

**FREE LEGAL OFFICE FOR THE
RIGHTS OF FOREIGN NATIONALS
AND STATELESS PERSONS
HUMAN CONSTANTĂ**

2025 Report

In 2017, Human Constanta opened a free legal office in Belarus to protect the rights of foreign nationals and stateless persons. In 2021, Human Constanta, like many other civil society organisations in Belarus, was subjected to unjustified persecution and forced liquidation, which significantly impeded human rights and humanitarian work within the country. The physical offices in Minsk and Brest were closed, and in-person consultations were discontinued. The team had to develop new approaches and tools to continue advising foreign nationals and stateless persons on protecting their rights in Belarus and to respond to the humanitarian crisis on the border between Belarus and European Union (EU) countries, which began in the summer of 2021 and was ongoing at the time of writing this report.

This report provides an overview of the free legal office's activities, the nature of the requests received, and the legislative and law-enforcement issues encountered in Belarus in 2025.

Key findings

- In 2025, 461 foreign nationals and stateless persons from 46 countries received legal assistance from Human Constanta's free legal office, nearly twice the figures recorded in 2023 (219 requests) and 2024 (254 requests). The largest numbers of requests came from nationals of Burundi, the Comoros, Sudan, Cameroon, Somalia, Ukraine and Guinea.
- Analysis of the requests indicates a change in the migration profile of those seeking assistance and a growing perception of Belarus as a transit country for subsequently seeking international protection in European Union countries, primarily Poland.
- Despite the restrictions on access to the international protection procedure at the Polish-Belarusian border introduced by Poland in 2025, the number of requests on this issue continued to rise. While 24 foreign nationals sought advice on obtaining protection in Poland in 2024, that figure reached 262 in 2025. At the same time, requests concerning international protection in Belarus fell from 50 to 11, indicating a decline in the perception of Belarus as a potentially safe country.
- Exceptions to the restrictions on access to the international protection procedure at the border introduced by Poland led to an increase in requests from pregnant women. Many of them view pregnancy as a circumstance that increases the likelihood of gaining access to the international protection procedure at the Polish border.
- Foreign students became one of the most considerable groups of applicants in 2025. They faced the risk of losing their legal status in Belarus, a lack of means of subsistence, and limited options for regularising their stay. Although Belarus' Migration Policy Concept for 2024-2028 sets a course towards increasing educational migration, consultation practice shows that, for some foreign students - primarily nationals of certain African countries - staying in Belarus is highly

unstable. Educational migration effectively becomes a compelled form of transit migration and a means of subsequently seeking international protection in European Union countries.

- In 2025, Human Constanta's free legal office received more requests of a humanitarian and medical nature. Applicants reported a lack of housing, access to food and healthcare, and means of subsistence in Belarus. Analysis of the requests indicates that the available mechanisms of humanitarian support for transit migrants in crisis situations are limited.
- In 2025, there was an increase in requests from members of the LGBTQ+ community who regarded sexual orientation or gender identity as grounds for international protection. After arriving in Belarus, many nevertheless continued to face social and legal vulnerability and did not view Belarus as a suitable country in which to obtain such protection. Although Belarus was the first safe country after fleeing their country of origin for some, most applicants sought protection in EU countries, primarily Poland. Their decisions were influenced both by their own experience in Belarus and by information circulating within migrant communities about the difficulties of obtaining international protection in Belarus.
- Analysis of the requests shows the growing migration control in Belarus. In practice, migration law is often used as an instrument of pressure through the risk of losing legal status, the revocation of residence permits, entry bans and other restrictive measures. Migration authorities frequently apply a formalistic approach without an individual assessment of the circumstances of each case, substantially limiting foreign nationals' ability to protect their rights.
- Despite declining public attention to the situation on the Belarus-EU border, the free legal office continued to monitor the humanitarian crisis and respond to requests concerning missing migrants, efforts to determine the fate of those who had died, and interaction with

Belarusian state authorities. Such situations often entail prolonged uncertainty for relatives, a lack of timely information, and the need to approach various state institutions independently.

- In 2025, requests were received concerning children born to migrants in Belarus who lacked identity documents; in one case, this resulted in the separation of a mother and her newborn child. Such problems are often linked to the absence of clear documentation procedures and difficulties in cooperation between Belarusian state authorities and the diplomatic missions of the parents' countries of origin.

