

TIMELINE OF FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS PERSECUTION

**Belarus
August 2020-February 2022**



August 2020

The Prosecutor General's Office of Belarus [opened a criminal case](#) over establishing the Coordinating Council (CC) of the Belarusian opposition announced on 18 August. It was initiated under Art. 361 of the Criminal Code for public calls for the seizure of state power, the commission of actions aimed at causing harm to national security, including using the media or the Internet. According to the Prosecutor General's Office, «the establishment of such bodies is not provided for by law, and their activities are unconstitutional.» As part of this criminal case, members of the CC Praesidium Maria Kolesnikova and Maxim Znak were arrested. Ex-presidential candidate Svetlana Tikhanovskaya is also the accused in this case.

Detention of CC members began: law enforcement officers detained members of the Praesidium Sergei Dylevsky and Olga Kovalkova in Minsk in an administrative case. CC member Lilia Vlasova was detained. Anatoly Bokun, co-chairperson of the Belaruskali strike committee, was detained by the State Security Committee (KGB) officers.

September 2020

Detentions of civil society activists in administrative cases. Chairperson of the NGO Ecodom Board Irina Sukhiy, *Green Portal*'s author Nasta Zakharevich, fem-activist Aleksandra Kurochkina, the head of the executive bureau of the *NGO Assembly* Stanislava Gusakova, and activist of the LGBT+ rights movement Victoria Biran were detained after searches.

The CC Praesidium members Maxim Znak, Maria Kolesnikova, as well as lawyer Ilya Salei were detained in the criminal case. Subsequently, in September 2021, the court sentenced Maria Kolesnikova to 11 years in prison and Maxim Znak to 10 years in prison.

A video about the relationship between the IT company *PandaDoc* and the Centre for the Promotion of Women's Rights *Her Rights* was broadcast on the state TV (ATN «Agency of Television News»). The video showed a scheme in which the company transfers money to the Centre to fund women's marches.

Coordinator of the *Viasna* Human Rights Centre's volunteer service Marfa Rabkova was detained. A search was conducted in her apartment; equipment, her money and belongings were seized. Later, it became known that she was charged under 11 articles of the Criminal Code: Art. 293(1) (organising mass riots); Art. 293(2) (preparing and deliberate creating conditions for participation in mass riots); Art. 293(3) (educating or other preparing persons for participation in mass riots, as well as financing or other material support for the activities); Art. 342(1) (organising group actions grossly violating public order); Art. 361(3) (calling for actions aimed at causing harm to the national security of the Republic of Belarus using the mass media or the global computer network Internet); Art. 361-1(1) (creating an extremist formation); Art. 285(1) (leading a criminal organisation); Art. 130(3) (inciting social discord by a group of persons); Art. 339(2) (malicious hooliganism); Art. 339(3) (particularly malicious hooliganism); Art. 341 (desecrating buildings and damaging property); Art. 218(3) (deliberate destruction or damaging another's property committed by an organised group); Art. 295-3(2) (Illegal actions in relation to objects, the damaging effect of which is based on the use of combustible substances, committed by a group of persons). According to these articles, Rabkova faces up to 20 years in prison.

There was a start of requesting information from civil society organisations, primarily from recipients of foreign gratuitous assistance, by financial control bodies, such as structures of the General Department for Combating Economic Crimes, the Department of Financial Investigations of the State Control Committee, the Department for humanitarian activities, as well as of justice departments and tax offices. Thus, the State Control Committee carried out an unscheduled inspection of the Local Cultural Foundation *Country of Castles*.

October 2020

Andrey Chepyuk, a volunteer for the *Viasna* human rights center, was detained by the General department for combating organized crimes and corruption (GUBOPiK) officers and then was charged under Art. 293(2) of the Criminal Code (participating in mass riots).

Director of *Ecodom* Marina Dubina, director of the research project 'Modern Society, Ethics, and Politics' Olga Shparaga, director of the *ABF* Effective Communication Development Center Yulia Mitskevich, the Coordinating Council member, coordinator of the movement *March, Baby* Svetlana Gatalskaya, activist of the Human Rights Center *Viasna* Marina Kostylyanchenko, and human rights activist of the Belarusian Helsinki Committee Leonid Markhotko (repeatedly) were detained and sentenced to administrative arrests.

There were inspections by the Department of Financial Investigations, the Sanitary and Epidemiological Station, refusal to conclude a lease agreement, and pressure of other kinds against the Grodno children's hospice.

November 2020

Searches were carried out at the office of the Belarusian Students' Association (ZBS), one of the oldest youth organizations in the country, as well as at the residences of its leaders and activists. Ten activists of the student movement, as well as a teacher for the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics were detained. Later, ZBS' press secretary Ksenia Syromolot, its activist and member of the Coordinating Council Alana Gebremariam, members Yegor Kanetsky, Yana Orobeiko, and Kasya Bud'ko were sentenced to two and a half years in a penal colony under Art. 342 of the Criminal Code (organizing and preparing actions grossly violating public order, or actively participating in them).

[A mass blocking of accounts](#) of recipients of assistance from the BY_help foundation supporting victims of mass repressions began.

December 2020

The Prosecutor General's Office, «taking into account the data obtained during the investigation by the Investigative Committee of the criminal case against members of the so-called coordinating council under Article 361, paragraph 3 of the Criminal Code,» decided to initiate criminal proceedings against S. Tikhanovskaya, M. Kolesnikova, M. Znak, P. Latushko, O. Kovalkova, S. Dylevsky, and other persons over creating and leading an extremist formation, i.e. committing a crime under Art. 361-1(1) of the Criminal Code. The Prosecutor General's Office opened a criminal case against A. Leonchik and others over financing the activities of an extremist formation under Art. 361-2 of the Criminal Code.

There were searches in the office of the Cultural and Educational Establishment *Journalistic Workshop Press Club* and in the homes of its managers and employees. Six people were detained: founder Yulia Slutskaya, program director Alla Sharko, financial director Sergei Olshevsky, programme director of the Press Club Academy Sergei Yakupov, cameraperson Piotr Slutsky, and Ksenia Lutskina, a former employee of the state broadcaster *Belteleradiocompaniya*. Subsequently, in August 2021, they were released, excepting the Coordinating Council member Ksenia Lutskina. [The Prosecutor General's Office announced](#) the closure of the criminal case in connection with a plea agreement, the compensation paid for the damage (approximately 43.7 thousand US dollars) and the special criminal compensation paid.

There was an obvious increase in the number of non-profit organisations that made a decision to self-liquidate. As a result, from September 2020 by 15 March 2022, at least 239 non-profit organisations making decisions on self-liquidation were [recorded](#).

