PERSECUTION OF JOURNALISTS AND MASS MEDIA IN BELARUS

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AND MASS MEDIA IN BELARUS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The situation in Belarus since August 2020 is characterized by systematic and massive human rights violations and crackdown on civil society and independent media. The human rights violations are perpetrated as a part of a systematic and widespread attack against the civilian population and may amount to crimes against humanity.

Independent media, journalists and bloggers have become one of the first targets in a policy of persecution by the State authorities against anyone who express his/her disagreement with the state policy and the political regime or alleged to have such a position. After the presidential elections on August 9, 2020, the independent Belarusian media faced the most brutal repressions since the independence of Belarus in 1991.

Suppression of press freedom is an integral part of the intentional policy of persecution against independent media and journalists aimed to “clean-up” the information space and monopolize the media content. The acting Belarusian government does its utmost to neutralize independent media and journalists and to prevent free, pluralistic and independent reporting about the situation in the country for the Belarusian residents and for the international community.

If these aims are achieved, the Belarusians will have access only to the state propaganda instead of trustworthy information provided by the independent media.

Only on July 8-9, 2021 around 40 searches were conducted in the offices of 12 independent media and in the houses of journalists, at least 15 journalists were detained and interrogated, 4 – arrested under criminal charges of terrorism.

Persecution of journalists, bloggers and media in Belarus take numerous forms: criminal and administrative prosecution, arbitrary detentions, torture and physical violence (including use of firearms against journalists), searches, unfair trials, closure of media, refusals to print and retail media, internet shut-downs, recognition of social media channels and publications as extremist, institutional pressure on media, including warnings and fines.

Committing a crime of persecution, all Belarusian state bodies act jointly and synchronize their positions and actions that demonstrate systematic and intentional policy at the state level. There are no mechanisms at the national level for the effective protection of rights.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Information, Prosecutor’s offices, Ministry of Internal Affairs, the State Control Committee, Investigative Committee, economic courts and Supreme Court are all involved in the institutional persecution of media. The Cabinet of Ministers, Parliament and Constitutional Court participate in the law-making process. MIA (including OMON and GUPOBiK), KGB, general courts at all levels, Prosecutor’s offices and Investigative Committee take part in the individual persecution of the journalists. Lists of alleged perpetrators may be found in Annexes to the present report.

INTRODUCTION

In the aftermath of the presidential election on August 9, 2020, followed by mass protests, the Belarusian media have faced severe repression. The post-election period (from August 2020 to the present) has been the most difficult time for mass media in the entire history of independent Belarus. For the exercise of freedom of speech and the right to receive and disseminate information, journalists and bloggers (treated as organizers of protests by the authorities) are subjected to violence, arbitrary detentions, interrogations, raids and searches, administrative and criminal cases convictions, and fines. There have been registered facts of firearms usage against journalists.

According to the Belarusian Association of Journalists’ figures, the number of violations of journalists’ rights by government representatives in Belarus in 2020 was more than 8 times higher than the average of the previous ten years (856 administrative and criminal cases, detentions, arrests in 2020, compared to an average of 104.8 in 2010-2019). The vast majority of attacks on journalists and the media were related to their coverage of the presidential elections in August and the protests that followed them.

In 2021, the situation has not changed. Moreover, in late 2020 – early 2021, the authorities began to actively harass journalists and media specialists with criminal proceedings and charges. The Belarusian Association of Journalists registered the following cases of persecution of journalists in the 11 months since August 2020:

Criminal prosecution of journalists and media employees is the worst type of repression. As of July 15, 2021, 29 journalists and media specialists, as well as dozens of bloggers and administrators of Internet sites, are in custody on criminal charges.

The post-election repression against the media sector has been:

- **severe** (large-scale criminal prosecution of journalists and media specialists; the use of direct violence against journalists and media employees);
- **long-lasting** (the repression against the media, as well as against civil society and the opposition, did not stop after the suppression of active protests, but even intensified after that);
- **consistent** (pressure was exerted on almost all spheres related to the freedom of expression).

2. [https://baj.by/en/analytics/repressions-against-journalists-belarus-2021-chart](https://baj.by/en/analytics/repressions-against-journalists-belarus-2021-chart)
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The consistency of pressure on the media sphere and on the spheres related to freedom of expression manifests in:

- the Internet blackout in Belarus in the first days after the election and regular blocking of mobile Internet during mass protests;
- restrictions on online access to independent news websites;
- the crackdown of the largest Internet portal in Belarus, TUT.BY, with the audience of 60% of all Belarusian Internet users (withdrawal of the portal’s media status, criminal prosecution of its employees, blocking of the portal, actions to recognize its materials as extremist);
- pressure on the owners and administrators of Telegram and YouTube channels, as well as local chats (from criminal charges and pressure on administrators to declaring their materials extremist);
- bans on printing and distribution of independent newspapers (including Narodnaya Volia, Slobodne Novosti Plus, BellGazeta, Brestskaya Gazeta, Hazeta Slonimskaya, Intex-press, Novy Chas), which in most cases led their suspension;
- searches and seizure of all editorial equipment of Hazeta Slonimskaya, leading to its suspension;
- denial of accreditation to foreign reporters and subsequent revocation of accreditation of all foreign media reporters who had received it earlier (Belarusian citizens working for European media still cannot get accredited);
- the dismissal of dozens of state media employees who refused to spread fake news on the air and on the pages of state media, and their further administrative and even criminal prosecution;
- exclusion of Euronews TV channel from TV networks in Belarus and the increase of pro-Kremlin propaganda on Belarusian TV.
- The Belarusian Association of Journalists (BAJ) that promotes freedom of expression has faced harassment, too. The security forces raided the apartments of its leaders and BAJ office, seizing equipment, money, and documents. BAJ office and bank account were blocked for a month. The equipment and some of the documents have not been returned yet. The Ministry of Justice has launched an examination into the BAJ activities.
- The undemocratic legislation in the field of freedom of expression was further amended in 2021 (amendments to the Laws “On Mass Media”, “On Mass Events”, “On Internal Affairs Bodies”, “On Countering Extremism”, etc.) in order to legitimize the repressive practices that had already been widely used in Belarus.
- The following chapters describe the main forms of persecution of independent journalists and media in Belarus and present the selected illustrative cases. The review and description of all cases of persecution of journalists in Belarus could be found at the resources of Belarusian Association of Journalists.