General data

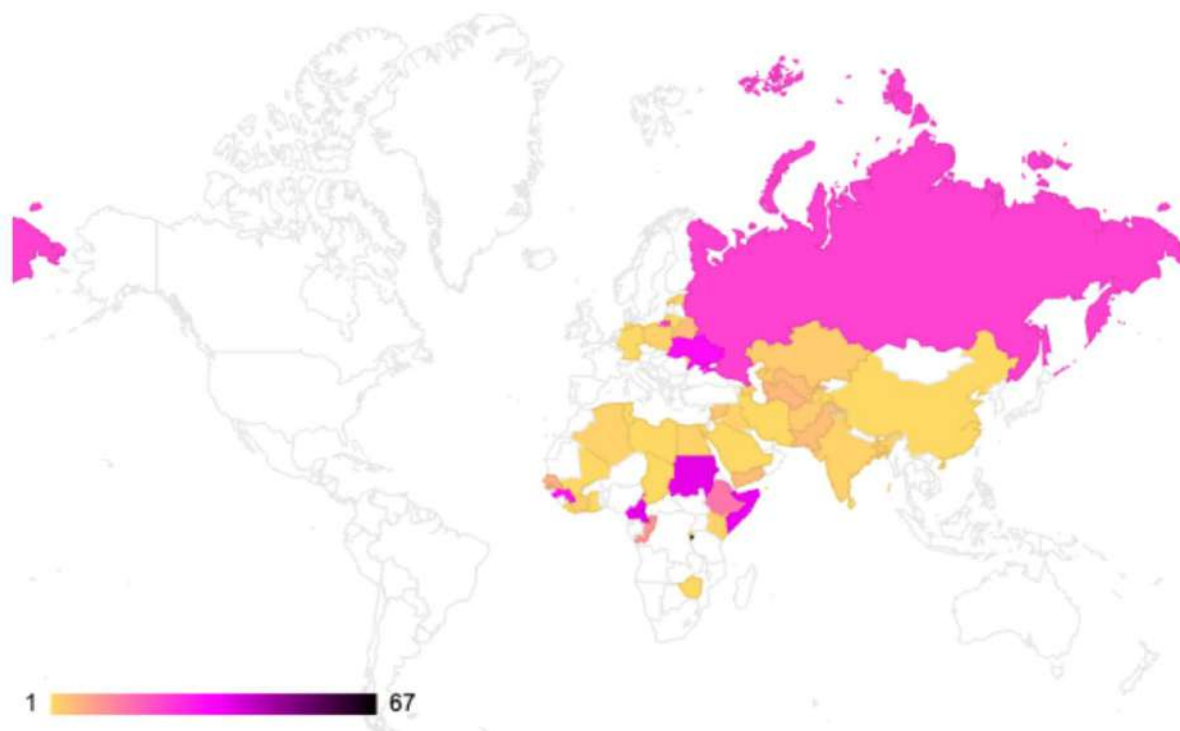
In 2025, 461 people from 46 countries contacted Human Constanta's free legal office. Some applicants (18 people) did not state their nationality, so the geographical scope of the requests may be broader. Consultations were provided by telephone, email and through a specialised online platform. Most requests concerned the procedure for obtaining international protection in Poland and came mainly from nationals of African countries, particularly Burundi, the Comoros, Sudan, Cameroon and Somalia. We also provided advice on entry into and stay or residence in Belarus, as well as on issues arising from the humanitarian crisis at the border between Belarus and European Union countries: assistance in searching for missing migrants and obtaining humanitarian and medical support in Belarus.

Nationality distribution of applicants to the free legal office

In 2025, the largest numbers of requests came from nationals of Burundi (67), the Comoros (54), Sudan (37), Cameroon (37) and Somalia (36). A substantial number of requests also came from nationals of Ukraine (32), Guinea (32) and the Russian Federation (24). Information on the applicants' nationality was unavailable in 18 cases.

Nationals of Ethiopia (16), Eritrea (12), the Congo (11), Senegal (7) and Turkmenistan (6), as well as Uzbekistan (5), Belarus (5), Pakistan (5), Yemen (5) and Syria (4), also frequently sought assistance.

