

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 19 March 2022 to Friday 25 March 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](#).

Belarusian involvement in Russia–Ukraine armed conflict and persecution for sharing information about it

On Belarusian state TV Alexander Lukashenko stated that no one should be punished for expressing an [anti-war position](#). Contrary to this statement, repression for anti-war speech and action continues – at least 908 people were detained for anti-war protests, including for holding blue and yellow flowers and recording video statements condemning Russian aggression in Ukraine.

Belarusian state TV created a dedicated news piece on two Mazyr residents, [Sergey Pleshkun and Yuriy Selvich](#), arrested on terrorism charges for engaging in railway sabotage to prevent Russian military equipment and supplies from arriving in Ukraine. As persecution continues, Oleksandr Kamyshin, director of the Ukrzaliznytsya state railroad, stated that “there is currently [no rail traffic from Belarus into Ukraine](#)” due to the actions of Belarusian railway workers.

Politically motivated cases for participating in protests

Two residents from Brest were convicted in the so-called ‘dance protest case’ when, during a protest in Brest in September 2020, people gathered at an intersection in the city center and danced in circles, after which they were dispersed by water cannons. Local resident [Alexander Antanyuk](#) was sentenced to 1.5 years in prison, and [Ruslan Gachinsky](#) to 2 years of house arrest. A total of 116 people have already been convicted in this case.

Activist [Zmitser Dashkevich](#) was detained for participating in the 2020 protests and allegedly manufacturing products with white-red-white symbols. A video appeared on pro-government resources with forced confessions from the detainee, filmed against the background of posters with the symbols ‘Z’ and ‘V’, which are used to demonstrate support for the Russian regime's aggression against Ukraine.

A resident of the city of Rogachev, [Svetlana Ostrovinskaya](#), was sentenced to a year in a penal colony for a sad emoji under one of the posts about Lukashenko on social networks, for “insulting the President of the Republic of Belarus”.

[Pavel Vashkevich](#), a Grodno resident, was sentenced to 2.5 years of restriction of freedom and sent to an open correctional facility for a Telegram messenger comment criticizing the authorities in which he allegedly showed hatred towards the riot police.

On 21 March 2022, multiple [Baranovich residents](#) were searched, detained, and tried en masse for distributing extremist materials.

Mistreatment of prisoners

Human rights defenders are aware of the [torture conditions](#) experienced by people serving an administrative arrest for participating in protests against the Russian invasion of Ukraine. It is known that detainees were kept in extremely overcrowded cells, they were hardly fed, and many were beaten, accompanied by public humiliation. There are cases of detainees' [heads being hit against the wall](#), [broken ribs](#), etc.

Report on humanitarian crisis in Belarus published

Human Constanta published a [report](#) on the humanitarian crisis on the border of Belarus and the European Union (EU), based on the information collected since the beginning of summer 2021 from open sources, including officially presented statistics from the border services of Belarus, Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia, as well as testimonies from refugees/migrants in transit who are in the territory of Belarus or have already left the country.

At first efforts were made to find the causes of the increased flow of irregular migration through Belarus — for example, a seasonal increase in the number of migrants, a growing number of conflicts, and human rights violations in the countries of origin. However, it gradually became clear that this migration movement was organized by the state in order to destabilize the situation at the border between Belarus and the countries of the EU. Such actions by the Belarusian authorities ultimately led to the humanitarian crisis both at the border with the EU countries and inside the country.

Political prisoners

The total number of political prisoners in Belarus is [1101](#). The number continues to grow daily.