1. CRIMINAL PROSECUTION OF JOURNALISTS

The criminal prosecution on politically motivated charges has been one of the common tools used by the Belarusian authoritarian regime against its citizens for the last three decades. However, in 2020-2021 the journalists are prosecuted literally for performing their professional duties or as a revenge. The criminal prosecution of independent media started in June 2020, before the presidential elections on August 9, 2020 with the detentions of bloggers, and intensified since autumn 2020. As of July 15, 2021 there are 29 journalists and media workers being detained in Belarus on criminal charges in connection with their work. They include several ‘group’ cases, such as 12 persons are detained within TUT.BY case, 4 persons detained within ‘Nasha Niva’ case, 5 persons detained within PressClub case. The most common accusations are tax evasion or organisation of mass riots. The criminal prosecution is characterised by prolonged groundless pre-trial detention, lack of any investigative actions and violation of basic fair trial guarantees during the trials, such as equality of parties, publicity, presumption of innocence, right to legal aid and others. The detention conditions are quite poor, especially in pre-trial detention centers.

The criminal prosecution is performed by several state bodies, including Ministry of Internal Affairs, KGB, Investigative Committee, the State Control Committee, general courts at all levels and Prosecutor’s offices. List of alleged perpetrators for criminal prosecution may be found in Annexes to the present report.

1.1. THE CASE AGAINST JOURNALISTS OF BELSAT TV CHANNEL KATSIARYNA ANDREYEVA (BAKHVALAVA) AND DARIA CHULTSOVA

On November 15, 2020, the journalists broadcast live from a mass street rally in Minsk, first from the scene of the murder of Raman Bandarenka, later from an apartment of a nearby building. After the dispersal of the protest by police, GUBOPK (Main Directorate for Combating Organized Crime and Corruption) officers (GUBOPK chief is Mikalai Karpenko) broke into the apartment they had been livestreaming from.

The journalists were detained on charges of participating in actions that grossly violate public order (Article 542 of the Criminal Code of Belarus). The case was investigated by the Frunzenski district department of the Investigative Committee (Investigators Ihor Kurylovich and Ihor Kudzelia, head of the department Svirhei Kaptseva).

On November 15, 2020 Katsiaryna Andreyeva’s apartment was searched. On December 12, 2020 Daria Chultsova’s apartment was searched.

On February 9, 2021 the Frunzenski district court of Minsk began the trial over the Belsat journalists (Judge Natalia Buhuk, prosecutor Alina Kasyanchyk), and on February 18, Andreyeva and Chultsova were sentenced to 2 years of imprisonment each. On April 23, 2021 the Minsk city court (judges Alena Ananich and Piotr Arlou, prosecutor Voha Herasimovich) upheld the verdict. Since June, the journalists have been serving their sentences in the correctional facility No. 7 in Homel.

On January 16, 2021 Minsktrans, state-owned transportation enterprise, claimed 11,562 BYN (around 3,700 EUR) in damages allegedly caused by their actions.
On November 12, 2020, activist Raman Bandarenka died in a Minsk hospital after a severe beating by security forces. The Prosecutor General's office made a statement about the activist who had been in a state of alcoholic intoxication. The hospital doctor Artiom Sarokin refuted that and sent Katsiaryna Barysevich a photo of Bandarenka's blood test results that showed he had no alcohol in his blood. The family of the deceased reported the same facts to the journalist. She published an article on this on TUT.BY.

On November 19, 2020 the Prosecutor General's Office (Prosecutor General Andrei Shved) started a criminal case against doctor Artiom Sarokin and journalist Katsiaryna Barysevich under Article 178 Part 3 of the Criminal Code (disclosure of medical secrets that entailed serious consequences). The journalist was detained and placed in the KGB pre-trial detention center, her home was searched.

On December 9, 2020 the Centralny district court of Minsk heard the journalist's attorney's complaint against her detention. Judge Tatiana Aivakaya ruled to dismiss the complaint.

On January 22, 2021 the Prosecutor General's Office completed the investigation and referred the case to Minsk city court (Chairman Pavel Korchunov).

On February 19, 2021 the Maskouski district court of Minsk (judge Sviatlana Bandarenka, prosecutor Ludmila Ivanenka) started the trial behind closed doors. On March 2, 2021 the court found the doctor and the journalist guilty. Sarokin received a suspended sentence of 2 years, and Barysevich got 6 months of imprisonment. The journalist has fully served her sentence and was released on May 19, 2021.

On March 12, 2021 the Belarusian KGB detained Iashyn, who lives in Hrodna. Dziarz is an investigative journalist. In Belarus, he works with Novy Chas newspaper. His last article for Novy Chas was dedicated to former Ukrainian Berkut officers who fled Ukraine and got jobs in the Belarusian police forces.

On March 12, 2021 the security forces searched the journalist's apartment and his mother's house. On March 15, 2021 they searched the home of Iashyn's 95-year-old grandmother. The journalist was detained and put in custody in a pre-trial detention center (Aliaksandr Laurencuk was investigator for particularly important cases of the investigative department of the KGB for the Hrodna region; Aliaksandr Nevarouski, the head of the Hrodna KGB).

