

Missing and Dead Migrants in Belarus: Law and Practice

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Introduction

The crisis of the European policy in the field of migration and asylum, as well as purposeful actions of the Belarusian authorities to attract a large number of foreign citizens to Belarus, as a country of convenient transit to Europe, led in 2021 to a humanitarian crisis on the border of Belarus with the neighboring countries of the European Union¹. Although the route had been used since at least the 1990s², in 2021 the traffic was manipulated by the Lukashenko regime in an attempt to destabilise neighboring countries. Tens of thousands of third-country nationals arrived and continue to arrive in Belarus, both individually and in groups, to cross the border into the EU and apply for international protection in one of its Member States. On both sides of the border migrants face pushbacks and violence from state authorities, and lack of access to food, medicine and shelter. Migrants who go missing or die while attempting to cross Europe's external borders often receive little attention. The IOM emphasises that, as of 2020, no national or international authority has released data or comprehensive reports on migrant deaths in their respective jurisdictions³. This lack of attention to the problem suggests that the data on migrant deaths in Europe understates the actual number. The exact number of lives lost during attempts to cross the border between EU and Belarus may therefore remain unknown forever.

1 Human Constanta, [Humanitarian Crisis in Belarus and at the border with EU, June 2021-February 2022](#), 2022.

2 Paweł Kaczmarczyk and Marek Okólski, [International migration in Central and Eastern Europe – current and future trends, United Nations Expert Group Meeting on International Migration And Development](#), 2005; Izabela Koryś, [Migration Trends in Selected Applicant Countries. Volume III - Poland. Dilemmas of a Sending and Receiving Country](#), IOM, 2004.

3 IOM, [Missing Migrants Project](#), www.missingmigrants.iom.int.

Legal context for the search for missing migrants and management of bodies in Belarus

The review of the legal norms relating to the obligations of States to search for missing persons, register data on missing persons and the dead, identify bodies, locate and contact families, and bury and repatriate bodies is based on the Mytilini Declaration. The Declaration sets out basic principles and standards for the dignified treatment of all persons missing and dead as a result of migratory displacement and their families⁴.

⁴ [Declaration for the Dignified Treatment of all Missing and Deceased Persons and their Families as a Consequence of Migrant Journeys \(The Mytilini Declaration\)](#), May 11, 2018.

Border zone

The law on the State Border of the Republic of Belarus of July 21, 2008 (No. 419-Z) establishes two types of border regimes along the country's entire border: a border zone and a border strip. The border zone can extend up to an average depth of 30 km from the border, including cities, urban-type settlements, villages and other residential or business facilities. The border strip is narrower — up to 10 km deep — and solely intended for the construction of facilities needed to protect the state border. People in either of zones must comply with certain rules, which include carrying identification documents. They can only enter the border strip with a special permit issued by the border authorities.

This implies that any efforts by individual activists or organisations in the border strip to find missing migrants or deliver humanitarian assistance must be authorised by the Belarusian State Border Committee (GPK).

