

The information is aggregated from open online sources and our own practice. In the newsletters, we will update you in brief on human rights violations in numbers and facts.

Saturday 1 February 2024 to Friday 14 February 2025

The human rights crisis in Belarus continues to deepen. The analyzed period was marked by severe sentences for direct resistance to the regime, repression for showing solidarity with political prisoners, continuation of *in absentia* persecution. Human Constanta published its regular review on the fight against “extremism” in 2024.

Repression for showing solidarity with political prisoners

Mass persecution of people who support political prisoners, as well as relatives of political prisoners continues. [According to our data](#), in 2024, at least 27 people were sentenced for “aiding extremist activities” under Article 361-4 of the Criminal Code in this regard. On 11 February 2024, Minsk Regional Court [sentenced](#) Natallia Ladutka to 4 years of imprisonment and a fine equivalent to \$9600 under Article 361-4 of the Criminal Code.

Severe sentences for direct resistance to the regime

The authorities continue to persecute people for acts of direct resistance to the regime, interpreted by the law enforcement as “acts of terrorism.” Recently, state propaganda sources have been publishing films about terrorist attacks and sabotage allegedly organized by the “Western” or Ukrainian intelligence services. In many cases, traces of state involvement in provoking such crimes [can be found](#), and some of the alleged “sabotage” incidents were evidently staged.

On 7 February 2025, Minsk Regional Court [sentenced](#) Pavel Vabishevich and Andrei Zinenka to 23 years and 12 years of imprisonment, respectively, for “illegal trafficking of explosives,” “preparation of an act of terrorism,” “deliberate incapacitation of railway transport,” and “high treason,” under Articles 295, 289, 309, and 356 of the Criminal Code. [According to the State Security Committee \(KGB\)](#), Pavel Vabishevich filmed a military unit in Maladzyechna and an oil depot in Fanipal. Later, together with his acquaintance Andrei Zinenka, he allegedly received information from the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) about two caches of explosives, which they reportedly transported for the detonation of the Staubtsy-Baranavichy railway track.

***In absentia* persecution continues**

On 21 July 2022, Aliaksandar Lukashenka signed [Law No. 199-Z](#), which introduced the possibility to conduct special *in absentia* trials of people accused of “extremist” and “terrorist” crimes and residing outside Belarus. The Chairman of the Investigative Committee Dmitry Gora [stated](#) that one of the main goals of this law was to create legal grounds for the confiscation of the property of political migrants. He believes that the conversion of such property into state income will allow “at least partially to cover the damage that has been done to the country.” According to [the List of Persons Subject to Special Proceedings and Summoned by Criminal Prosecution Authorities](#), as of 12 February 2024, special proceedings have officially been initiated against 145 individuals in Belarus.

On 31 January 2025, Minsk City Court [sentenced](#) economist Paval Daneyka to 12 years in prison *in absentia*, finding him guilty of “illegal entrepreneurial activity,” “conspiracy to seize power,” and “creating an extremist formation” under Part 4 of Article 233, Part 1 of Article 357, and Part 3 of Article 361-1 of the Criminal Code. The economist was also ordered to pay a fine equivalent to \$156 000. According to the prosecution, Daneyka joined the

Coordination Council of Opposition in August 2020 and, as a member, “actively took actions to commit the unconstitutional seizure of state power.”

On the same day, the Investigative Committee [initiated](#) *in absentia* proceedings against Stanislau Buinitski, the former deputy chairman of the Union of Poles in Belarus. He is the owner of a building in Hrodna, where political parties and civil society organizations regularly rented offices, and which now belongs to the Consulate General of Poland. Despite the fact that he is accused of “tax evasion” under Article 243 of the Criminal Code, his case is clearly politically motivated.

Repressions in connection to the “Belaruski Hajun” project

On 5 February 2025, it became known that law enforcement agencies [had gained access](#) to data on Telegram accounts of individuals who had sent messages to the bot of the project “Belaruski Hajun,” which monitored military activity in Belarus (the project was designated an “extremist formation” in March 2022). Sending information to opposition initiatives designated as “extremist formations” can lead to criminal prosecution under Article 361-4 of the Criminal Code (“aiding extremist activity”), carrying a penalty of up to seven years of imprisonment.

Between 6 and 9 February 2025, the BYSOL foundation [received requests for evacuation](#) assistance from 150 Belarusians who had previously sent messages to the project. On 6 February 2024, law enforcement officials [reported](#) the arrest of 42-year-old Mozyr Oil Refinery worker Maksim Nikitsenka for alleged ties to “Belaruski Hajun.” On 7 February 2025, it was announced that the “Belaruski Hajun” project [ceased](#) its operations.

Results of the fight against “extremism” in Belarus in 2024

Human Constanta published a review summarizing the application of “anti-extremist» legislation in Belarus in 2024.

According to the Investigative Committee, since 2020, a total of [22,500](#) “extremist crimes” have been documented. In 2024, Viasna documented [1,721 convictions](#) under “extremist” criminal articles, while Dissident.by documented [1,762 convictions](#). In 2024, at least five individuals [died](#) due to politically motivated persecution under “extremist” charges. According to Dissident.by, between 2020 and 2024, at least 21,692 individuals [were convicted](#) under “extremist” articles of the Code of Administrative Offenses (CAO). Data from Viasna indicates that in 2024 alone, at least 5,890 individuals [were convicted](#) under administrative “extremist” charges.

In its regular report Human Constanta documented new practices and trends of “anti-extremist” legislation’ application in 2024 – in particular, mass trials *in absentia*, first death sentence for a foreign national on “extremism” charges, first conviction for “denying the genocide of the Belarusian people,” mass convictions for alleged cooperation with Ukrainian intelligence services, criminalization of support for political prisoners, first criminal charges for “terrorism propaganda,” criminal prosecution for donations despite “compensating damages,” first-ever conviction for monitoring court proceedings, first convictions under new law on “foreign gratuitous aid,” first LGBTQ+ resource labeled as “extremist.” You can read the full review [on our website](#).

Political prisoners

The total number of political prisoners in Belarus is [1229](#). As of 14 February 2025, our colleague [Nasta Lojka](#) has been in custody for more than 2 years ([868 days](#)).