On March 20, 2021 Iashyn was charged under Article 365 of the Criminal Code, allegedly for exerting influence on a police officer in order to change the nature of his legal activities by disclosing information that he wants to keep secret. The journalist has been in pre-trial detention facility since March 12, 2021.

Press Club Belarus staff Yulia Stslutska, Alia Sharka, Piotr Sutsuki, Stanislav Alshevski, Sergei Yakupov and journalist Ksenia Lutskina were detained in Minsk on December 22, 2020. The Department for Financial Investigations of the State Control Committee (Ihar Maraschau, director of the Department) searched their homes and the Press Club office.


Dozens of people who collaborated with Press Club Belarus have been questioned as witnesses from January to May, 2021. At present, the Press Club Belarus team is kept in the pre-trial detention center in Minsk.

On May 18, 2021 the Department for Financial Investigations of the State Control Committee (Ihar Marshalau, director of the Department) conducted searches in the office of the most popular Belarusian portal TUT.BY, the apartments of editors, accountants and journalists. Equipment and documents were seized. TUT.BY office has been sealed from May 18, 2021.

On May 18, 2014 journalists, employees and former employees of TUT.BY and its partner companies were detained and put in custody: CEO Ludmila Chekina, editor-in-chief Maryna Zolatava, deputy director Aliaksandr Daineka, manager Andrei Audzeu, CEO of hoster.by Stanislav Pavalishau, TAM.BY project manager Daria Dziarz, lawyer Katsiaryna Takschanka, former lawyer Iryna Kostyiuchanka. Co-owner of hoster.by Yulia Charniauskaya is placed under house arrest. All of them were recognized as political prisoners by human rights defenders.

On May 29, 2021 the Investigative Committee (chairman Dzmitry Hara) filed charges of tax evasion on a particularly large scale (Article 243 part 2 of the Criminal Code of Belarus) against 15 journalists, employees and former employees of TUT.BY and hoster.by.

On May 18, 2021, the court in Homel began to hear his criminal case behind closed doors. Even his family were not allowed to attend the trial.

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2. VIOLENCE AND TORTURE AGAINST JOURNALISTS

Mass violence was used against journalists on August 9–11, 2020. The Belarusian Association of Journalists registered at least 67 facts of violence on August 9, 2020 — June 30, 2021. The use of force was intentional, and the journalists, wearing the specific insignia — badges, vests etc. — were targeted and attacked. Violence was used against both Belarusian and foreign journalists, men and women in different cities. There were at least three cases of police using firearms against journalists during protests in Minsk. As a result, they were injured, including severe injuries that required long-term treatment in hospital.

The physical violence was mainly initiated and performed by Ministry of Internal Affairs: OMON special unit, GUBOPiK and unidentified units participated in street violence, torture and ill-treatment were widely practiced in local police departments, police transport and in detention centers (especially temporary detention center at Akrestin street in Minsk - Akrestina prison). All the units were under command, and executed the orders to harass journalists. Despite the subsequent complaints of journalists, not a single case on the attacks, torture and ill-treatment of journalists was initiated.

2.1. YAHOR MARTSINOVICH, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF THE NASHA NIVA (NN.BY)

On the night of August 11, 2020 Martinovich drove to pick up his team members near the Pushkinskaya subway station. His car was stopped by officers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Minister Yury Karazeyev. Head of the Minsk City police Ivan Kubrako), dragged out of the car, detained, and taken to the Zavadski police department of Minsk (Head Kiryl Kislou). In the police department, the journalist was severely beaten — he received several dozen blows to different parts of the body with fists and batons. Then he was taken to a Zhodzina jail, and later released on August 12, 2020.

2.2. ALENA DUBOVIK (SHCHARBINSKAYA)

On August 10, 2020 Belsat TV reporter Alena Dubovik was covering protests in Minsk. After that, she came to the police department to report her colleague, Belsat cameraman, as missing. Her colleague had been detained earlier. A paddy wagon drove up to the police building, the riot police came out and grabbed the people near standing the police station, mostly families of those detained, looking for their relatives. Alena also was arrested. The journalist spent three days in the Akrestsina jail, where she was severely beaten by the Akrestsina staff (Head of the Akrestsina jail Yauheni Shapetska). After her release, she was hospitalized in an emergency hospital with a closed abdominal injury, lower abdominal wall confusion, bladder confusion, and ovary rupture.

2.3. YAUHEN MIKALAEVICH, JOURNALIST OF THE MEDIA-POLESIÉ WEBSITE

The journalist was covering a street protest in Minsk on August 10, 2020. He was detained in the central square of the city and beaten by OMON officers (Maksim Mikihovich, commander of the OMON of the Brest Regional Department of Internal Affairs). The journalist received head injuries. He spent 7 days in the detention center and was released on August 17, 2020.

The journalist recalls: “On August 10, 2020 I came to take pictures. I saw policemen there. I came over and took a picture of them. Then I got a phone call that riot police were coming. I walked down the street a couple of meters and saw them running. I started running away towards the building of the city executive committee. And I see policemen with shields already running from there. I raised my hands. I had a press badge on me. They detained me. They took me inside the building of the executive committee and threw me to the ground. I shouted “Journalist!” They hit my head against the floor twice, then they hit me with their hands’. I kept running.”

2.4. NATALLIA LUBEUSKAYA, JOURNALIST OF NASHA NIVA NEWSPAPER

She was covering a street protest in Minsk on August 10, 2020 near Korona supermarket on Kalvariajska Street in a group of journalists. Natalia was wearing a blue Press vest and Nasha Niva badge. At about 20:00, a detachment of security forces in unmarked camouflage ran out of nearby courtyards and shot bullets targeting the group of journalists (video of the incident). The journalist was taken by ambulance to the emergency hospital with a gunshot wound to her knee and spent 38 days in hospital. She reported the incident and applied to the Frunzenski department of the Investigative Committee (head Dzianis Shamah) requesting the instigation of a criminal case. The criminal case has still not been initiated.