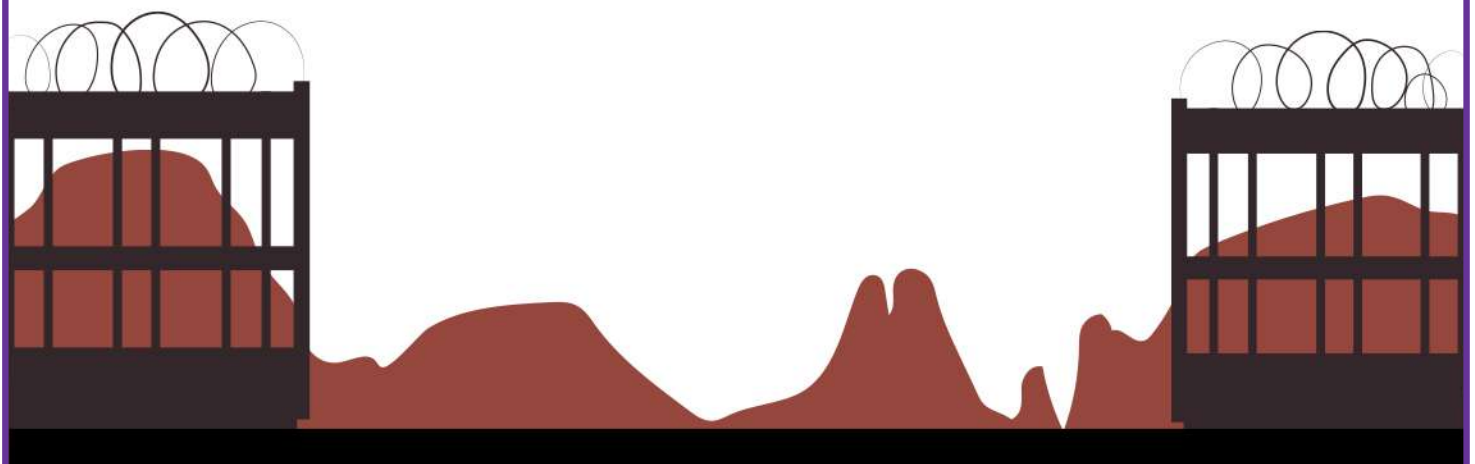
Search for missing or dead

To report a foreigner as missing on Belarusian territory, his or her relatives or other individuals or organisations should contact the country's law enforcement authorities. They must provide information about the missing person's last known whereabouts, as well as details about his or her appearance and distinctive features. The report can be submitted over the phone or in person.

Law enforcement or border authorities are mandated to conduct operational-search activities upon obtaining any information about a missing person. If the person goes missing in remote areas, emergency services can participate in the search activities. The official must initiate an operational accounting case, which should be continued until the missing person is found, dead or alive.

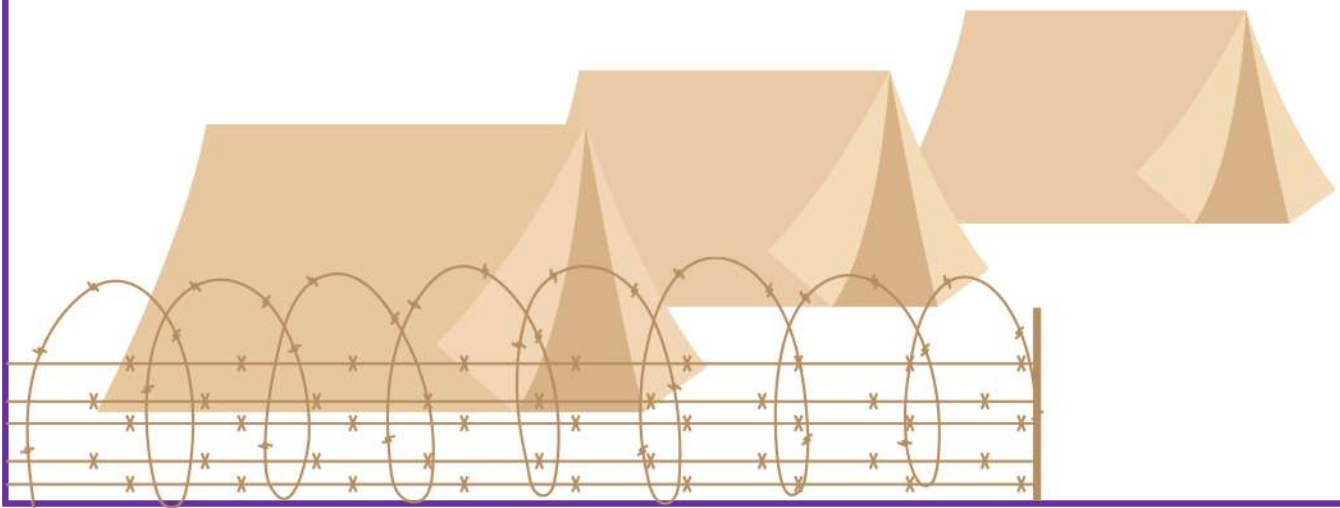
If the law enforcement bodies fail to locate a person within 10 days of their reported disappearance, they must launch a criminal case.

While Belarusian law imposes an obligation on authorities (including law enforcement and border authorities) to search for missing migrants when they are reported as missing, it does not explicitly mandate the authorities to locate and notify the missing migrants' families. This means that families may face limitations when it comes to communicating with the authorities and obtaining up-to-date information about the search activities.



Management of the body

When a dead body is found, an investigative authority must be dispatched to the scene of the incident. In the case of a body without signs of violent death, an inspection is ordered. A decision based on the inspection must be made within three days, and if it is necessary to verify the sufficiency of grounds for initiating a criminal case, this must be done within ten days. A forensic medical examination is required to determine the cause of death. The inspection period is suspended during this examination.