The free legal office also received requests from nationals of Bangladesh (3), Cote d'Ivoire (3), Kazakhstan (3), Afghanistan (3), Moldova (3), Estonia (2), Algeria (2), India (2), Kenya (2), The Gambia (2), Egypt (2), Iraq (2), Azerbaijan (2), Poland (2), Sri Lanka (1), Liberia (1), Lithuania (1), Ghana (1), Chad (1), Rwanda (1), Zimbabwe (1), Mali (1), Iran (1), China (1), Tajikistan (1), Germany (1), Tunisia (1), Libya (1) and Saudi Arabia (1).



Topics of requests

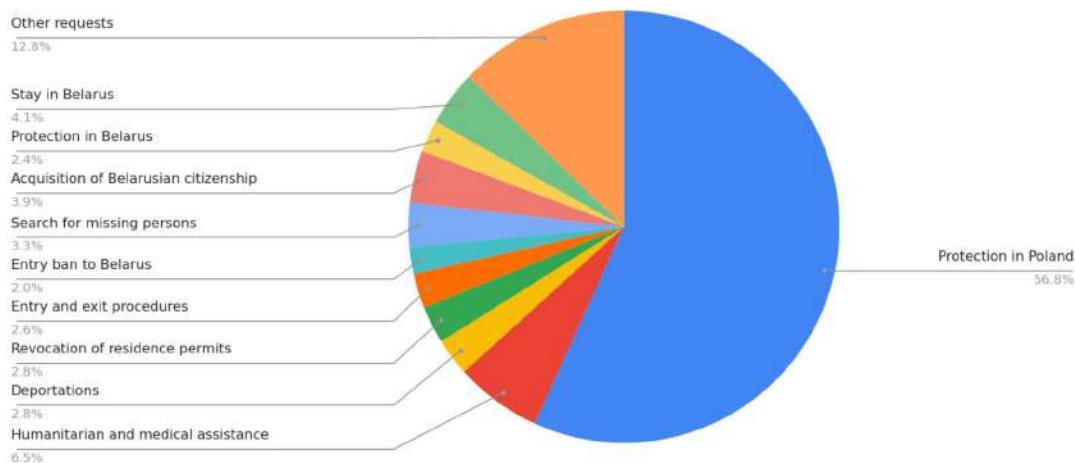
In 2025, most requests received by the free legal office concerned the international protection procedure in Poland (262 requests). In particular, applicants sought information about how to submit an application, the possibility of accessing the international protection procedure after crossing the border, and the conditions for considering applications in Poland.

The continuing humanitarian crisis also generated requests concerning searches for migrants missing at the border between Belarus and European Union countries (19 requests). In addition, applicants sought advice on obtaining medical assistance (16 requests) and humanitarian assistance (11 requests) in Belarus.

A number of requests concerned the acquisition of Belarusian citizenship (18 requests), deportation and expulsion of foreign nationals (13 requests),

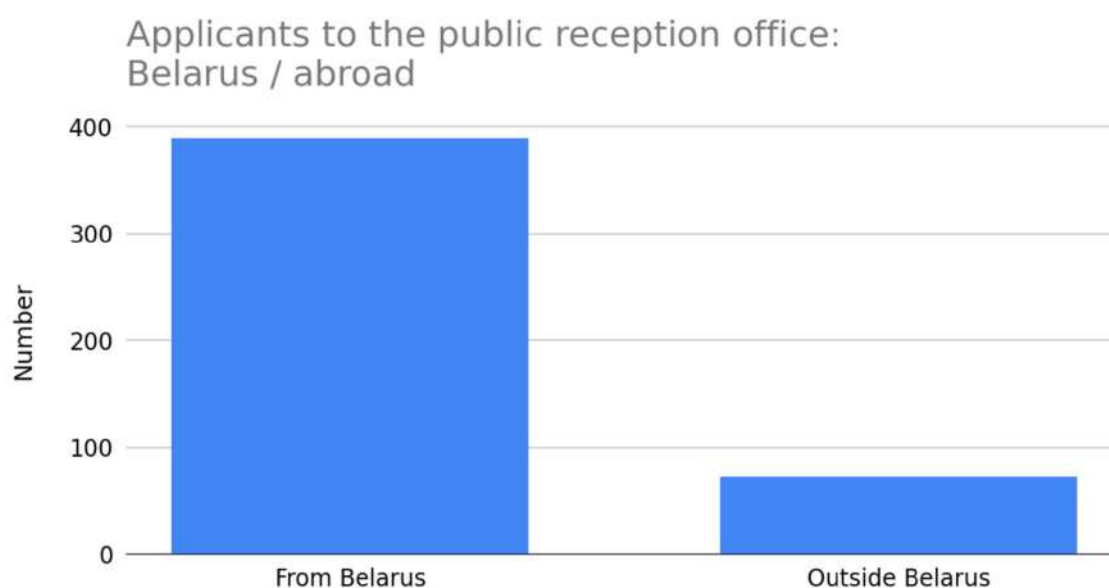
revocation of residence permits (13 requests), entry, exit and visa procedures (12 requests), and regularisation of stay in Belarus (6 requests). Applicants also sought assistance regarding entry bans (9 requests) and the detention of foreign nationals (8 requests).

