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Belarus: New report highlights deteriorating human rights situation



The EUAA has published a Country of Origin Information (COI) report on political opposition and dissent in Belarus. It provides a comprehensive overview of the country's increasingly restrictive political landscape following the 2025 presidential elections, and the lasting impact of the 2020 protests.

Covering the period between 1 January 2025 and 1 April 2026, the report gives a detailed overview of the current human rights situation in Belarus. It highlights **restrictions on freedom of expression and the right to peaceful assembly** and association, and **examines the situation of political opponents**, protesters, journalists, human rights defenders, lawyers, political prisoners, and their relatives, as well as LGBTIQ+ persons and activists.

The country's political system and governance is characterised by the authoritarian power of President Lukashenka, who, following the January 2025 elections, claimed a seventh consecutive term in office. The authorities have continued **a systematic campaign of repression against those involved in the 2020 protests**, with thousands of people convicted on politically motivated charges or forced into exile. Legislation has been widely used to criminalise dissent. Individuals have been **subjected to prosecution for expressing critique of the authorities**, supporting Ukraine, or associating with organisations deemed extremist.

The **judiciary functions as a tool of political repression**, with proceedings conducted in *absentia* and trials held behind closed doors. Law enforcement agencies carry out large-scale surveillance over the population and the Belarusian diaspora abroad. Belarusians returning to the country are **subjected to systematic phone searches and interrogations** at border crossing points. The authorities have also **extended repression to the family members of activists** and political prisoners through raids, interrogations, and the confiscation of property.

EU asylum situation for Belarusian nationals

In 2025, Belarusians lodged 3 800 asylum applications in the EU+, a decrease of a quarter compared to 2024. So far, this declining trend has persisted in January and February 2026, with Belarusians lodging 450 applications, almost 40% less than in the same period the previous year. Between January 2025 and February 2026, over three quarters of Belarusian applications were lodged in Poland.

In the same period, around 3 200 first instance decisions were issued, with a recognition rate of 71%. Notably, over three quarters of positive outcomes granted subsidiary protection. At the end of February 2026, close to 4 000 Belarusian applications were awaiting a decision at first instance, with the majority pending in Poland.

Background

The EUAA regularly updates its Country of Origin Information reports, which aim to provide accurate and reliable up-to-date information on third countries to support EU+ asylum and migration authorities in reaching accurate and fair decisions in asylum procedures, as well as to support national policymaking.

Download the COI Report - Belarus: Political Opposition and Dissent

Any further information may be obtained from the European Union Agency for Asylum's Press Office at the following email addresses:

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