Identification

Internal affairs bodies are responsible for identifying unidentified bodies, especially when there are no accompanying identification documents. If documents are found with the corpse and there is no doubt that they belonged to the deceased, his or her identity is established based on these documents.

When visual identification is not possible, even using photographs and information about special features from various databases (such as records from Belarusian citizenship and migration bodies, the automated “Consul” system, the Unified State Data Bank on Offences, the list of persons whose entry into the Republic of Belarus is prohibited or undesirable, and the automated border control system database), internal affairs bodies may involve the State Forensic Examination Committee of the Republic of Belarus. Foreign states or international organisations can be provided with data upon request and in accordance with the international agreements signed by Belarus.

The Committee uses various techniques to identify the body, including dactyloscopy, collecting biological materials and samples, and establishing postmortem dental profiles. In cases where there are no samples for comparison, making identification impossible, and there are grounds to believe that the deceased was a citizen of another state, internal affairs bodies can upload information about the discovery of unidentified corpses to Interpol. Internal affairs bodies can send the authorities of a particular country a direct request through the Main Consular Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The laws offer several ways to identify a body or at least collect and retain postmortem information about the deceased. Nevertheless, it does not distinctly prescribe the sequence of steps and their obligatory nature. In practice, this lack of clarity can result in a superficial examination and identification process.

Burial

If the identity of the deceased is established but there are no individuals responsible for organising the burial, and no information about the deceased's will, the State Committee for Forensic Expertise has the authority to transfer the unclaimed body (or remains) of the deceased located in the morgue:

- To a specialised organisation for burial, after forty-five days have passed since the cause of death was established.
- To the morgue of a state organisation determined by the Ministry of Health, for subsequent use for educational purposes, after ten days have passed since the cause of death was established.

If the identity of the deceased cannot be established and there are no individuals responsible for organising the burial, the unclaimed remains located in the morgue are transferred to a specialised organisation for burial after forty-five days have passed since the cause of death was established.

The law states that two forms of burial are possible in the case of unidentified bodies: burial of the body or cremation and subsequent burial of the ashes. The decision is made by the specialised organisation responsible for performing the burial. Urns containing the ashes of deceased individuals whose identity has not been established and people who died in the absence of individuals responsible for organising a burial are buried in mass graves three years after cremation. During this period, the urns containing the ashes must be stored in a special room at the crematorium or another designated facility. For the placement of common graves, a plot equivalent to one used for a single burial is provided, except in cases where the layout of the burial site does not allow for this. Between 20 and 40 urns containing ashes can be buried in a common grave.

Repatriation of bodies

If the body or the urn with ashes has been buried on the territory of Belarus, relatives of the deceased could submit an application for the body/urn to be reburied. Reburial can be conducted based on an application by a spouse or close relatives, accompanied by a death certificate and the statement by the institutions responsible for state sanitary supervision. The reburial can take place within two weeks of the initial burial. As a rule, subsequent reburials cannot take place until three years after the initial burial (or one year in sandy soil).

The transport of bodies/urns to another region, city or outside the country for burial is carried out by specialised vehicles. If public transport (such as a train or plane) is used, the remains must be placed in a galvanised, airtight coffin filled with a moisture-absorbing substance and enclosed in a wooden, tightly-woven box or a case made of thick fabric. The documentation required to repatriate the body from Belarus may vary depending on the destination country. Relatives are generally required to provide the following documents:

1. An official death certificate
2. A statement for customs about the absence of unauthorised content in the coffin or urn (issued and signed by the morgue director, a representative of the local authorities or an authorised welder)
3. A certificate on the possibility of re-burial in case of a potential exhumation (issued by the local sanitary-epidemiological service).