2.5. IRYNA ARAKOUSHKAYA, A FREELANCE JOURNALIST, COLLABORATED WITH THE BELSAT TV CHANNEL

She was covering street protests in Minsk on August 10, 2020. Wearing a blue “Press” vest she reported from a rally near the Pushkinskaya subway station. Security officers in black uniforms opened fire with rubber bullets. The journalist was wounded by a rubber bullet, resulting in a hemotoma on her leg. The journalist recalls the events: “I was standing on a hill (about 40 meters from the main events) and filmed the rally from above. When the conflict started and masked people in black uniforms approached a group of journalists, I stopped filming and ran up to a building on Pritytski 48, together with other journalists and some other people. Near the building the crowd split up: some people ran into the courtyard, my colleague (Aliaksandr Vasiukovich) and I ran along the building. Two men in black uniforms and masks (only their eyes could be seen), with long guns followed us. At that moment, one of them shot me. I ran out into the courtyard. I fell down, punched the floor, and ran into the building.”

The journalist was assessed in the 6th City Hospital of Minsk. She reported the incident and applied to the Frunzenski department of the Investigative Committee (head Dzianis Shamah) requesting instigation of a criminal case. The criminal case has not been initiated.

2.6. STANISLAU IVASHKEVICH, A JOURNALIST, COOPERATES WITH THE BELSAT TV CHANNEL

On August 9, 2020 he covered the voting at a polling station in Minsk. After the closure of the polling station, he was detained by police and taken directly to the Akrestsina detention center (Head Yauheni Shapetska) where he was severely beaten by the guards. The detained people had to pass through a “corridor” of security officers, each of whom beat a detainee with batons on the back, legs and head. They used plastic zip ties as handcuffs (the ones designed for construction work). The zip ties were put on by OMON officers (Dmitry Balaba, head of the OMON of the Minsk City Police Department). The journalist recalls: “The blows were made with rubber batons. Some officers wore gloves when they used the batons, I was hit about 10 times on my arms, with which I tried to protect myself, on the lower back, on the soles of my feet, and my shoulder blades. There were about 30 of them. They lined up in the corridor near our cell, their faces covered with masks. The uniform was like that of the detention center staff: black T-shirts, black pants. Black balaclavas, handcuffs and a holster on the belt. I got the impression that the holsters were empty. It seems to me that some of the employees were in police uniforms, but I can’t say for sure now. Some of them struck hard, some blows were weak, without much brutality. It seems to me that one or two officers did not hit me at all. We were forced to run into the courtyard, where a line of officers, about 10 people, made us kneel, our heads down, and started hitting us with rubber batons. Each officer had a person to beat”.

10 https://baj.by/be/content/journalist-yevgeniy-nikolaevich-bili-unizhali-devochek-razdevali-zapalo-dopol
11 https://t.me/bajby/9629
12 https://t.me/bajby/1045
2.8. YAN ROMAN, A JOURNALIST OF TELEVIZJA POLSKA

The journalist, wearing a blue “Press” vest, was covering street protests in Hrodna on August 11, 2020. Yan Roman was detained by the OMON of the Hrodna regional police department (head Viktar Krautsevich). He was severely beaten during detention: he had 4 teeth knocked out, an eye hematoma, a bone fracture on his left arm, and numerous abrasions and bruises.

The journalist recalls: “Someone kicked me in the face. When I fell, two people started kicking me and beating me with batons. I shouted: “I’m a journalist, don’t touch my wife!” One of the guys asked for my last name. I answered, and he said, “Ah, now we’ve got you.” He took my camera and yelled: “The country is at war because of journalists like you.” And he started hitting me with a stick. I tried to protect my face with my hands, and I got injuries (broken wrists).”

The beating continued in the Kastrychnitski district police department of Hrodna (head of the Kastrychnitski district department Vadzim Siniauski). Two days later, the journalist was released and placed to the Hrodna Emergency Hospital with fractures of both hands (photo9). He was interrogated by the staff of the Hrodna region Investigative Committee (head Eduard Malinouksi) about the beating and injuries. The criminal case has not been started.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE PROSECUTION OF JOURNALISTS

Administrative prosecution of journalists and freelancers increased in the post-election period. The journalists who covered or livestreamed from the protests were especially targeted. Despite wearing distinction clothes and badges, they were detained and charged with participation in unauthorized street actions, disorderly conduct, as well as illegal production and (or) distribution of media products.

In this format of prosecution, the important role is played by the general courts of all levels. The court decisions were largely based on the testimonies of law enforcement officers, whose identities are often hidden and not disclosed to accused, and documents provided by that. The courts of the second instances normally left the previous decision in force despite the grave violations of fair trial guarantees.

In the same way as during the criminal prosecution, the detention conditions are poor, and in some cases were even worsened by the prison administration to additionally punish the detained journalists.

3.1. DETENTION OF THE JOURNALISTS OF TYT.BY AT THE STUDENTS’ RALLY ON SEPTEMBER 1, 2020

On September 1, 2020 there was a student protest in Minsk15. The participants called for the resignation of Alexander Lukashenko, end of police violence and accountability of those responsible for torture, the release of political prisoners, and new presidential elections.

Besides students, the security forces detained six journalists that day: TYT.BY reporters Aliaksandr Sudnikau and Volha Niaborskaya, Komsomolskaya Pravda in Belarus journalists Siarheu Shchahalou, Mikita Dubaleka and Maria Elesevich, and Andrei Shauluha from the BelaPAN news agency. The journalists spent the night in the Kastrychnitski district police department.