Distribution of requests by topic



Applicants to the free legal office from Belarus and abroad

The number of requests from people inside Belarus remains high. We also receive requests from people outside the country, both in neighbouring countries and the EU and in more distant regions.



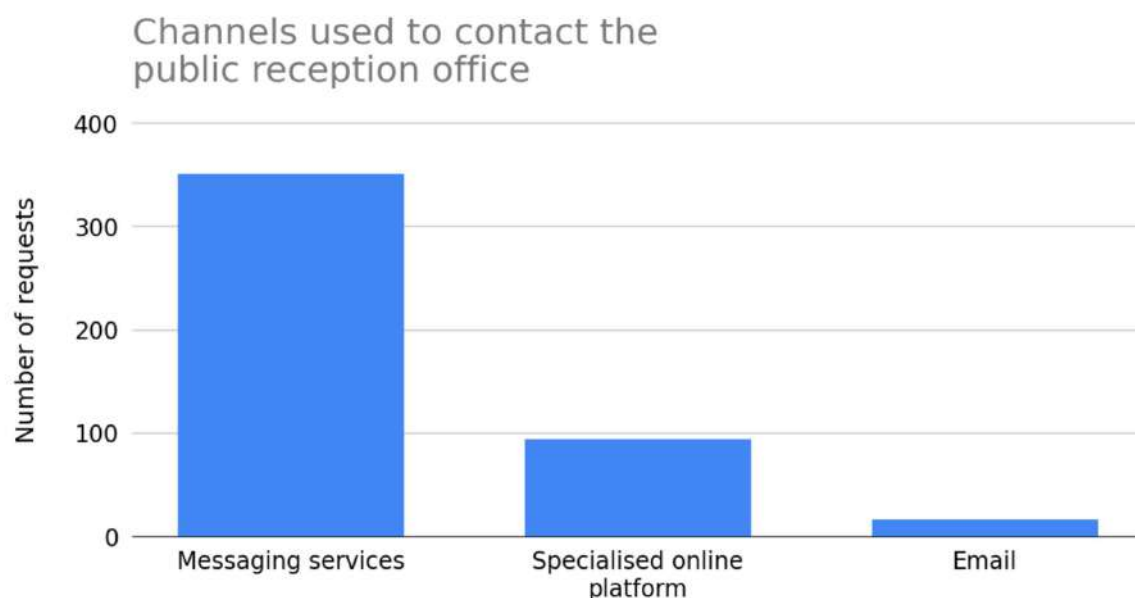
Channels used to contact the free legal office

Since 2021, the free legal office has suspended in-person consultations for foreign nationals at its offices in Belarus. In 2025, most people contacted us through various messaging services, which enabled full consultations and the secure exchange of documents.

Messaging services: 351 requests

Specialised online platform: 94 requests

Email: 16 requests



Changes in Belarusian legislation concerning the rights of foreign nationals in 2025

In 2025, Belarusian migration policy focused on further regulation of labour migration and tighter control over foreign nationals' stay in the country. The priorities set out in the Migration Policy Concept for 2024-2028 were developed further in both new legislation and law-enforcement practice.

On 23 August 2025, Decree No. 202 of the President of the Republic of Belarus of 21 May 2025, 'On Enhancing the Role of Employers in Labour Migration', entered into force. The document significantly expanded the obligations of employers engaging foreign labour. In particular, employers are now responsible for monitoring migrant workers' living conditions and compliance with migration law, and for arranging an assessment of their knowledge of one of the official languages before an employment contract is concluded.

As part of the regular inspections of foreign workers' living conditions introduced by the Decree, employers must visit their places of residence and assess compliance with established requirements. Migrant workers themselves may not restrict access for such inspections.