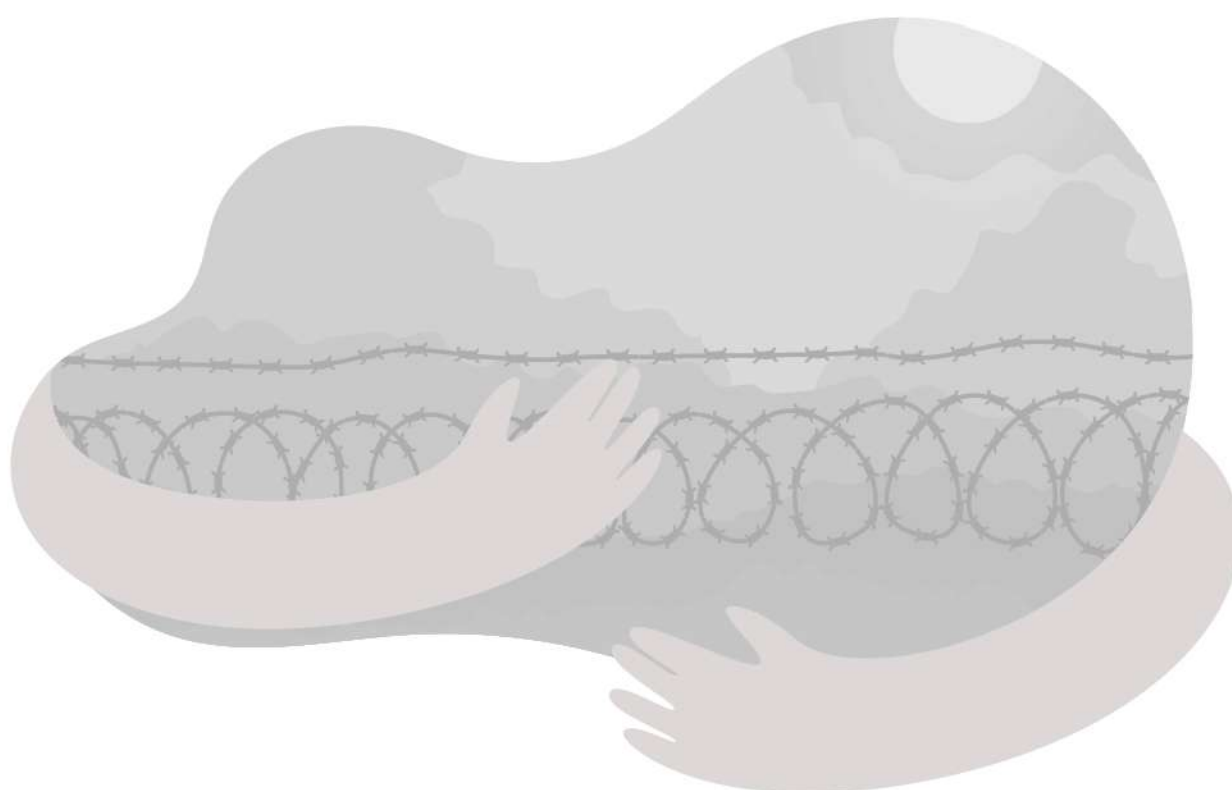
In the absence of an insurance policy, all the costs of repatriation must be covered by the family of the deceased.

Despite the provisions in Belarusian law outlining the procedures for the reburial and repatriation of the body, migrants' families may face several obstacles. Firstly, there is the complexity of obtaining a death certificate through a Belarusian court, as described below. Secondly, both procedures are lengthy and costly, and the authorities do not actively facilitate the repatriation process.

Contact with the family

The state authority that is informed about a foreigner's death, accident or other life-threatening conditions must report it to the main consular department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by submitting a notification within a day of receiving the information.

The department then passes on this notification to the diplomatic mission or consular office of the state that the foreigner was a national of, or where he or she usually resided, within the time limits established by international treaties using diplomatic, electronic or other communication channels. **Subsequently, the diplomatic missions handle this information independently and there is no established mechanism for verifying whether they have informed the deceased foreigner's family.**



Certificates

The Civil Code of the Republic of Belarus establishes criteria for when a person can officially be recognised as missing or deceased, and when their relatives can obtain the corresponding certificates. According to Article 38 of the Civil Code, a person may be recognised as missing by the court, at the interested parties' request, if there is no information about their place of stay within a year. In cases where it is impossible to determine the date of the latest information about the person, the calculation period for recognising his or her absence begins on the first day of the month after the one in which the latest information about him or her was received. If this month cannot be determined, the calculation begins on January 1 the following year.

In addition, according to Article 41 of the Civil Code, a person may be declared dead by the court if there is no information about their whereabouts for three years. If the person went missing in life-threatening circumstances or ones that gave reason to assume death from a certain accident, the declaration of death can occur within 6 months. The date of death for a citizen declared dead is the day the court decision to declare them dead comes into force. If a citizen who went missing in life-threatening circumstances or ones suggesting death from a specific accident is declared dead, the court may consider the day of his or her presumed death the date of death.