11. Five journalists being released from prison after they were arrested for covering the September 1st rally. Photo: Radio Svaboda.

On September 2, 2020, judges of the Kastrychnitski district court of Minsk sentenced the journalists to three days of arrest16, thereby justifying their arbitrary detention and imprisonment for performing their professional activities. The verdicts were made based on contradictory testimony of masked witnesses with classified personal data.

12. Jurisdictions of the journalists of TYT.BY at the students’ rally on September 1, 2020

http://mediazona.by/online/2020/09/01/students-protest
http://spring96.org/ru/news/99381

3.2. DETENTION OF A JOURNALIST OF REFORM.BY YAUHENIA DOUHAYA

On October 9, 2020 police detained a Reform.by journalist Yauhenia Douhaya. They arrested her near her home in front of her 8-year-old daughter. In the police station, she was asked about her journalistic activity. The officers threatened her with criminal charges and issued a report on her alleged participation in two unauthorized mass protests, one of which she covered as a journalist. The journalist spent at least two days in a cold cell awaiting trial. A mattress, a pillow and a blanket were given to her only in the evening of the next day. In the detention center, an officer who interrogated Douhaya reproached her for being a bad mother and threatened to send her daughter to an orphanage. On October 12, 2020, the chairman of the Partyzanski district court of Minsk, Mikhail Khoma, fined the journalist 500 base values (500 Euro). The journalist had to leave the country, fearing criminal prosecution for her journalism and for the fate of her daughter.

3.3. BEATING OF BELSAT CAMERAMAN DZMITRY SOLTAN

Dzmitry Soltan (Buyanau), cameraman of the Polish TV channel Belsat, was filming a peaceful event on November 1, 2020, and was wearing a Press vest. Despite this, the law enforcement officers knocked him down and began to kick him with legs and batons, while his camera continued to work. The policemen smashed the camera and stole a memory card from it. Later Dzmitry was diagnosed with a dislocation of the collarbone, a torn ligament of the left shoulder and a head hematoma. On November 2, 2020, judge of the Partyzanski district court of Minsk, Natalia Dziadkova sentenced the journalist to 10 days of administrative arrest. Dzmitry was also informed that he was a suspect in a criminal case started for organization and preparation of actions that grossly violate public order.

3.4. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS AGAINST JOURNALISTS ALIAKSANDR BURAKOU AND ULADZIMIR LAPTSIEVICH

On May 15, 2021, journalists Aliaksandr Burakou and Uladzimir Laptsievich were tried in Mahiliou.17 They were detained on May 12 near the building of the Mahiliou regional court, while covering criminal prosecution of opposition activists. Both journalists were sentenced to 20 days of arrest. Aliaksandr Burakou collaborates with Deutsche Welle. He received 20 days of arrest for “repeated participation in an unauthorized event within a year”. A similar penalty was imposed on Uladzimir Laptsievich, a journalist of 6tv.by. The ruling was based solely on the testimony of a police officer of Leninski district police department of Mahiliou, Vasily Dzaidko. The ruling was passed by judge of the Leninski district court of Mahiliou, Viktoria Paliakova.

When released, the journalists described the conditions in jail: they had been sleeping “on bare boards” for 20 days and woken up twice a night. In the daytime they were taken out into the corridor, forced to strip naked and stand near the wall with legs far apart. The officers would hit them on the legs if the legs were stretched not far enough.

3.5. THE AMENDED CODE OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFENSES

On March 1, 2021 a new version of the Code of Administrative Offenses came into force. On the one hand, the new version of the Code lowered the upper threshold of the fine for illegal production and dissemination of information from 50 to 20 base values (from 500 to 300 Euro). On the other hand, it introduced the confiscation of items of an administrative offense.

This is an offence that journalists and freelancers often "fall within", if their stories are published in foreign media. Moreover, the offense derives not from the content of their materials, but from the very fact of their appearance in foreign mass media, since Article 35 part 4 of the Law of "On Mass Media" prohibits professional activities of foreign media journalists without accreditation.

The case of freelance journalist Dzmitry Lupach is illustrative in this respect. On February 26, 2021 alone, three hearings by three different courts were held. Mukhayevo court (judge Ludmila Vaschanka), Pastavy court (judge Natalia Makismovich), and Shkarskuchynia court (judge Alksera Tabola) – all in Vitsebsk region – fined Lupach 90 base values each (900 Euro) for the appearance of his journalistic work on Belsat.

4. INSTITUTIONAL HARASSMENT OF MASS MEDIA OUTLETS

Institutional harassment of media is another serious form of violation of press freedom. It includes various actions that seriously restrict the functioning of media or lead to its suspension. It includes forced shut down of media, blocking the access to the web-sites, refusals to print and/or distribute media (for printed media), fines, searches and warning for unlawful activities for media, deprivation of accreditation of foreign journalists. All these forms intensified since autumn 2020 and put the independent media on the edge of survival. If the pressure continues, the independent media will stop functioning.

Together with that, the state media enjoy full support from the government, transmitting more and more aggressive state propaganda that instigates hatred in the society and to the neighboring countries. Dozens of journalists, who worked in the state-owned media and who expressed disagreement with the government police were fined, some even faced administrative or criminal prosecution.

In addition to the previously named state actors that take part in the repression, here the key role is played by the Ministry of Information, Ministry of Justice, the State Control Committee and economic courts of all levels as well as state-owned enterprises – RUE Belpchota (the state-owned operator of the national postal network) and RUE “Belsoyuzpechat” (the largest state-owned retail press network).