January 2021

Chairperson of the Gomel branch of the Human Rights Center *Viasna* Leonid Sudalenko, volunteers of *Viasna*, Tatiana Lasitsa and Maria Tarasenko, were detained. Afterwards, in November 2021, Leonid Sudalenko [was sentenced](#) to three years in prison under Art. 342 of the Criminal Code (organizing and preparing actions grossly violating public order, or actively participating in them), Tatyana Lasitsa [was sentenced](#) to two and a half years in prison under the same article. Maria Tarasenko was able to flee Belarus as a state prosecutor demanded a sentence of two and a half years in prison for her.

There was the inspection by the Department of Financial Investigations of the State Control Committee (DFI) in relation to the Educational Human Rights Establishment *Office for the Rights of People with Disabilities*'s

staff members and other people over alleged misappropriation funds received by the establishment as charitable contributions and international assistance for assisting to citizens of the Republic of Belarus with disabilities in the period from 2020. This was followed by detention of the Office's leader Sergei Drozdovsky and lawyer Oleg Grablevsky, who were charged under Art. 209(2) of the Criminal Code (fraud committed by a group of persons). In July 2021, they were released under personal guarantee and had to flee Belarus.

Inspections of the Socio-Cultural Establishment *Kryly Khalopa Theater* by the Department of Financial Investigations and the Ministry of Emergency Situations began, which lasted more than four months.

February 2021

A wave of searches at Belarusian human rights activists' homes and in human rights organizations headquarters 'as a part of a preliminary investigation in order to establish the circumstances of funding protest activities' swept. There were raids in the premises of the Belarusian Association of Journalists (BAJ) and its employees, as well as members of the REP trade union, *Viasna*'s human rights activists including members of its Mogilev branch Aleksey Kolchin and Boris Bukhel, coordinator of the campaign *Human rights activists against the death penalty in Belarus* Andrei Poluda, leader of its Mozyr branch Vladimir Telepun, leader of its Svetlogorsk branch Elena Maslyukova, Dmitry Solovyov, who was detained, placed in custody and was subsequently released on his own recognisance, and others. In total, at least 90 searches were conducted across the country.

March 2021

A package of repressive legislation that significantly affects the interests of CSOs was urgently developed and adopted during the spring: a new edition of the Code of Administrative Offenses and amendments to the Criminal Code, legislation on countering extremism, on advocacy, etc. (Analysis of these regulations prepared by *Lawtrend* and BHC's experts: <https://belhelcom.org/ru/document/novoe-zakonodatelnoe-regulirovanie-v-respublike-belarus-kak-reakciya-vlastey-na-sobytiya>)

The list of public associations and establishments that have lease benefits was almost halved.

The Investigative Committee of the Republic of Belarus announced the initiation of a criminal case over the activities of the Human Rights Centre *Viasna*. A wave of searches and interrogations of its members swept across the country.

A criminal case was filed over committing deliberate actions aimed at inciting hostility on the basis of ethnic, religious, and linguistic affiliation and rehabilitating Nazism by a group of persons under Art. 130(3) of the Criminal Code. Inspections began to put pressure on Polish educational centres. Director of the *Polish School* Educational Public Association Anna Panisheva, director of the public school at the Union of Poles in Volkovysk Maria Tishkovskaya, the Lida branch of the Union of Poles' leader Irena Bernatskaya, chairperson of the Union of Poles Anzhelika Boris, journalist and member of the Union of Poles Andrei Poczobut were detained. Panisheva, Tishkovskaya, and Bernatskaya were released in May 2021 and taken to Poland. Boris and Poczobut were charged under Art. 130(3) of the Criminal Code.

The Centre for Urban Life's leader Pavel Mozheiko and artist Ales Pushkin were detained under Art. 130(3) of the Criminal Code. Then, Mozheiko was released as «there were no grounds for detention.»

April 2021

The *Zveno* Public Association was raided, as well as homes of human rights activists Tatiana Gatsura-Yavorskaya, Natalya Trenina, and Yulia Semenchenko. Five activists were detained in the administrative case. Later, Gatsura-Yavorskaya was detained in a criminal case and released after nine days in custody. Yulia Semenchenko was [detained](#) again in December 2021 and arrested for 14 days under Article 19.1 of the Code of Administrative Offences (petty hooliganism).

A volunteer of the International Committee for the Investigation of Torture in Belarus was detained; after having served an administrative arrest, he became a suspect in a criminal case under Art. 342(1) of the

Criminal Code (organising and preparing actions that grossly violate public order, or actively participating in them). Security officials [raided](#) the apartment of *Human Constanta* team member, member of the Supervisory Board of the Office for the Rights of People with Disabilities Enira Bronitskaya as well as her parents' one. The official reason for the search was a criminal case over mass riots. However, according to the officials conducting the search, the true reason for their actions was the activities of the International Committee for the Investigation of Torture in Belarus.

[The Minsk Department of the Investigative Committee](#) opened a criminal case against Aleksei Leonchik and Andrei Strizhak, co-founders of *BY_help* and *BYSOL* initiatives, under Art. 342(2) (other preparing persons for participating in group actions grossly violating public order) and Art. 361-2 (financing the activities of an extremist group) of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Belarus.

Belarus' Foreign Minister Vladimir Makei announced the prospect of destroying civil society in the event of strengthening sanctions against Belarus.

A. Lukashenko gave a mandate to deal fundamentally with all «doubtful associations and establishments» and to re-register them.

May 2021

Inspections of public associations documentation by justice departments (registering bodies) began; their requests contained a huge number of items, including internal documents, such as contracts with individuals and other persons, e-mails, information on donors, and lists of public associations members indicating their personal data.

At the meeting on a draft law on civil service, A. Lukashenko reiterated the need to re-register non-profit organizations.

June 2021

Tatyana Kuzina, a member of the Council and co-founder of the School of Young Managers for Public Administration *Sympa*, an expert for the *Bipart* research project, was detained. She [was charged](#) under Art. 357(1) (conspiracy or other actions committed with the aim of seizing or holding state power in an unconstitutional way) and Art. 361(3) (calling for action aimed at causing harm to the national security of the Republic of Belarus using the media or the Internet).

Inspections of public associations and foundations by justice departments intensified. Public associations and foundations began to receive written warnings over violations of the law.