The law does not explicitly address situations in which a missing or deceased migrant did not have a registered place of stay in Belarus, creating legal uncertainty, especially in cases involving irregular migrants who are presumed missing in the country's border regions. The certificates for missing and deceased individuals are both issued by the court. This means that migrants' families must have legal representation on Belarusian territory. This can pose challenges for families that lack financial resources or an understanding of the administrative procedures.

Overview of existing practices in Belarus

On August 4, 2021, several months after the start of the humanitarian crisis, the Belarusian authorities officially acknowledged the first death of a migrant on the Belarusian-EU border⁵. Afterwards, the GPK started to regularly document and report new fatalities. By the end of July 2024, the official number of deceased migrants found on Belarusian territory stood at 56. Twenty-eight bodies were discovered in 2023 alone.

Since restrictions on the number of direct flights to Belarus from Iran and Iraq were imposed by some countries, individuals have opted for a more intricate route via Russian territory⁶. The absence of border control checkpoints along the entire land border between Belarus and Russia means that many migrants have remained unregistered. This makes the magnitude of the traffic into Belarus difficult to estimate. This route through Russia exposes individuals to insecurity from the moment they arrive on Belarusian territory, as they have an irregular status without the legal authorisation to be in Belarus, the required medical insurance and other guarantees. In these circumstances, individuals are disinclined to seek assistance from any authorities, including medical institutions.

When it comes to deaths on the Belarusian side of the border, only the GPK and Investigative Committee (SK) provide official information on deceased individuals at the Belarusian-EU border. Both of them share this information on their Telegram channels, with minimal details about the location, the victim's identity, or the cause of death. However, most reports include photos and videos, often featuring the bodies of the deceased or other migrants accompanying them. Occasionally, authorities disclose the nationality or a preliminary cause of death, such as hypothermia. In all the disclosed cases, authorities withhold subsequent information from the public, including whether a criminal investigation was initiated and the outcome of these inquiries. Moreover, a few deaths confirmed by authorities of other countries, as well as the media and activists indicate that GPK and SK inform the public not about all cases. The situation is further complicated by the possibility that some migrants may die in rivers, swamps or other areas that are difficult to reach, where their bodies remain undiscovered.

⁵ На беларусско-литовской границе умер иностранец, GPK.gov.by, August 4, 2021.

⁶ Human Constanta, [Humanitarian Crisis in Belarus and at the border with the EU](#), 2023.

This means that the actual death toll could be considerably higher and that many victims of the EU-Belarusian border crisis remain nameless.

Given that the Belarusian authorities were clearly involved in the creation of the humanitarian crisis on the border, there are reasonable doubts about the reliability of the official figures. Nevertheless, these reports and videos can serve as a foundation for independent Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) investigations. One such investigation was carried out by Lighthouse Reports and Der Spiegel in 2021. The team of independent investigators gathered all the information available on the reported deaths in the border area in Belarus and Poland between August and December 2021. Combining open-source methods and on-the-ground reporting, they created detailed profiles of 12 victims. These investigations are of paramount importance, not only for informing a wider audience about the reality in the border regions, but also for the families and friends of the deceased. Without these kinds of efforts, they might never discover the circumstances surrounding their loved ones' fate.

The highly restricted access to the border zone means that NGOs and international organisations face significant challenges when seeking to respond promptly and effectively to reports about migrants who are in danger, missing or deceased. This lack of access hampers the proper monitoring of the border, impeding rescue operations and the search for missing migrants. Independent observers are unable to assess whether search operations or legal proceedings related to deaths are diligently conducted by the Belarusian authorities.

Between April 2022 and July 2024, Human Constanta received requests concerning at least 66 missing migrants. In each case, the team promptly forwarded this information to the GPK, the sole entity capable of locating and rescuing individuals in border regions. However, the Committee often did not respond to requests about missing migrants or failed to provide follow-up information about search activities, findings or the condition of the people who had been located. These individuals could also be detained and held in various detention centres across the country⁹.

7 Jack Sapoch, Mohammad Najjar, Bashar Deeb Christina, Hebel Maximilian Popp, Muriel Kalisch, Lina Verschwele, Steffen Lüdke, Klaas van Dijken, [Who died at Europe's border?](#), Lighthouse Reports, December 12, 2021.