4.1. TUT.BY: WITHDRAWAL OF THE MEDIA STATUS AND SHUTTING DOWN THE PORTAL

On September 18, 2020, the Ministry of Information filed a lawsuit to deprive TUT.BY of a status of an online publication. On October 1, 2020 the Minister of Information ordered to suspend the portal’s status of mass media until December 30, 2020. On December 3, 2020, the Economic Court of the city of Minsk, supported the suit of the Ministry of Information and ruled to deprive TUT.BY of the status of mass media.18

The grounds for the ruling were 4 warnings from the Ministry of Information on the following articles:

- “Seven times more voters and “secret” protocols. What violations did the observers see and what did the CEC say?”
- “The State Control Committee will be able to pay large bonuses to employees who show their work in high-profile cases”;
- “TUT.BY editor visited by security forces. Her daughter charged with organizing mass riots”;
- “The Belarusian customs asked to confirm that “Harry Potter” did not contain calls to overthrow the government.”

At the same time, when TUT.BY appealed against the warnings, to the Supreme Court, one of them was declared invalid. The current Law on Mass Media allows to strip a publication of its media status after two or more written warnings within a year.

On May 18, 2021, the Financial Investigations Department of the State Control Committee searched the homes of TUT.BY management and its office. The searches followed the instigation of a criminal case for alleged tax evasion on a particularly large scale.

On the same day, the Ministry of Information decided to restrict access to TUT.BY and its copies on the basis of a notification from the Prosecutor General’s Office. The Prosecutor General’s Office stated that it had established “numerous facts” of prohibited information posted on the portal (for example, about the BYSOL Fund). During the search, the security forces seized the servers. That led to the closure of TUT.BY. To date, the team works only in social media.

On June 24, 2021, a court hearing began, where the Ministry of Internal Affairs asked to recognize the blocked portal, as well as its social media pages, extremist materials. The hearing has been suspended until further notice.19

17 http://spring96.org/ru/news/103369
18 https://baj.by/ru/content/v-tutby-prishyol-dfr-idut-obshnie-say-tut-byl-zablokirovan-denezhnye-svyazi
19 Background information: TUT.BY was founded on October 5, 2000, and was one of the most popular Internet resources in Belarus. According to the Yandex.Metrica service, its monthly audience recently amounted to about 20 million unique visitors, of which 70% are users from Belarus. After the presidential election in 2020, the portal and its journalists experienced serious pressure. In 2020, TUT.BY journalists were detained 38 times (journalist Alaksie Sudkiv was detained 4 times); 5 journalists
The websites of many media outlets were blocked after the election on August 9, to prevent the dissemination of information. From August 9 to 12, the Internet was blocked in Belarus. Problems with Internet access continued until the end of October: every Sunday during mass rallies, mobile providers suspended mobile Internet services for several hours “due to the requirements of authorized state bodies”.

After the elections, most of the independent websites that covered the socio-political situation were blocked, outside any legal procedure. Thus, the BAJ website was inaccessible for users in Belarus from 9 to 27 August, although there were no official rulings to restrict access to it.

The Law on Mass Media allows to restrict access to mass media websites “by decision (notification) of the national state administration body in the field of mass media or by a resolution of the Prosecutor General, or regional/Minsk city prosecutor”. At the same time, the Ministry of Information can rule to block a website “referring to written notifications by state bodies (organizations) that have revealed, within their competence, violations on the use of Internet resources for the dissemination of information, the dissemination of which is prohibited.”

On August 21 and 28, 2020, the Ministry of Information was reported to have restricted access to more than 70 Internet resources, which were either in conflict with the constitutional appeals and were used to coordinate actions on organizing mass disobedience to government representatives, as well as for “a number of articles that described the violence in Belarus after the end of the electoral campaign in a negative way and discredted the activities of law enforcement agencies.”

In November, among others the following media faced this kind of pressure:

Navi.by. On April 12, 2021, at the request of the Ministry of Information, access to the Navi.by news site was blocked23. Media.by. The publication was blocked by the order of the Ministry of Information on December 1, 2020 on the basis of a decision of the Central District court of Minsk24.

Mashka.by, gazetaby.com, etc. On August 21, 2020, the Ministry of Information ruled to block a number of Internet resources, including mashka.by and gazetaby.com25. The blocking of the sites was linked to an attempt by the authorities to block information about post-election protests in the country and severe violence against protesters.

In August 2021, a number of non-state print media have faced obstacles in printing and distribution. The government pushed RUE Belpoftchta (the state-owned operator of the national postal network) to exclude independent publications from subscription catalogs. Also, the private press is denied distribution by “Belsoyuzpechcat” (the largest state-owned retail press network).

The state agencies also put pressure on private retail chains, leading to their refusal to sell private print media in their chain stores.

This creates huge obstacles for the sale of the press and undermines the economic independence of the media outlets. In particular, the following media faced this kind of pressure:

Intex-press. On April 28, 2021, the team of Intex-press received a letter from RUE Belpoftchta stating that the newspaper would no longer be included in the subscription catalog for the second half of 202126.

On May 4, 2021, a letter from the Brest branch of RUE “Belsoyuzpechcat” stated that from May 5, 2021, the company “waives its contractual obligations unilaterally”27.

Nasha Niva. On April 8, 2021, the company received a letter that RUE “Belpoftchta” terminates the contract from July 202128. Nasha Historya, Dudu, and Astsiarozhna: Dzetsi magazines will not be included in the subscription catalog. In March 2021, RUE “Belsoyuzpechcat” refused to sell these magazines in its kiosks29.

BelGazeta, “Komsomolskaya Prava in Belarus”, “Narodnaya Volya”, “Svobodnye Novosti Putes”. These publications were not included in the RUE “Bel poftchta” subscription catalog for the first half of 202130.