July 2021

There was an unprecedented [wave of searches](#) affecting various civil society organisations, their leadership, members, and employees. Searches were carried out in such prominent Belarusian organisations as the Human Rights Centre *Viasna*, the Belarusian Association of Journalists, the Belarusian Helsinki Committee, the Centre for Legal Transformation, *Names*, the Movement *For Freedom, Tell the Truth*, the Francišak Skaryna Belarusian Language Society, *Civil Forum*, *TimeAct* and many others; in the homes of *Legal Initiative*'s leader Viktoria Fedorova, member of the Board of this organisation Galina Ustinova, member of the organisation Yevgeny Pugach, the Public Association *Ekodom*'s leader Marina Dubina, leader of the Centre for Legal Transformation Olga Smolianko, chairperson of the *Francišak Skaryna Belarusian Language Society* Alena Anisim, the Belarusian language course *Mova Nanova*'s manager Gleb Lobodenko, and many others.

[Leaders](#) of the Human Rights Center *Viasna* [were detained](#) and placed in custody, that is its chairperson Ales Byalyatsky, the Board member Valentin Stefanovich, lawyer, coordinator of the campaign *Human Rights Defenders for Free Elections* Vladimir Labkovich, as well as his wife, executive director for the investor association, Nina Labkovich (released ten days later). Several other members of the organisation, Alena Laptенок, Sergei Sys, Viktor Sazonov, Oleg Matskevich, Andrei Poluda, Alexander Kaputsky, and Yevgenia Babayeva, were detained for various periods.

It was a start of mass forced liquidation of public associations, foundations, and establishments. This affected the oldest and credible organisations, such as the Belarusian Association of Journalists, the Public Association *Ecodom*, the Belarusian PEN Centre, the Belarusian Helsinki Committee, the Francišak Skaryna Belarusian Language Society, the World Association of Belarusians *Bačkauščyna*, the Belarusian School Society, the Union of Belarusian Writers, the Gomel Youth Local History Public Association *Talaka*, the International Public Association *Gender Perspectives*, the Public Association *Radislava*, the Public Association *Akhova Ptushak Batskaushchyny*, the Foundation *Dobra*, the Centre for Legal Transformation, the Office for the Rights of People with Disabilities, the Office for European Expertise and Communications, and many others. As a result, by 15 March 2022, 382 non-profit organisations [were known](#) to have been forcibly liquidated or to be in the process of forced liquidation.

The deputy chief of the KGB investigative department [said](#) that «in Belarus, an operation was underway to clean it from radical people.» During a [meeting](#) with local authorities activists, A. Lukashenko said that, as a result of the measures taken, 185 destructive structures posing a potential threat to national security were revealed, including a representative office of a foreign non-profit organisation, 71 republican and local public associations, and 113 establishments.

August 2021

Belarusian philosopher and methodologist, public and political figure, one of the founders of *the Flying University* and the *EuroBelarus Consortium* Vladimir Matskevich was detained. He [was charged](#) under Art. 342 (organising and preparing actions grossly violating public order, or actively participating in them) and Art. 361-1 (creating an extremist formation or participation in it) of the Criminal Code. Tatyana Vodolazhskaya, a senior analyst at *the Centre for European Transformation*, an expert of the analytical group for *the Agency for Humanitarian Technologies*, curator of *the Flying University*, was detained for ten days in a criminal case. The residence of Oksana Shelest, a senior analyst at the Centre for European Transformation, an expert of the analytical group for the Agency for Humanitarian Technologies, and public person Vlad Velichko was raided.

September 2021

[Searches were carried out](#), with seizure of equipment and documentation, at the residences of *the Green Portal*'s editor Yanina Melnikova and eco-activist Natalia Gerasimova. They both were detained for 72 hours. At the same time, the home of Irina Sukhiy, founder and member of the board of the *Ecodom* Public Association, an activist of the Belarusian anti-nuclear campaign, who had to leave Belarus earlier, was raided.

The issue of civil society organisations was once again [raised](#) by A. Lukashenko at a meeting with the Administration of the President. In particular, he proposed to define by law which subjects should be classified as civil society.

October 2021

The Financial Investigation Department of the State Control Committee's officers [searched](#) the home of human rights activist Tatyana Revyako. Then, she was taken for interrogation to the DFI and the Investigative Committee departments. Earlier, Revyako's residence had already been searched on 12 August 2020.

The Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 575 "On measures to counter extremism and rehabilitation of Nazism" came into force. There is a list of extremist formations on the website of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. As of 18 January 2022, it contained 29 'groups of citizens', including initiatives *the Workers' Movement*, *By_help*, the Solidarity Fund BY SOL, BY POL, and the Platform of People's Representatives *Skhod*.

November 2021

Olga Gorbunova, a women's rights activist, ex-leader and member of the Board of the *Radislava* Public Association, [was charged](#) under Art. 293(1) (organising riots), Art. 293(2) (participating in riots), Art. 293(3) (training or other preparing persons for the participation in mass riots, or financing this activity), and Art.

342 (organising and preparing actions grossly violating public order, or actively participating in them) of the Criminal Code. Later, in January 2022, after a search by GUBOPiK officers, member of the Board of the *Radislava* Public Association Daria Tsarik [was detained](#) for eight days in the administrative case. On 13 January 2022, the homes of three more representatives of the *Radislava*'s Board and of their family members were raided.

The websites of several Belarus' public associations, which were decided to be forcibly liquidated, were blocked, in particular [zbsb.org](#) (the World Association of Belarusians *Бацькаўшчына*), [perspektyva.org](#) (*Perspective*), [penbelarus.org](#) (*Belarusian PEN Centre*), [lit-bel.org](#) (the Union of Belarusian Writers), [baj.by](#) (the Belarusian Association of Journalists), [ecohome-ngo.by](#) (*Ecodom*), and [icomos-belarus.by](#) (Belarusian ICOMOS Committee).

A. Lukashenko signed the Decree No. 7, entering into force on 10 February 2022, to amend the Decree No. 3 of 25 May 2020 «On foreign gratuitous aid.» The new decree counts citizens of the Republic of Belarus permanently staying outside the Republic of Belarus for more than 183 days during the 12 months preceding the month of providing the aid as senders of foreign gratuitous aid, as well as virtually all anonymous donors.

December 2021

The residences of more than twenty Human Rights Centre *Viasna*'s volunteers were searched. The people were detained, interrogated and had to sign non-disclosure agreements. The Ministry of Information included the Telegram channel of *Viasna* on the list of «extremist materials.»

The requirements for public reporting by public associations and foundations were expanded: information on all the events they held during a year, indicating the purpose and content of the events, as well as their participants, including journalists, bloggers, and social network community moderators must be published.

A criminal case under Art. 342 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Belarus (organising and preparing actions grossly violating public order, or actively participating in them) was initiated against cultural figure, [founder of *symbal.by* and Art *Siadziba Pavel Belous*](#), after three his administrative arrests.

The Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 761 was adopted that once again [significantly reduced](#) the list of organisations that have lease benefits: only 23 Belarusian non-profit organisations can use the benefits; by comparison, before this, there had been 103 of these ones.

[Amendments to the Criminal Code](#) came into force, in particular Art. 361, which criminalises calling for restrictive measures (sanctions).

At a meeting on countering sanctions, Lukashenko [said](#) that the NGOs liquidated in Belarus would never be re-established. Any foundations and organisations can exist in the country, provided that they are engaged in «a concrete business for the good of the motherland.»

January 2022

The website of the human rights organisation *Human Constanta* was [blocked](#) by the decision of the Prosecutor of Minsk.

There were [searches](#) of the Public Organisation *Mogilev Human Rights Centre*'s members' residences and of its office, along with summoning its leader for interrogation.

The Law of the Republic of Belarus No. 144-3 i On Amending Codes' was adopted and entered into force. According to this law, the infamous article 193-1 was restored in the Criminal Code, which covers organising and participating in the activities of the public associations, including political parties, trade unions, religious organisations, and foundations, that either not to have been registered on the territory of Belarus or to have been liquidated by the decision come into force.

February 2022

The State Control Committee filed one more criminal case over financing extremist activities (Art. 361-2 of the Criminal Code) against founders of BY SOL and BY Help initiatives, Andrei Strizhak and Aleksey Leonchik, as well as «other persons who participated in their financing.»

The office of the Free Trade Union of Metalworkers was raided; equipment and means of communication were seized from its leaders and members. The deputy chairpersons of the trade union, Igor Komlik and Alexander Yevdokimchik, were detained.

The Human Rights Centre *Viasna*'s pages on social networks appeared in the Republican list of extremist materials; 21 Internet resources of the organisation were recognized as 'extremist materials.'

March 2022

Volunteer and activist of the Vitebsk organization Our House Yulia Goryachko was sentenced to one year in a general regime penal colony under Article 342(2) of the Criminal Code (other preparing persons to participate in group actions grossly violating public order or actively participating in them). The reason for the charge was that she «prepared at least 178 persons to participate in group actions grossly violating public order» by helping victims of repression to pay their fines and other expenses.

Numerous arrests and searches of representatives of civil society organizations (CSOs): the social initiative Alternativa's leader Oleg Korban was detained for 15 days in the administrative case under Article 24.3 of the Code of Administrative Offences; chair of the cargo carriers' trade union Sergey Shtoda, head of the art project SIGNAL Oleg Larichev, activist of the forcibly liquidated movement For Freedom Tatyana Trofimova were arrested; detentions in the criminal case against «a group of citizens uniting via the Internet» was held. Searches were conducted in the houses of Mozyr human rights defender Uladzimir Tseliapun (for the third time), former leader of the Young Front and organizer of the Kurapaty protection actions Zmitser Dashkevich (the latter was detained after the search). Tatsiana Vodolazhskaya, a sociologist, member of the Coordination Council and coordinator of the Flying University, was detained. The Belarusian Radio-Electrical Manufacturing Workers' Trade Union (REP) trade union's Brest branch premises and the house of its former leader Zinaida Mikhniuk were searched; she was detained in a criminal case.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs published the List of citizens of Belarus, foreign nationals, and stateless persons involved in extremist activities. It includes citizens in relation to whom there is an effective court sentence relating to their committing criminal offenses of extremist nature. At the moment of publication of the List there were 140 people on it, most of them are political prisoners, including members of the Presidium of the Coordination Council Maksim Znak and Maria Kolesnikova.

A number of logos were recognized as extremist materials, including logos of the Golos Platform, ByPOL and BYSOL initiatives, and «an image of a palm of the hand in white on a lilac background with blue patterns and the inscription «Vyasna»».

382 non-profit organizations were in the process of forced liquidation, 271 ones decided to self-liquidate in Belarus.

April 2022

Mass pressure on Belarus' independent trade unions: an unprecedented wave of raids at the offices and leaders and activists' residences of independent Belarusian trade unions — the Belarusian Congress of Democratic Trade Unions (BCDP), the Free Trade Union of Belarus (FTU), the Free Metal Workers' Trade Union (SPM), the Belarusian Radio-Electrical Manufacturing Workers' Trade Union (REP) — both in Minsk and regions. More than 20 representatives of the independent trade union movement of Belarus were detained (there is no open official information on the detainees).

The Independent Trade Union of the Mozyr Oil Refinery operating was terminated by the decision of the Mozyr City Government.

Olga Britykova, chair of the Naftan independent trade union, was sentenced to 15 days of an administrative arrest for the fifth time (her total term of administrative detention is 75 days).

The Grodno Azot independent trade union's private chat was found extremist, and its shop steward Andrei Khanevich was detained.

A number of trade union representatives were held liable for violating the procedure for the use of foreign

donations (Article 24.14 of the Code of Administrative Offences), for instance, the Free Metal Workers` Trade Union`s leader.

The KGB recognized the Sports Solidarity Fund and the Belarusian Radio-Electrical Manufacturing Workers` Trade Union (REP) as extremist formations.

At the request of the prosecutor of Minsk, access to the website of Human Rights Watch, one of the most authoritative human rights organizations in the world, was blocked in the territory of Belarus.

416 non-profit organizations in Belarus were in the process of forced liquidation and 284 ones decided to self-liquidate.

May 2022

Human rights activist, former leader and board member of the public association Radislava Volha Harbunova was found guilty of organizing and preparing actions grossly violating public order (Article 342(1) of the Criminal Code) and sentenced to three years of restraint of freedom without being sent to an open type institution.

Maryna Kisialevich, an activist of the Mothers-328 movement, was sentenced to four years of restraint of liberty and sent to an open-type institution under two defamatory articles of the Criminal Code — Article 368(2) (insulting the president) and Article 367(2) (slander against the president).

Former leader of one of the largest environmental NGOs of Belarus, Protection of Homeland Birds, Viktor Fianchuk was found guilty of «gross violation of public order» (Article 342(1) of the Criminal Code) and sentenced to 2.5 years in jail.

REP Trade Union activist Zinaida Mikhniuk was sentenced to two years in a general regime penal colony under Article 368(1) of the Criminal Code (insulting the President of the Republic of Belarus).

In a criminal case under Art. 361-4 of the Criminal Code (abetting extremist activity), eco-warrior, the Green Watch initiative`s representative, organizer of environmental protests in the city of Mozyr Pavel Nazdra and Mothers-328`s activist Liana Shuba were detained.