The Decree additionally prohibited the temporary transfer of migrant workers to another employer.

To implement Decree No. 202, the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus adopted Resolution No. 477 of 3 September 2025, establishing the procedure for the mandatory assessment of migrant workers' knowledge of one of the official languages. The assessment is conducted for a fee and is a prerequisite for employment in a number of occupations in demand, including healthcare and service professions. If the applicant fails the assessment, the employer may not conclude an employment contract with the foreign national.

The list of occupations in which foreign nationals may be employed under a simplified procedure was also updated in 2025 (Resolution No. 99 of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of 12 December 2024). Compared with the previous period, the list was slightly expanded, indicating that the policy of attracting foreign labour remains in place.

Thus, the 2025 amendments demonstrate the dual direction of migration policy: on the one hand, the authorities continue to seek to attract foreign workers; on the other, mechanisms for controlling their stay and employment are being strengthened. Expanded employer obligations and additional requirements for foreign workers may create new barriers to legal employment and increase migrants' dependence on employers.

Analysis of requests

In 2025, the number of requests received by Human Constanta's free legal office rose sharply compared with previous periods. There were 219 requests in 2023 and 254 in 2024, while in 2025 the figure reached 461.

The increase occurred against the background of restrictions introduced by Poland at the border, reduced capacity among Polish organisations to assist people in Belarus, and longer periods spent in the country by transit migrants. These circumstances may have contributed to more frequent requests for assistance from Human Constanta, although the available data do not allow a definitive causal link to be established.

Requests concerning international protection in Poland often also included requests for humanitarian assistance in Belarus, including access to housing, food and healthcare. This indicates the absence of a social protection system for transit migrants in Belarus.

At the same time, the requests received in 2025 demonstrate the intensification of migration control in Belarus. In a number of cases, decisions on the revocation of residence permits were adopted without sufficient regard for applicants' individual circumstances, such as family, humanitarian or other significant considerations.

Despite declining public attention to the situation on the Belarus-EU border, the free legal office continued to monitor the humanitarian crisis. We handled requests concerning migrants who had gone missing or died at the border, family separation cases, and the situation of children born to migrants in Belarus.

International protection: new legal regulation in Poland and changes in the composition of requests

In 2025, the composition of requests to Human Constanta's free legal office concerning international protection changed significantly. Requests related to obtaining protection in Belarus decreased from 50 in 2024 to 11 in 2025. At the same time, requests concerning international protection in Poland rose from 24 to 262.

The decrease in requests concerning the Belarusian procedure does not in itself allow the reasons for this trend to be determined conclusively. At the same time, as in previous years, applicants continued to report difficulties submitting applications in Belarus, including refusals to accept applications and lengthy waits for an initial appointment.

Against this background, requests concerning international protection in Poland rose sharply. This change coincided with the introduction of new restrictions at the Polish-Belarusian border.

In March 2025, the Polish government introduced temporary restrictions on the submission of applications for international protection at the Polish-Belarusian border. These measures apply both at official border crossing points and along sections of the so-called 'green border'. They mean that the Polish Border Guard does not accept applications for international protection from foreign nationals arriving from Belarus.

The restrictions provide for a number of exceptions under which applications for protection may still be submitted. These include applications made by unaccompanied minors, pregnant women, and foreign nationals who may require special care because of their age or health. Border Guard officers may also accept an application for protection where foreign nationals demonstrate that they face a real risk in the territory from which they enter Poland.

Although initially introduced as a temporary measure, the restrictions may be extended, creating uncertainty about access to the international protection procedure at the border.

Exceptions to the restrictions on access to the international protection procedure at the Polish-Belarusian border led to an increase in requests from pregnant women. Analysis of the requests shows that many regard pregnancy as a circumstance increasing the likelihood of access to the international protection procedure in Poland. According to the applicants, this information is spread both through informal migrant networks and by intermediaries offering services to arrange onward movement to the European Union. The observed trend is also consistent with information from partner organisations in Poland, which reported an increase in requests from pregnant women after the relevant exceptions were introduced.

Thus, the restrictions at the Polish-Belarusian border not only complicated access to international protection but also affected the profile of migrants choosing a route through Belarus. In particular, for some women the exception for pregnant women became a decisive factor in choosing to travel to Poland. Yet making such a journey while pregnant creates additional risks to women's health and safety.