8 Mohammad al-Najjar, Bashar Deeb, Klaas van Dijken, Christina Hebel, Muriel Kalisch, Steffen Lüdke, Maximilian Popp, Jack Sapoch, Marta Solarz und Lina Verschwele, [A Chronicle of Refugee Deaths along the Border Between Poland and Belarus](#), Spiegel International, December 22, 2021.

9 According to one response from the law enforcement authorities, between August 2021 and June 2023, 253 irregular migrants from various countries were held at a single temporary detention centre in the city of Hrodna.

People held in such facilities have limited access to legal aid, which can be an additional means of communication with embassies and relatives. Within the framework of the criminal process, detainees have a guaranteed right to a lawyer. However, this norm does not apply to people in the administrative process, such as cases involving violations of migration rules or deportation/expulsion from the country. In Belarus, accessing a lawyer is quite complex¹⁰ and can be even more difficult when foreigners do not speak Belarusian or Russian. The requests for public information submitted by Human on the Move, Human Constanta's partner organisation, to various authorities, including law enforcement, border control, investigative bodies, hospitals and prosecutor's offices, only yielded the number of deceased migrants discovered by the border authorities. More specific details about the victims fall within the investigative authorities' jurisdiction. However, these investigative bodies and prosecutor's offices have consistently declined to respond to numerous requests concerning the investigation of cases involving dead or missing migrants. They cite Article 18-1 of the Law of the Republic of Belarus "On Information, Informatisation and Protection of Information", stating that providing the requested information may jeopardise national security, civil order, morality, individual rights, freedoms, legal interests, including honor and dignity, personal and family life, and legal entities' rights and legal interests.

Hospitals have also refrained from providing information, citing medical confidentiality. As a result, obtaining information about deceased migrants requires that contact with their families be established. This is a challenge, primarily because their names are not publicly disclosed (for example, in obituaries). In this situation, it is believed that many unidentified bodies were probably buried on Belarusian territory. Their families may never receive information about their loved ones or where their graves are located.

In Belarus, humanitarian or legal assistance to migrants is effectively criminalised and, in fact, cannot be provided by both institutionalised forms of civil society organisations (CSOs) and individual activists. Since 2020, no fewer than 1,510 CSOs, such as civic associations, professional unions, political parties, foundations, non-governmental institutions, associations, religious organisations, including all independent human rights organisations, have been shut down by the Belarusian authorities¹¹.

¹⁰ Human Constanta, [Report on the work of the free legal office in Minsk](#), April 20, 2020.

¹¹ Lawtrend, [Monitoring the situation of freedom of association and civil society organisations in the Republic of Belarus](#), December 2023.

Legislative amendments to the Belarusian Criminal Code adopted in December 2021 reintroduced criminal liability for "acting on behalf of unregistered or liquidated organisations". The shutting down of all independent human rights organisations by the authorities has therefore led to the de facto criminalisation of human rights work. In this situation, a substantial number of Belarusian human rights defenders were forced to leave the country. In addition, volunteers who are not affiliated with any registered organisation may face criminal prosecution.

The remaining entities in Belarus that could assist migrants include the representative offices of international organisations, the Belarusian Society of the Red Cross, and the Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) special mission. However, their ability to help is constrained by limited mandates and restricted access to migrants. The UNHCR representative office in Belarus has a small number of employees and only engages with migrants who opt to seek international protection in Belarus. The IOM office only aids those who agree to and qualify for voluntary return to their home countries. The Belarusian Red Cross Society, often referred to as a government-organised non-governmental organisation (GONGO), solely operates with the Belarusian authorities' direct authorisation. While it did provide migrants in the temporary refugee camp in Bruzgi, near the Belarusian-Polish border, with assistance, it lacked access to migrants stranded in border regions. The MSF mission was effective in supporting migrants with medical assistance and advice. Since January 2024, the mission has been closed.

During the initial stages of the humanitarian crisis in 2021, several foreign media outlets managed to obtain accreditation and visit Belarus. Assisted by the Human Constanta team, some journalists engaged with migrants in Minsk, conducting interviews on various topics, such as their motivation for leaving their homes and seeking protection in the EU, routes to Belarus, attempts to cross the border, and the challenges they encountered in the country. However, as the crisis intensified in November 2021¹², with thousands of migrants converging at the Belarusian-Polish border and the establishment of a temporary refugee camp in Bruzgi, independent journalists were no longer permitted to interview migrants on Belarusian territory.

¹² [Poland blocks hundreds of migrants, refugees at Belarus border](#), Al Jazeera, November 11, 2021.