The Main Department for Investigation of Organized Crime and Corruption initiated one more criminal case, under Article 361-3(2) of the Criminal Code for financing and other material support of participation in an armed formation, an armed conflict or military actions in the territory of a foreign state, against Andrei Strizhak, the founder of the BYSOL initiative recognized as an extremist formation.

Systematic destruction of independent trade unions has continued: pressing on members in order to force them to leave the union; summoning for «preventive talks»; forcing to join a pro-government organization - the Federation of Trade Unions of Belarus; raiding and detaining trade union activists; liquidating trade union structures, and their recognizing as extremist.

After his nomination, Maksim Pazniakou, acting chair of the Belarusian Congress of Democratic Trade Unions, was detained and twice sentenced to 15 days of administrative arrest. Searches were conducted in the headquarters of the Belarusian Independent Trade Union (BNP) in Salihorsk, BNP primary organization premises at Belaruskali, and in the union`s offices at the 2nd and 1st mining departments of Belaruskali. Aleksandr Mishuk, chair of the BNP primary organization, was detained and his residence was raided. Pavel Razumouski, BNP leader of the 1st Belaruskali mining department, was summoned for a talk to the State Security Committee (KGB).

Independent trade unions received requests to submit their documentation, including trade union members` data, to the prosecutor`s office.

The Hrodna regional court behind closed doors deemed extremist the Grodno Azot workers` primary organization of the Belarusian Independent Trade Union.

The initiative Our House («Наш дом») was recognized as an extremist formation.

The website of the Union of Poles in Belarus nadniemnemgrodno.pl was included in the list of «extremist materials.»

The KGB updated the list of «terrorists» to include, among others, members of the Coordination Council Mariya Kolesnikova and Maksim Znak.

448 non-profit organizations in Belarus were in the process of forced liquidation and 317 ones decided to self-liquidate.

June 2022

Expert for the analytical group of the Agency for Humanitarian Technologies, coordinator of the *Flying University*, senior analyst of the Center for European Transformation *Tatsiana Vadalazhskaya* was sentenced to 2.5 years of imprisonment in an open type institution under article 342(1) of the Criminal Code (organizing and preparing actions grossly violating public order or actively participating in them). The court also recognized the right of Minsktrans enterprise to charge her with a pecuniary claim for disruption of public transport.

Uladzimir Matskevich, philosopher, public figure, founder of the *Flying University* was sentenced to five years' imprisonment in a reinforced regime penal colony for organizing and preparing actions grossly violating public order (Art. 342(1) of the Criminal Code), creating an extremist formation (Art. 361-1(1) of the Criminal Code), and insulting the president (Art. 368(1) of the Criminal Code).

The Belarusian Rada (council) of Culture was recognized as an extremist formation.

Websites of the initiatives *By_help*, *Media Solidarity Belarus*, *BYSOL*, *voicesfrombelarus.com*, their content on social networks (Telegram, Facebook, VKontakte, Instagram), the «platform for financing changes» website *digitalsolidarity.io*, its Instagram and Facebook, mobile application in App Store and Google Play, Telegram channels *Young Front of Belarus* and *dissidentby* were declared extremist.

A criminal case under Article 193-1 (organizing and participating in the activity of an unregistered organization) was [brought](#) against former head of the public charity organization *Hrodna Children's Hospice*, liquidated by the decision of the Hrodna regional court of 20 August 2021, Olga Velichko (this was the third criminal case against her).

At the national seminar «Updating of Methods and Forms of Work with the Population at the Local Level,» Alexander Lukashenko [spoke about](#) «non-governmental marginal organizations» which «being motivated by the desire to help the needy and protect the nature, protecting animals, have become hostages to the destructive forces engaged by the West.» He once again pointed to the need for the authorities to understand that «society must be cleaned of these scoundrels.»

465 non-profit organizations in Belarus [were](#) in the process of forced liquidation and 326 ones [decided](#) to self-liquidate.

July 2022

The Law of the Republic of Belarus of 20 July 2022 № 199-3 «On Amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code of the Republic of Belarus» introduced the concept of «special proceeding» defined as proceedings in a criminal case against an accused person who is outside the Republic of Belarus and evades appearing before the body conducting the criminal proceedings.

Activist Olga Yaltsevich was [sentenced](#) to two years in a general regime penal colony under Article 342(2) of the Criminal Code (financing of group actions grossly violating public order) for allegedly paying, together with other persons, fines, lawyers' fees, state fees for filing complaints, and other material assistance to participants of unauthorized protests.

The KGB recognized as an «extremist formation» the Professional Union of Belarusians of Great Britain which had donated money and equipment to the Kastus Kalinouski Belarusian regiment in Ukraine.

Telegram chat *Scientists Against Violence* was recognized as extremist materials.

Mikola Sharakh, leader of the 'Byelaruski' Free Trade Union, was detained and sentenced to 15 days in jail.

Searches were conducted at homes of the United Civil Party (UCP) leaders Nikolai Kozlov (from late December till late March 2022 he had already spent three months in detention), Antonina Kovaleva, and Oksana Alekseeva; and they were arrested. UCP member Artur Smolyakov was not released after 15 days of administrative arrest but charged under Article 342 of the Criminal Code (actively participating in group actions grossly violating public order).

The *Belarus 1* TV channel [showed](#) a film in which it was alleged that leaders of independent trade unions received funds from abroad without registering them with the Department for Humanitarian Activities of the Belarusian Presidential Executive Office.

At the claims of the Prosecutor General, the Supreme Court issued decisions to [terminate the activities](#) of the “Byelaruski’ Free Trade Union, the Free Metal Workers’ Trade Union, Belarusian independent trade unions of mining, chemical, oil refining, energy, transport, construction, and other workers, the Belarusian Radio-Electrical Manufacturing Workers’ Trade Union, as well as the Belarusian Congress of Democratic Trade Unions (association of trade unions).

537 non-profit organizations in Belarus [were](#) in the process of forced liquidation and 343 ones [decided](#) to self-liquidate.

August 2022

Pavel Mazheika, Hrodna activist who headed the Center for Urban Life liquidated at the claim of the Prosecutor’s Office of the Hrodna region was detained (he had been previously detained in March 2021, but subsequently released with the wording «no grounds for detention»).

At the petition of the Prosecutor General, the Supreme Court [recognized](#) the informal organization *BY-POL*, with its structural subdivisions Situation-Analytical Center and Mobilization plan *Peramoha*, as terrorist organization.

Social networks of the *Godna* (godna.by) and *simbal.by* public campaigns; Green Portal Telegram channel and Instagram; Ecodom Telegram channel and Ecochat: for Finding Solutions to Environmental Problems, VKontakte group FOR THE SINGLE state LANGUAGE of Belarus!; website, social networks, and Youtube channel of the Belarusian Rada of Culture were recognized as extremist materials.