Novy Chas. On January 14, 2021, the team of Novy Chas found that RUE “Belsoyuzpechcat” would not sell their newspaper. The print of the newspaper was temporarily suspended by the Russian authorities. The team also tried to print the newspaper in Moscow, however, the contract was not signed due to “a very high-level” pressure on the printing house.

Brestskaya Gazeta. On November 30, 2020, the editorial team of Brestskaya Gazeta found out that Brest Printing House, which had been printing the newspaper for 18 years (since the publication was founded, was to break the contract in 2021. The company management did not explain the reasons for this decision. The team tried to find a printing house in Pinsk, Minsk, and Brest, but had no success. Since January 2021, the newspaper has had a contract with the Hrodna Printing House for 8 years31.

On June 4, 2021, a letter from RUE “Belpoftchta” that the newspaper would not be included in the subscription catalog for the second half of 2021.

4.4. TERMINATION OF PRINTING CONTRACTS WITH MASS MEDIA BY PRINTING HOUSES

State printing houses used various pretexts (the wearing of the equipment, a large number of clients, etc.) to terminate printing contracts with non-state media, despite many years of cooperation. Both state and private printing presses refused to print the inquisitive publications, on the pretext that there were no funds higher in rank told them not to print the newspapers. There are cases when printing houses of other states (for example, in Moscow (Russian Federation)) subsequently, refused to sign contracts due to the pressure exerted on them.

In particular, the following media faced this kind of pressure:

Haza ta Slonimskaya. On June 1, 2021, the SUE “Hrodna Printing House” notified the team of Hazeta Slonimskaya”32 that printing of the newspaper was not possible “due to high workload and the wearing of the printing machine”. The newspaper had a contract with the Hrodna Printing House for 8 years33.

Intex-press. Intex-press newspaper received a letter from RUE “Belaruskii Dom Druku” on May 9, 2021. The printing house notified the editorial team that on May 9 it “unilaterally terminated the services contract.” The company did not specify any reasons. “We apologize and hope for mutual understanding,” says the letter.

Narodnaya Volya. Narodnaya Volya newspaper has been having trouble with printing in Belarus since August 21, 2020. Belaruskii Dom Druku (that describes itself as the “House of Printing (CEO explained, they were unable to print the issue due to a breakdown of the printing press. At the same time, the failure of the printing press did not particularly upset the management”. The team organized the printing in Russia (the city of Dolgoprudny). After, later the printing house terminated the contract; its activities were temporarily suspended by the Russian authorities. The team also tried to print the newspaper in Moscow. However, the contract was not signed due to “a very high-level” pressure on the printing house.

4.5. IMPOSITION OF FINES ON THE MEDIA

Most often, mass media are fined for previously posted material (which were later regarded as extremist), as well as interviewing people suspected or charged with crimes. The fines are very large. Together with the restricted access to distribution networks, these are a serious blow to the financial state of independent media.

The following media faced this kind of pressure: Intex-press. On April 26, the Baranawichi district and city court fined Intex-press chief editor Uladzimir Yuryevich 20 base values (190 euro) for an interview with ex-presidential candidate Sviatlana Troski. On May 20, 2021, the Economic Court of the Brest Region considered an administrative case against the company (Intex-press) for the same interview, and ruled to fine Intex-press 150 base values (1,490 euro). On June 17, the Supreme Court upheld this decision34.

Haza ta Slonimskaya. On June 1, 2021, Yauhen Valadashchuk, owner of g.by (Haza ta Slonimskaya) was fined 90 base values (9,700 euro) on charges of distributing extremist materials. The ruling was made by the Slonim district court35.

newrogo.by. On March 12, 2021, the Leniniski district court of Hrodna fined editor of newrogo.by Ihar Bukubic (Remzik) 25 base values (240 euro) for dissemination of extremist materials36.

Hrodna.life. On March 19, 2021, the Leniniski district court of Hrodna, fined chief editor of Hrodna.life, Alakssei Shota, 400 base values (3,865 euro) — as a representative of a legal entity and 25 base values (240 euro) — as an individual. The reason was three articles in April and June 2020, which contained links or a logo of a Telegram channel recognized as extremist. When the materials were published, the Telegram channel had not been recognized as extremist, but was recognized as extremist after this. The team removed all the references that it could find. Therefore, the team did not disseminate extremist materials deliberately and purposefully37.

On April 26, 2021 the decision of the Leniniski district court of Hrodna was appealed to Hrodna regional court. However, it remained in force38.

On June 3, 2021 Iryna Novik, special projects editor of Hrodna. life, was fined 30 base values (2,850 euro) for an interview with a non-state media. On June 18, 2021 Hrodna Life Media company (the owner of the Hrodna.life website) was fined 500 base values (4,800 euro) for dissemination of extremist material39.

In July 2021 the telegram channel of Hrodna.life was recognized extremist40.
On December 23, 2020, Viktar Marchuk, its editor-in-chief, was summoned to the Brest city prosecutor’s office. Also, on March 21, 2021, the prosecutor’s office of the city of Brest issued a warning to Viktar Marchuk, for spreading information that called for unauthorized mass events.

The following media faced this kind of pressure:

- Brezhtskaya Gazeta. On April 30, 2021, the Constitutional Court considered the draft Law to be constitutional. On May 24, 2021, the law was signed by the President.
- Novy Chas. On May 28, 2021, the Prosecutor General’s Office issued a warning to Novy Chas. The warning referred to articles “Not very visible but important” (February 26), “Smoky curtain with consequences” and “Lawlessness is most difficult to accept” (April 19). According to the Prosecutor General’s Office, the authors used certain expressions and turns of speech that contributed to the tension in society, hatred and hostility against government officials and law enforcement officers as separate social groups.
- Svoboda.