Case study: the death of a Sri Lankan national

On February 21, 2023, the Human Constanta team received information about a missing migrant in Belarus who was presumed dead, a Sri Lankan national. His family in Sri Lanka was contacted from a Belarusian phone number, which allegedly belonged to a representative from the Central Hospital in Postavy, a Belarusian town in the Vitebsk region, close to the Lithuanian border. The family was informed that their son's body was in Belarus. The authorities were able to identify him as his passport had been found among the personal belongings near the body. However, the family did not receive a death certificate or other proof of their son's death. Attempts to call the hospital for detailed information were unsuccessful, highlighting the challenges faced by the families of migrants who go missing or die at the Belarusian-EU border, particularly those who live far away.

The Human Constanta team managed to confirm the deceased individual's identity, providing the family with much-needed clarity. The Belarusian investigative authorities verified that the body had been found near the border and the cause of death was determined to be natural, with no signs of violence. Consequently, a criminal case was not initiated. According to the investigator, both their office and medical experts sought to reach the deceased's relatives for the identification procedure.

As specific details pertaining to the case could only be shared with relatives or legal representatives, the family of the deceased asked Human Constanta to hire an attorney to represent them and facilitate communication with the investigative office. In fact, relatives of migrants cannot use the services of attorneys on their own if they are not in Belarus, as the contract with the lawyer must be signed by the parties in person. Unfortunately, once the attorney got involved and an inquiry was submitted to the investigative office, it was discovered that the body had already been buried, contravening the timeframe stipulated by Belarusian law. Furthermore, the attorney sought to access the results of the investigation conducted by the regional investigative office and medical experts. However, these materials had already been transferred to the Investigative Committee for storage.

At the same time, on behalf of the deceased migrant's father, Human Constanta formally requested information on obtaining a death certificate, the retrieval process for personal belongings, details on the burial location and procedure, and the feasibility of repatriating the body to Sri Lanka, but no official response was received.

This case underscores that the challenges in communicating with the Belarusian authorities go beyond the considerable geographical distance between Belarus and the deceased or missing migrants' families. It reveals a pattern of unresponsiveness and reluctance on the part of the Belarusian authorities to do everything necessary to aid the families of migrants caught in the humanitarian crisis, dead or alive.



Case study: searching for a missing Yemeni national

In March 2024, the Public Reception number received a report from a woman who was looking for her father, a 54-year-old Yemeni national who had stopped contacting her in early January 2024. The daughter knew her father had attempted to cross the border on 6-7 January. The border committee's telegram channel on the 8th of January published the news about the death at the border of the Yemeni citizen and attached a video. However, the woman reported that the video did not show her father. Human Constanta contacted the GPK and Mol (with a power of attorney attached and requesting sensitive information to be communicated directly to the daughter). The daughter actively tried to involve the Yemeni Embassy in Moscow in the search, which responded with a request to the Brest Department of Internal Affairs. The GPK responded that there was no information, a search had been organised. The Ministry of Internal Affairs refused to provide information. They demanded an official request from the Yemeni Interior Ministry.

Around 15 May, the daughter was contacted by Belarusian border guards on messenger and informed that they had found her father's body. It should be noted that around this date there were no reports about bodies found at the border in the GPK telegram channel.



Recommendations

For states

To respect the fundamental human right to life, all possible means should be used to minimise the time people spend in the forest. Multiple pushbacks and getting lost in the forest can be deadly. The practice of pushbacks must be stopped and authorities should actively engage in the search for missing persons. We therefore demand that the three EU member states covered by this report:

Restore laws' and regulations' compliance with international law and their constitutions by eliminating pushbacks from the legal orders of Poland, Lithuania and Latvia. Regulations violating the principle of non-refoulement towards foreigners crossing the border and the right to asylum should be repealed.

Change the practice of border guards unit commanders and their subordinate by having the ministers of internal affairs issue written instructions to the heads of border guards and monitor their implementation. These instructions should clearly prohibit the use of pushbacks against foreigners — and also referred to as “turning [them] back to the border line” — and remind the Border Guard about the need to initiate administrative procedures regarding granting foreigners international protection or obliging them to return.

Introduce search-and-rescue protocols and ensure that they are implemented in practice. Establish minimal requirements on the police's engagement in search-and-rescue activities, including the number of officers and the mobilisation of volunteers, if necessary.

