithuania is planning to extend the [state of emergency](#) until the end of January 2022.

The personal stories of migrants’ experiences during the migration crisis, which are rarely in focus in media narratives covering the situation, show that their human rights are continuously violated. Migrants face [pressure and violence](#) by Belarusian authorities and are denied essential resources, like food and water, by authorities on both sides of the border.

Belarusian authorities have adopted a range of “[asymmetrical counter-measures](#)” in response to the recently adopted [sanctions](#) by the European Union, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada [as a reaction to the crisis](#). The measures, characterized by the European Union as “[not transparent](#)”, primarily focus on [limiting trade](#) with countries imposing sanctions on Belarus.

Human Constanta commented on the situation in the [media](#), providing information of migrants’ persecution in their home countries and the rise of hate speech and xenophobia in connection to the crisis, and released a [statement](#) on the matter.

### **Inhumane conditions in Belarusian prisons**

A political prisoner and former volunteer at human rights centre “Viasna”, [Marfa Rabkova](#) was barred from obtaining necessary medical assistance in prison, despite multiple requests to undergo an ultrasound examination. A financial and administrative assistant in the United Nations Development Programme, [Anastasiya Nestserava](#), detained since 18 November 2021, was diagnosed with cancer and is unable to get the necessary surgery due to confinement.

Meanwhile, political prisoner [Ihar Bantser](#) was put in a disciplinary cell again, spending a total of 70 days there since the start of his confinement. This form of detention is particularly harsh and isolating for inmates. Another political prisoner, [Ihar Povarau](#), was placed in solitary confinement for six months and is reportedly tortured by extremely cold conditions in prison.

### **More platforms and initiatives recognized as “extremist”**

On 3 December 2021, the Telegram channel of leading Belarusian political analyst [Artsyom Shraibman](#) was listed as “extremist” as decided by Belarusian authorities. Solidarity initiatives [BYSOL](#), [Voices from Belarus](#), and [Digital Solidarity](#) were also recognized as “extremist”.

### **Repression of culture workers in Belarus**

[Twenty-five employees](#) of the Belarusian Academy of Arts were fired from the institution, following the announcement in an open letter of their refusal to support the actions of Belarusian authorities and join the state-controlled labor union under the university’s auspices.

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

Some of the key developments in politically motivated cases include:

- On 8 December 2021, [Mikalai Slyoz](#) was sentenced to a year in prison for drawing a white-red-white flag on an abandoned building;
- On 8 December 2021, [Syarhei Satsuk](#), journalist and editor-in-chief of the online business daily *Ezhednevnik*, was arrested and put into a pre-trial detention center;
- On 7 December 2021, Belarusian Academy of Sciences employee [Natallya Kapytska](#) was sentenced to five days in jail for lighting a candle and placing it on the window sill on the anniversary of the death of Minsk protester Raman Bandarenka, who was beaten to death allegedly by pro-government forces on 11 November 2020;
- On 6 December 2021, [Yuliya Syamenchanka](#), an activist from the Belarusian public association Zvyano, the employees of which faced persecution in April 2021, was sentenced to 14 days in jail for “petty hooliganism”;
- On 3 December 2021, activist, political prisoner, and mother of five, [Volha Zalatar](#), was sentenced to four years in prison for “grossly violating public order” and establishing an “extremist formation”. Her lawyer reported that she was tortured during detention;
- According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, [1,900](#) cases of violence against Belarusian law enforcement officers were committed in Belarus, with 332 people convicted for the “crimes”. Meanwhile, no cases on the abuse of power by law enforcement authorities were initiated.

### **Political prisoners**

The total number of political prisoners in Belarus is [911](#). The number continues to grow daily.