602 non-profit organizations in Belarus [were](#) in the process of forced liquidation and 363 ones [decided](#) to self-liquidate.

September 2022

Registration authorities intensified their inspections of public associations and foundations accompanied by issuing written warnings to them.

Human rights defenders Ales Bialiatski, Valiantsin Stefanovich, and Uladzimir Labkovich, being in pre-trial detention, faced new charges: smuggling (illegal moving across the customs border of the Eurasian Economic Union a large amount of cash by an organized group) under Article 228(4) of the Criminal Code and financing group actions grossly violating public order under Article 342(2) of the Criminal Code. At the same time the previous case under Article 243(2) of the Criminal Code (non-payment of taxes), due to which they spent more than a year in jail, was dropped.

Coordinator of the Human Rights Center *Viasna*’s volunteer service Marfa Rabkova and volunteer Andrei Chapyuk were [sentenced](#) to 15 years and six years in jail respectively (the trial lasted 4.5 months).

Environmental activist Pavel Nozdrya, representative of the *Green Watch* initiative was sentenced to two years in a penal colony under article 361-4 of the Criminal Code (abetting extremist activity).

The Human Rights Center *Viasna*’s volunteer Tatsiana Lasitsa convicted under Article 342 of the Criminal Code (organizing or actively participating in group actions grossly violating public order) to 2.5 years in a general regime penal colony, who spent a year and eight months in jail, was [released early](#) from prison.

Human rights activist Nasta Loika was detained and sentenced twice to 15 days of administrative arrest. Mozyr human rights defender Uladzimir Tseliapun was detained and sentenced to administrative arrest.

A police report under Article 24.23 of the Code of Administrative Offences (violating the procedure for organizing or holding mass events) was drawn up against one of the leaders of the Public Association *Positive Movement* Tatsiana Pechko and a fine of 100 basic units (3200 BYN) was imposed on her. Sviatlana Kostenko, volunteer of the *Say Yes to Life* initiative's residence was searched. There were numerous arrests, searches, and short jail terms of representatives of religious organizations.

Provisions on special proceedings (criminal proceedings against an accused person outside the Republic of Belarus) began to be implemented in practice: such proceedings were initiated against administrators of the group Black Book of Belarus recognized as an extremist formation and against human rights defender Dzmitry Salauyou, a representative of the Human Rights Center *Viasna*.

Telegram channel Naftan Against Extremism was recognized as extremist materials.

The Ministry of Information of Belarus restricted access to Green Portal, an information resource producing and distributing news and analytical environmental information.

The newspaper of the Presidential Administration *Belarus Segodnya* (SB) [published](#) another series of articles aimed at discrediting civil society organizations.

646 non-profit organizations in Belarus [were](#) in the process of forced liquidation and 374 ones [decided](#) to self-liquidate.

October 2022

Belarus denounced the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 16 December 1966; accordingly, it refused to recognize the competence of the UN Human Rights Committee to accept and consider complaints from individuals alleging that the state violates any of the rights provided for in the Covenant, including the right to freedom of association.

The organization *Dapamogoha* operating in the Republic of Lithuania and the Public Association *Ecodom* were considered extremist formations by the decision of the KGB (the State Security Committee).

Public activist Uladzimir Matskevich, Nasta and Zmitser Dashkevich, human rights activists Leanid Sudalenka and Tatsiana Lasica were put on the list of persons involved in extremist activities. Member of the Union of Poles Andrei Poczobut was included in the list of persons involved in terrorist activities.

Yury Mialeshkevich, former deputy chair of the Belarusian Voluntary Society for Protecting Historical and Cultural Monuments, former deputy chair of the public association *BNF Adradzhenne* and activist of the *Movement for Freedom*, was detained.

Human rights activist Nasta Loika was once again detained and sentenced to 15 days of administrative arrest under Article 19.1 (disorderly conduct).

Chairperson of the primary trade union organization of the Free Metal Workers' Trade Union at MAZ enterprise Artiom Zhernak was sentenced to four years in jail under Article 361(3) (calling for restrictive measures (sanctions) and other actions aimed at harming the national security of the Republic of Belarus), Article 342(1) (participating in the actions violating public order), and Article 361-1 (establishing or participating in an extremist formation).

Criminal cases over financing of «extremist activity» (Article 361-2 of the Criminal Code) were initiated: Aleksandr Strugalski was detained for transferring money to the BySol fund, Anastasia Petrachenko was detained for donations to the Belarusian Kalinouski regiment.

Private educational institutions massively received orders to stop their activities.

Telegram channels *KPD. Coalition of Protest Neighborhoods*, *Viasna: Political Prisoners of Belarus*, *Honest People*, *Honest People* community on Odnoklassniki social network, Internet resources of the Belarusian Investigative Center were recognized as extremist materials.

The website of the human rights initiative *Journalists for Tolerance* (J4T.by / J4T.info) was blocked in Belarus.

At least seven lawsuits were filed to the Minsk City Court to suspend the activities of public associations.

667 non-profit organizations in Belarus [were](#) in the process of forced liquidation and 390 ones [decided](#) to self-liquidate.

November 2022

Human rights defender Nasta Loika was detained for 15 days for the third time in a row (her fifth arrest for the autumn). According to Loika, she was tortured.

Among those detained were: Aliaksandr Shumchanka, former chair of the Republican Public Association *Perspective* liquidated by the Supreme Court on 7 September 2021 (fined 15 basic units (480 BYN) under Article 19.11 of the Code of Administrative Offences for «distributing extremist materials»), co-founder of the popular science project *Smart Minsk* — center of informal education for children – Sergei Savkin, colleagues of Uladzimir Matskevich Oksana Shelest and Kirill Maltsev, deputy head of the public association *Minsk Cycling Society* Maksim Puchinsky (charged under Article 342 of the Criminal Code).

A series of searches were conducted all over Belarus in relation to former activists of the liquidated Movement *For Freedom*. Some of them were subjected to administrative arrests after the searches.

Olga Britykova, leader of the Naftan independent trade union was detained again and twice sentenced to 15 days of administrative arrest under Article 19.11 of the Code of Administrative Offences for distributing extremist materials (in spring 2022, she had spent a total of 75 days of administrative arrest).

Country for Life Foundation`s volunteers Anton Stashevsky and Marina Dubrovskaya were sentenced to eight years in a penal colony with a reinforced regime under Article 357(1) of the Criminal Code (conspiracy to seize power unconstitutionally) and to 1.5 years in a general regime colony under Article 342(2) (training and preparing individuals to participate in activities grossly violating public order, as well as financing and other material supporting). Yulia Syrykh and Tatsiana Ostrovskaya, who were also on the wanted list in this case, were able to flee Belarus after almost a year of imprisonment.