Establish emergency humanitarian and first-aid medical points near the EU-Belarusian border to provide to migrants in urgent need of assistance with urgent medical aid, food and shelter.

Cease acts of criminal persecution against human rights defenders and humanitarian activists who assist migrants in border regions, and ensure their physical and psychological safety.

Deceased migrants' relatives have the right to justice, information and closure. All possible means should be used to identify the deceased, establish the circumstances of their death, find their families and support them during the formal procedures so as not to leave them in bureaucratic limbo. To respect of these rights, the authorities should:

Provide international organisations and local civil society organisations with access to the border zones along the entire EU-Belarusian border so that they can monitor the border independently.

Strengthen the authorities responsible for investigating border deaths by ensuring appropriate staffing and the support of cultural mediators. Evaluate the authorities' actions when it comes to identifying migrants' bodies, locating and contacting their families, informing them about the investigation, preserving the belongings of the deceased and returning them to the relatives. Ensure that these actions are taken as quickly as possible to allow them to grieve the deceased and seek closure.

Ensure that the deceased person's data is collected consistently by the authorities in charge and that the minimum standards are applied systematically, including DNA samples collection and preservation. Strengthen coordination with the diplomatic missions of migrants' countries of origin to identify the deceased and establish contact with their relatives.

Consider amending existing legislation to establish clear and comprehensive protocols for the thorough examination of unidentified bodies, outlining the steps and procedures for identifying them. This should include specific guidelines on when and how to involve different agencies, such as law enforcement, forensic examination agencies, diplomatic missions and Interpol.

Establish mechanisms for providing migrants' families seeking certificates for missing or deceased relatives with legal assistance. This could include providing free or subsidised legal representation and translation services to families lacking financial resources or knowledge of the administrative procedures.

Review and update the legislation and procedures concerning certificates for missing and deceased individuals to ensure that they remain relevant and effective in addressing emerging challenges and circumstances, particularly those involving migrants.

In respect of the human right to freedom of religion, non-discrimination and respect for the beliefs of both migrants who have died on their way to EU and their families and friends, the states should:

Support local institutions, such as municipalities, welfare centres and religious communities, when it comes to burying deceased migrants properly and providing their families with assistance and support. This support should include information about the country's laws and procedures, easy access to interpreters, and intercultural training.

Establish protocols and training for local institutions so that they can assist and support the families of migrants' who have died on their territory when it comes to organising the repatriation of the body or a funeral in accordance with their religious rituals, providing legal aid, and helping them obtain a death certificate.

Create mechanisms to systematically and reliably support NGOs tasked with assisting the family of the deceased. Provide safety, due access to information, administrative procedures and cooperation.

For intergovernmental organisation

Ensure the active involvement of the IOM and UNHCR's local representative offices in the search for missing migrants along the EU-Belarusian border and within the four states. Coordinate search efforts with government authorities and establish contact with relatives.

Establish an independent border monitoring mechanism along the entire EU-Belarusian border. In addition, promote the establishment of emergency humanitarian and first-aid medical points in border regions for migrants in need of urgent assistance.

For non-governmental organisations

Revise the procedures in the Restoring Family Links programme of the International Committee of the Red Cross to assess its accessibility for migrants' families. Evaluate Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' implementation of the programme. Supplement the process of notifying the local Red Cross/Red Crescent Society with the option to approach the Federation or Committee directly. Local Red Cross Societies may not be reliable in every country so it is crucial that people have alternative means of receiving assistance in their search for missing relatives.

Organisations working at the border should use a single, comprehensive methodology to collect data about migrants who have gone missing or died there. Data collection should be promoted among activists and the reporting methods should be accessible. Those who obtain information about the death of a migrant or find a body should be provided with psychological support.

Human Constanta is a Belarusian human rights organization.

We work with human rights in three main areas:

- protection of the rights of foreign citizens and stateless persons;
- promoting anti-discrimination and non-formal human rights education;
- digital freedoms and rights.

Our mission

Promoting public interests and joint actions in response to modern challenges in the field of human rights in Belarus.

What are we doing?

- we help others protect their rights;
- we compare Belarusian laws and practices with the best foreign examples and human rights standards;
- we pass on this knowledge through educational events.

If your rights have been violated in Belarus, you can contact our free legal office for free legal advice:

+4915774002500 (Telegram, WhatsApp, Signal)

legal@humanconstanta.org

<https://www.legalhub.help/>