Foreign students

In 2025, a substantial number of requests to Human Constanta's free legal office concerning international protection in Poland came from foreign students in Belarus. The vast majority were from African countries. Applicants sought advice on the consequences of possible expulsion from their educational institution, revocation of residence permits, loss of grounds for staying in Belarus, and crossing the border into Poland to seek international protection.

Analysis of the requests shows that many foreign students view Belarus as

a transit country in which their situation remains unstable. If they lose the grounds for their stay - for example, because they are expelled, cannot continue their studies, or lack funds for tuition and living expenses - they face the risk of quickly losing legal status and have limited options for restoring it.

Practice in 2025 also confirms the trend identified in 2024: for some foreign students, primarily nationals of certain African countries, educational migration to Belarus effectively becomes a form of forced migration and a means of leaving their country of origin when safe and accessible alternatives are unavailable. In such cases, education is often combined with a subsequent search for international protection outside Belarus.

A number of requests indicate that foreign students are highly dependent on decisions by educational institutions and student dormitories administrations when interacting with migration authorities. In practice, these administrations often act as intermediaries in communication with state authorities, making students additionally dependent on decisions by their educational institution. In some cases, applicants reported that exit documents had been prepared without their initiative or that they were unable to obtain in due time the information and documents needed to regularise their migration status.

The increase in such requests may be linked, among other factors, to the development of educational migration under the Belarus' Migration Policy Concept for 2024-2028, which provides for the active recruitment of foreign applicants to Belarusian educational institutions. Practice indicates, however, that some foreign students view study in Belarus as one of the available pathways for onward movement to European Union countries. Such expectations often do not match the actual possibilities: after arriving in Belarus, many encounter a lack of safe and accessible mechanisms for continuing their migration, while attempts to change their migration status or seek international protection entail a high risk of losing legal stay in Belarus and being expelled to their countries of origin.

Requests concerning the risk of persecution on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity

In 2025, Human Constanta's free legal office recorded an increase in requests from applicants who openly identified themselves as members of the LGBTQ+ community and regarded this as grounds for seeking international protection. While such requests had been isolated in previous years, in 2025 at least 15 were directly related to risks of persecution, violence or discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. The actual number is probably higher. In a context of severe stigmatisation, dependence on temporary social ties and a limited circle of trusted people, many applicants find it difficult to speak openly about their sexual orientation or gender identity. Fear of violence, condemnation or disclosure may prevent them from revealing this information even when seeking assistance.

Analysis of the requests shows that applicants face risks of persecution in their countries of origin, including violence, threats from family and community members, forced marriage, and pressure related to religious and social norms. In some cases, their lives and safety are directly threatened, forcing them to leave their country of origin.

At the same time, the requests show that after arriving in Belarus many applicants remain socially and legally unprotected. Some lack permanent housing, financial support and access to healthcare, and are at risk of losing legal status. In several cases, applicants reported that their well-being depended on chance acquaintances and temporary informal connections, and they were often compelled to stay with other migrants. This further increased the risks of exploitation, violence and social isolation.

The nature of the requests indicates that applicants generally do not consider Belarus a country in which they can obtain international protection on grounds related to sexual orientation or gender identity. Although Belarus became the 'first safe country' after flight from the country of origin for

some, most requests concerned opportunities to obtain protection in European Union countries, primarily Poland. This strategy was influenced both by applicants' own experience in Belarus and by information circulating within migrant communities about the practical difficulties of obtaining international protection there.

Humanitarian and medical requests

In 2025, Human Constanta's free legal office received more requests of a humanitarian and medical nature. Applicants reported a lack of housing, access to food and healthcare, and means of subsistence, as well as the consequences of violence experienced in their countries of origin, during migration, and while in Belarus.

Many requests came from migrants who remained in Belarus after unsuccessful attempts to cross the border into the European Union or after losing their grounds for legal stay in Belarus. In several cases, people reported living on the street, with casual acquaintances, or in places not intended for habitation, as well as being unable to obtain medical assistance and lacking financial support.

Applicants included people with chronic illnesses, disabilities, the consequences of injuries and surgical procedures, pregnant women, and families with children. Some requests concerned the consequences of physical and sexual violence, as well as exploitation during migration.