Leaders of the United Civil Party were sentenced to imprisonment in a general regime penal colony under Article 342 of the Criminal Code (organizing and preparing actions grossly violating public order or actively participating in them): Antanina Kavalioua to a year, Aksana Aliakseyeva to a year and a half, Artur Smolyakov to two years, Nikolai Kozlov additionally charged under Article 407 (disclosure of data of initial inquiry, preliminary investigation, or a closed trial) to two years and six months.

Chairperson of the primary trade union organization at Belaruskali Aleksandr Mishuk was sentenced under Article 361(1) of the Criminal Code (calling to restrictive measures (sanctions) and other actions aimed at harming the national security of the Republic of Belarus) to two years and six months in a general regime penal colony for speaking to workers of Belaruskali «for the purpose of establishing a strike committee.»

Yanina Malash, activist of the Free Metal Workers` Trade Union, was sentenced to one and a half years in prison under Article 342 of the Criminal Code, Andrei Khanevich, chair of the primary organization of the Belarusian Independent Trade Union of employees of Grodno Azot, was sentenced to five years in prison under Article 369-1 of the Criminal Code (discrediting the Republic of Belarus) and Article 361-4 (abetting extremist activities), and the Free Metal Workers` Trade Union`s secretary Mikhail Gromov was sentenced to two years and six months of restraint of liberty without sending to an open institution (so called «home chemistry») under Article 342(1) of the Criminal Code (organizing and preparing actions grossly violating public order or actively participating in them).

Detentions for «financing of extremist activity» continued.

Aleksandr Ziyazetdinov was sentenced to three years in a general regime penal colony under Article 361-2(1) of Criminal Code (financing of extremist formation activities) for transferring 0.2 ether (about \$800) to BYPOL cryptocurrency in May 2021.

Members of the Union of Belarusian Students (ZBS) Yegor Kanetsky, Yana Orobeiko, Kasia Budzko, Ksenia Syromolot, and Alana Gebremariam (member of the main staff of the opposition Coordination Council) were released due to serving their full sentences (2.5 years in a general regime penal colony).

Union of Belarusian National Shield and *Paspalitaye Rushanne* (as stated in the official list, this is a group of citizens under the leadership of extremist formations «BYPOL» / Mobilization plan *Peramoha* and the Unit-

ed Transitional Cabinet) and the foundation *Country for Life* were recognized as extremist formations by the decision of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Instagram accounts @viasna96 (previously already recognized as extremist), @freebelaruscenter, the one of the project August2020 which posted stories of people who suffered from torture at the hands of security forces, Telegram chat Independent Trade Union of Gomel were listed as «extremist materials.»

699 non-profit organizations in Belarus [were](#) in the process of forced liquidation and 403 ones [decided](#) to self-liquidate.

December 2022

Oksana Zaretskaya, founder of the School of Business Culture and Etiquette and member of the main staff of the Coordination Council, was detained under Article 342 of the Criminal Code (organizing and preparing actions grossly violating public order or actively participating in them).

On 14 December, human rights defender Nasta Loika was sentenced for the fourth time in a row to 15 days of administrative arrest under Article 19.1 of the Code of Administrative Offences (disorderly conduct) spending 60 days in custody uninterruptedly. Then, she was criminally [charged](#).

A sentence passed in the case of Civil Self-Defense Units of Belarus punished its five defendants with imprisonment from 13 to 20 years.

Chair of the Belarusian Congress of Democratic Trade Unions (BCDP) Aleksandr Yaroshuk was sentenced to four years in a general regime penal colony, his deputy Sergei Antusevich to two years, and its bookkeeper Irina But-Husaim to 1.5 years under Article 342(1) of the Criminal Code (organizing and preparing actions grossly violating public order or actively participating in them); Yaroshuk was also charged under Article 361(3) (calling for restrictive measures, other actions aimed at damaging the national security of the Republic of Belarus).

[The first sentence](#) in a special proceeding was pronounced. Former head of the Belarusian Sports Solidarity Foundation (BSSF) Aleksandra Gerasimenia was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment in a general regime colony and the Foundation's executive director Alexander Opeikin to 12 years' imprisonment in a penal colony with a reinforced regime under Article 361(2) of the Criminal Code (calling for restrictive measures, other actions aimed at harming the national security of the Republic of Belarus), with their joint property damage.

The practice of discrediting civil society in the official media, such as the Presidential Administration's newspaper *Belarus. Segodnya*, continued.

Lukashenka [stated](#) that «only the parties that act in conformity with the basic principles of the internal and foreign policy should work on the political field of the country.»

[Agreements were underway](#) to harmonize the Belarusian and Russian legislation on NGO financing, in particular, to remove restrictions on NGOs receiving funding from each of the countries.

Telegram channels Student Movement of Gomel, Viasna/Human Rights in Belarus, Coordination Council, and website <https://rada.vision> were recognized as extremist materials.

757 non-profit organizations in Belarus [were](#) in the process of forced liquidation and 416 ones [decided](#) to self-liquidate.

January 2023

Andrei Dmitriev, former co-chair of the *Tell the Truth* movement, was detained. He was charged under Article 342(1) of the Criminal Code (organizing and preparing actions grossly violating public order or actively participating in them).

Former leader of the Belarusian Radio-Electrical Manufacturing Workers' Trade Union (REP) Henadz Fiadynich and leader of the Orsha REP branch, acting REP chairperson Vasil Berasneu were sentenced to nine years' imprisonment in a colony with a reinforced regime, REP's activist [Vatslau Areshka](#) to eight years' imprisonment in a general regime colony for restrictive measures aimed at harming the national security of the Republic of Belarus (Art. 361(3) of the Criminal Code), inciting social hatred and enmity (Art. 130(3) of

the Criminal Code), and establishing an extremist formation or participating in it (361-1(1, 3) of the Criminal Code).

18 people were included on the «List of persons in respect of whom special proceedings were initiated and being summoned to a criminal authority.»

The management of major IT companies received lists of their employees who had donated to solidarity funds, in particular BYPOL and BYSOL, via Facebook, with a proposition for them to come to the State Security Committee for a talk.

Telegram chat Independent Trade Union of Gomel, Youtube channel BYPOL — Union of Belarusian Security Men, visual material (image, logo, digital watermark, etc.) and text «BYPOL» regardless of the medium, website *Our House*, Telegram channels Rabochy Rukh, KPD. Coalition of Protest Neighborhoods, Rabochy Rukh Instagram account, *Malady Front* VKontakte community, 21 web-resources of the HRC *Viasna* and its regional branches, Youtube channel Alliance of Belarus` Investigators were recognized as extremist materials.