Analysis of the requests indicates that the available humanitarian support mechanisms for migrants in crisis situations are limited. When applicants approached relevant state, international and civil society organisations, assistance was often constrained by those organisations' mandates, available resources or eligibility criteria. In some cases, applicants could receive one-off humanitarian assistance, such as food, clothing or essential items, but this support did not address needs for temporary accommodation, payment for medical care, medicines, or other needs

associated with a prolonged crisis situation.

Undocumented children of migrants

In 2025, Human Constanta's free legal office continued to receive requests concerning children born to migrants in Belarus who lacked identity documents. Such situations arise because clear and accessible documentation procedures are unavailable and interaction between Belarusian state authorities and the diplomatic missions of the parents' countries of origin is complex.

In practice, such cases involve prolonged legal uncertainty for children and their parents, restrictions on contact between family members, and the risk of family separation. Handling these cases requires comprehensive legal support and often entails engagement with international human rights mechanisms.

- **Case example: separation of a mother and child due to the absence of travel documents**

In 2025, the free legal office assisted in the case of a Guinean national who had arrived in Belarus on a student visa and given birth in the country. Because the child was born prematurely, the child required prolonged medical care and was admitted to a medical institution.

The mother's access to the child was restricted, and the child's return to her was made conditional on payment of substantial medical expenses. The child was subsequently placed in an infant home. Meanwhile, the mother's visa expired, resulting in the loss of grounds for legal stay in Belarus, her detention and subsequent deportation.

At the time of her deportation, the Guinean national did not have the documents required to obtain an identity document for the child and arrange the child's departure, and she was unable to maintain regular

contact with the child. The mother and child were consequently separated, while the child's lack of the necessary documents remained the principal obstacle to their reunification.

This case demonstrates that the absence of effective and accessible procedures for documenting children born to migrants in Belarus can result not only in uncertainty about their legal status but also in prolonged family separation. In this case, obtaining documents for the child depended on cooperation between the competent authorities of Belarus and Guinea. As Guinea has no diplomatic mission in Belarus, communication had to take place through the Embassy of Guinea in the Russian Federation, making the procedure considerably more difficult and lengthy. Delays on both sides meant that the mother and child remained separated for more than a year.

Consequences of the humanitarian crisis: tracing the dead and missing and assisting relatives

Human Constanta's free legal office continues to receive requests to search for missing migrants, determine the fate of migrants who have died, and engage with state authorities in Belarus.

Such situations often entail prolonged uncertainty for relatives, a lack of timely information about the fate of loved ones, and the need to contact various Belarusian state authorities independently. In practice, this can be complicated by the lack of accessible channels for remote communication: electronic submissions must be made through a specialised state system with an interface in Belarusian and Russian, and registration requires a Belarusian mobile telephone number. This creates additional obstacles for relatives outside Belarus who are trying to obtain information about their loved ones.

- **Case example: separation of a mother and child due to the absence of travel documents**

In 2025, a Somali national contacted Human Constanta seeking help in finding his brother, who had disappeared after attempting to cross the Belarusian-Latvian border. More than a month later, relatives learned from third parties that a body believed to be that of the missing man had been found and placed in a morgue in the Vitebsk region. The family had no official confirmation and was unable to locate the body, arrange identification or obtain information about the procedures that would follow.

Human Constanta sent submissions to medical institutions, internal affairs bodies, the Investigative Committee and other state authorities, asking them to establish the location of the body and ensure the participation of a relative in the identification procedure. In responding, the authorities confirmed that identification of the person and the body, and the release of the body, would be addressed as part of an inquiry into the death and through cooperation with Somalia's diplomatic mission in the Russian Federation, since Somalia has no diplomatic mission in Belarus; and the release of the body to the relatives would not be considered until the legally prescribed inquiry procedures had been completed.

The Belarusian authorities subsequently contacted the deceased's relatives directly, confirmed that the body had been found, and arranged further cooperation through the Embassy of Somalia in the Russian Federation. Once the identity had been confirmed, the family was able to view the deceased remotely, complete the necessary documents through the diplomatic mission, and arrange burial in accordance with religious traditions.

This case shows that, where the country of origin has no diplomatic mission in Belarus, establishing the identity of the deceased, communicating with relatives, and arranging the release of the body require sustained coordination between several state authorities and the diplomatic missions in different countries. Until these procedures are completed, relatives may remain without official information about their loved one's fate, the location of the body, and the procedure for releasing it for burial for a prolonged period.

Such situations also raise issues of dignified treatment of the dead and respect for their loved ones, including relatives' right to receive timely and complete information about the fate of the deceased and the location of their body and burial place.

Migration control and regulation of the legal status of foreign nationals

- **Revocation of residence permits and proof of a 'lawful source of income'**

In 2025, Human Constanta's free legal office continued to receive requests concerning the risk of revocation of temporary residence permits in Belarus. A substantial proportion of these cases concerned requirements imposed by state authorities to prove the existence of a 'lawful source of income'.

Analysis of the requests shows that in practice state authorities often interpret this requirement solely as a requirement of formal employment, although the concept of a lawful source of income is broader and may include other means of income, such as support from family members, income from property, social benefits or other lawful sources.

In several cases, similar difficulties affected people who were temporarily not working for objective reasons: parents taking care of young children, persons with disabilities, and foreign nationals supported by a spouse or relatives.

This practice reflects the state's effort to increase employment levels, including among foreign nationals. However, making a Belarusian residence permit issued on grounds unrelated to employment dependent on the foreign national's actual employment violates not only migration law but also the prohibition of forced labour enshrined in the Constitution and labour legislation.

For applicants, revocation of residence permits may mean the disruption of family and social ties, loss of housing, termination of studies or treatment, and a sharp decline in living standards. In such cases, migration law begins to operate not only as an instrument for regulating foreign nationals' stay but also as a mechanism of administrative pressure that substantially affects the stability of their position in the country.

- **Entry bans and limited avenues of appeal**

In 2025, Human Constanta's free legal office continued to receive requests concerning entry bans to Belarus. A substantial number related to Ukrainian nationals who had previously been banned from entering the Russian Federation, after which similar restrictions were imposed by Belarusian state authorities.

This practice is linked to the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Belarus and the Government of the Russian Federation on the Mutual Recognition and Enforcement of Decisions Refusing Entry into the Territories of the States Parties to the Agreement. Under Article 2 of the Agreement, a decision refusing entry taken by one state may be recognised as grounds for refusing entry to the territory of the other state. According to the Human Constanta's practice, decisions by Russian state authorities are often replicated by the Belarusian side without an independent assessment of the specific circumstances of the case.

At the same time, the Agreement does not provide for the automatic imposition of an equivalent ban. The competent authorities decide independently whether to recognise and apply an entry restriction. Moreover, Article 4 of the Agreement expressly permits a foreign national to enter or stay in a state even when another state party has imposed a ban.

Challenging such decisions is complicated by the fact that, under Part 4 of Article 31 of the Law of the Republic of Belarus 'On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons in the Republic of Belarus', the state

authority that decided to refuse entry is not required to inform the foreign national of the reasons for its decision. Consequently, many foreign nationals cannot understand the reasons for the entry ban, provide explanations or evidence relevant to a review, or prepare a comprehensive complaint. This practice increases legal uncertainty in migration procedures, expands the discretion of state authorities, and limits foreign nationals' access to effective mechanisms for protecting their rights.

- **Threats of losing residence documents and pressure during the consideration of citizenship applications**

A Ukrainian national who held a permanent residence permit in Belarus and had applied to acquire citizenship of the Republic of Belarus through the registration procedure contacted the free legal office. The applicant had lived in Belarus with his family for a long time and described himself as an ethnic Belarusian.

Several months after submitting the application, the applicant was summoned to a citizenship and migration office, where he was questioned at length and the contents of his mobile telephone and personal correspondence were examined. According to the applicant, migration officers told him that he had to take a polygraph examination and stated at the same time that, if he aroused 'suspicions', measures up to and including expulsion from the country could be taken against him.

The applicant reported having a disability and chronic pain syndrome, because of which he had medical concerns about taking a polygraph examination. After he refused the procedure, officers reportedly told him that his citizenship application was highly likely to be refused and again mentioned the possibility of measures resulting in the loss of his right to stay in Belarus.

This case demonstrates the use by migration authorities of procedures not provided for by law in order to pressure and intimidate foreign nationals.

Decisions on citizenship and migration status are subject to broad discretion by state authorities. Despite public statements by the Belarusian authorities about supporting Ukrainian nationals and creating favourable conditions for their stay in the country, practice shows that mechanisms of pressure persist and that procedures concerning citizenship and migration status remain unpredictable.