The practice of discrediting civil society organizations by the pro-government mass media, in particular by the Presidential Administration's newspaper *Belarus. Segodnya*. This time it targeted the leaders of the forcibly liquidated public association *Radislava* as well as human rights activists of the Human Rights Center *Viasna*.

The Law of the Republic of Belarus of 3 January 2023 № 240-3 «On confiscation of property» regulates the procedure for confiscation of property in the territory of the Republic of Belarus from foreign states, persons from foreign states and their affiliated persons who commit unfriendly acts towards Belarusian legal or natural persons. Herewith, the law does not define the notion of «unfriendly acts.»

The Law of the Republic of Belarus of 5 January 2023 No. 242-Z «On Amendments to the Law of the Republic of Belarus 'On Citizenship of the Republic of Belarus'» extended the grounds for loss of citizenship of the Republic of Belarus, in particular, acquired by birth, due to an effective Belarus` court sentence confirming participation of a person in extremist activities or causing serious harm to the interests of the country, if this person is abroad.

768 non-profit organizations in Belarus [were](#) in the process of forced liquidation and 421 ones [decided](#) to self-liquidate.

February 2023

Tatsiana Zhuravskaya, chair of the republican public association *People Plus* was detained.

Member of the Union of Poles Andrei Poczobut was [sentenced](#) to eight years' imprisonment in a reinforced regime penal colony under Article 361 (calling to acts aimed at harming the national security of the Republic of Belarus) and Article 130 (inciting of enmity or discord) of the Criminal Code.

Ten people were sentenced to terms of up 11 to 15 years in prison under Article 356 of the Criminal Code (treason against the state), Article 361-1 of the Criminal Code (establishing an extremist formation or participating in it), several defendants were also charged under Article 188 (slander) and one of them under Article 295 of the Criminal Code (illegal actions with firearms, ammunition, and explosives) in the «*Rabochy Rukh* case.»

The Minsk Tsentralny District Court considered an appeal against the decision of the KGB to recognize *Rabochy Rukh* as an extremist formation. The complaint was not satisfied.

People continued to be summoned to the KGB departments for their donations via Facebook to solidarity funds. Those who came to such talks were told about possible prosecution for abetting extremist activities, forced to write confessions about their donations to «extremist funds» and obliged to transfer large amounts of money mainly in support of state social institutions.

The website, Telegram channel, Telegram chat, YouTube, Instagram, and VKontakte community of *Honest People*, Telegram chat «Гарадзенская праваабарона»/Haradzenskaya Pravaabarona» were recognized as extremist materials.

The practice of discrediting civil society organizations in the pro-governmental media continued: once again a libel was [published](#) against environmental organizations.

The law of the Republic of Belarus of 14 February 2023 No. 251-3 «On Amending Laws on the Activities of Political Parties and Other Public Associations» was adopted which in general [changed neither](#) the procedure for registration, nor the procedure for activity of public associations. They must bring their statutes in conformity with the new requirements of the law (mainly the republican associations to be affected, because the new requirements demand that they have registered structures in most regions of Belarus and Minsk). The necessity of re-registration was established for political parties (two pro-governmental parties meet the criteria for the re-registration). The minimal number of party founders (members) was increased from 1,000 to 5,000 people, and the obligatory presence of their organizational structures in all regions and Minsk, as well as in at least one third of districts of each region and in at least in one third of districts of Minsk were established.

The Presidential Decree No. 25 of 6 February 2023 «On Consideration of Appeals of Belarusian Citizens Being Abroad Regarding Their Committing Offenses» established a Commission for Consideration of Appeals of Belarusian Citizens Being Abroad Regarding Their Committing Offenses. The appeals must contain, among other things, the reasons why a person left the country and the circumstances due to which he/she believes that he/she may be held criminally or administratively liable.

The Law of the Republic of Belarus of 14 February 2023 «On the Essentials of Civil Society» [provided for](#) special forms of cooperation with the state for a narrow circle of republican public associations (five associations meet the criteria) within the framework of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly (ABPA).

797 non-profit organizations in Belarus [were](#) in the process of forced liquidation and 432 ones [decided](#) to self-liquidate.

March 2023

The Human Rights Center *Viasna*'s activists were sentenced to imprisonment in a penal colony with a reinforced regime: Ales Bialiatski to ten years, Valiantsin Stefanovich to nine years, Uladzimir Labkovich to seven years, and Dzmitry Salauyeu (in absentia) to eight years under Article 228(4) of the Criminal Code (smuggling — illegal transportation of large amounts of cash across the customs border of the Eurasian Economic Union by an organized group) and under Article 342(2) of the Criminal Code (financing of group actions grossly violating public order). They were sentenced to heavy fines, and an order was issued to collect solidarily from them the amount of 752,438.62 Belarusian rubles (almost \$297,650) that they allegedly «had obtained by criminal means» through «smuggling by an organized criminal group.»

Maksim Puchynski, deputy director of the Minsk Cycling Society, was sentenced to two years and six months of restraint of liberty without sending to an open institution («home chemistry») under part Article 342(1) of the Criminal Code (actively participating in the group actions grossly violating public order).

Tatsiana Kuzina, board member and co-founder of the *Sympa* school for young managers of public administration, expert of the *bipart* research project, and Valeriya Kostyugova, founder and editor of the expert community *Nashe Mnenie* website and head of the monitoring expert group *Belarus in Focus* were sentenced behind the closed doors to ten years of imprisonment in a general regime penal colony under Article 357(1) (aiding and abetting to actions aimed at seizure of power), Article 361(3) (appealing to actions aimed at harming the national security) and Article 130(3) (inciting social enmity and discord).

Chair of the 'Byelaruski' Free Trade Union Mikolai Sharakh was sentenced to 15 days of administrative arrest.

Telegram channel *Vitsebskaya Viasna*, website *Berastseyskaya Viasna*, Vkontakte community Center for New Ideas, Instagram account *Antifund. Assistance to political prisoners in Belarus* were recognized as extremist materials.

One of the largest Belarusian CSOs, the Belarusian Association of Journalists (BAJ) forcibly liquidated in August 2021, was recognized as an extremist formation.

«Summonses for talks», searches and detentions in connection with donations to «solidarity funds» and «financing of extremist activities» continued.

809 non-profit organizations in Belarus [were](#) in the process of forced liquidation and 440 ones [decided](#) to self-liquidate.