4.4. SEARCHES AND INSPECTIONS IN THE OFFICES (AND AT HOMES OF CHIEF EDITORS) OF MASS MEDIA AND BAJ

As a rule, the following reasons were used to carry out searches: suspicion of storing the information products that are recognized as extremist; as part of criminal cases initiated against journalists; due to online insults of representatives of state bodies, as well as the president; to seize the entire print-run of an issue; as part of a criminal case for organizing and preparing actions that grossly violate public order, etc.

The following media faced this kind of pressure: Virtualny Brest, Hodna life and Newgradno.by, BelpAN49, Hantievski Chas50, Hazeta Slinkomskaya51, KYKY.org52, Narodnaya Volia53, etc., as well as the Belarusian Association of Journalists54.

Moreover, the Ministry of Justice has launched an examination of activities of the Belarusian Association of Journalists. The Ministry’s letters of June 8 and 16, 2021, requested BAJ to provide thousands of documents from January 1, 2018 to the present.

4.8. CHANGES IN THE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK THAT RESTRICT WORK OF INDEPENDENT MEDIA AND THROTTLE FREEDOM OF SPEECH

In May 2021, the Belarusian authorities adopted a number of laws aimed at creating obstacles to the work of independent media. These laws legitimize the repressions and make legal the unlawful practices. With this legislation any media could be persecuted easier. These include:

4.8.1. LAW NO. 110-Z OF 24.05.2021 “ON AMENDMENTS TO LAWS ON MASS MEDIA ISSUES”

The draft was submitted by the Council of Ministers to the Chamber of Representatives on March 31, 2021. The document was considered by the Standing Commission on human rights, ethnic relations and the mass media. On April 2, 2021, it was adopted in the 1st reading; and on April 16, 2021 – in the 2nd reading. On April 16, 2021, the draft Law was submitted to the Council of the Republic; it was considered by the Standing Commission on education, science, culture, and social development. On April 21, 2021, the draft Law was approved by the Council.

On April 30, 2021, the Constitutional Court considered the draft Law to be constitutional. On May 24, 2021, the law was signed by the President.

The law prohibits the media from real time coverage (live streaming) of mass events that are held in violation of the established procedure – to prevent their “promotion or propaganda” it opens possibilities for treating journalists covering unauthorized events as their participants. The law bans publishing any information about a mass event before state bodies give permission to hold it.

4.8.2. LAW NO. 108-Z OF 24.05.2021 “ON AMENDMENTS TO THE LAW "ON MASS EVENTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS”

The draft was submitted by the Council of Ministers to the Chamber of Representatives on March 31, 2021. The document was considered by the Standing Commission on housing policy and real estate development. On April 2, 2021, it was adopted in the 1st reading; and on April 16, 2021 – in the 2nd reading.

On April 16, 2021, the draft Law was submitted to the Council of the Republic; it was considered by the Standing Commission on Legislation and Statecraft. On April 30, 2021, the draft Law was approved by the Council.

On April 30, 2021, the Constitutional Court considered the draft Law to be constitutional. On May 24, 2021, the law was signed by the President.

The law prohibits the media from real time coverage (live streaming) of mass events that are held in violation of the established procedure – to prevent their “promotion or propaganda” it opens possibilities for treating journalists covering unauthorized events as their participants. The law bans publishing any information about a mass event before state bodies give permission to hold it.

8. 15. Press conference of the Belarusian Association of Journalists on September 30, dedicated to the massive persecution of journalists and the media. Photo: Radio Svaboda.
The draft was submitted by the Council of Ministers to the Chamber of Representatives on March 31, 2021. It was considered by the Standing Commission on national security. On April 2, 2021, it was adopted in the 1st reading; and on April 16, 2021 — in the 2nd reading. On April 16, 2021, the draft Law was submitted to the Council of the Republic; it was considered by the Standing Commission on Legislation and Statecraft. On May 7, 2021, the draft Law was approved by the Council. On May 17, 2021, the Constitutional Court considered the draft Law to be constitutional. On May 26, 2021, the law was signed by the President.

The law introduces criminal liability (Article 198[1] of the Criminal Code) for violation of the mass media (online dissemination of information, the dissemination of which is prohibited by legislative acts, if committed within 1 year after an administrative penalty for a similar violation). The article provides for the following sanctions: community service; fine; restriction of liberty for up to 2 years; and imprisonment for up to 4 years. Article 369 of the Criminal Code (Insulting a person in public authority) was also amended. Now, the dissemination of information both in the media and online might be considered an insult to a person of public authority or his family members in connection with their performance of official duties. The article provides for such sanctions as a fine, arrest, restriction of liberty for up to 3 years with a fine, or imprisonment for up to 3 years with a fine. A number of articles of the Criminal Code that restrict the freedom of speech were also amended. For example, Article 369 “Insulting a person of public authority”, 369[1] “Discrediting the Republic of Belarus”, and 375[1] “Illegal collection or receipt of information constituting state secrets”, etc.

All the state agencies in Belarus synchronize their actions, which leads to a “vacuum of justice”. In fact, this is a vital element of the government policy to consistently target the exercise of civil and political rights, including the right to freedom of expression and the right to disseminate information. This is accompanied by the lack of effective mechanisms for the protection of infringed rights and legal remedies. The purpose of the pressure is for the state to monopolize the disseminated content and to silence independent media, journalists, and bloggers. If the government succeeds, the people in Belarus would be left with state propaganda which would replace objective, reliable, and up-to-date information disseminated by independent media.

In order to do that, it is important to ensure that the state officials who take part in repression, including oppression of journalists and the media, as well as in the introduction of repressive norms into legislation, realize that their personal accountability is inevitable. This should be achieved by a prompt investigation by an independent and impartial body into all reports of torture, ill-treatment and other types of harassment for the exercise of human rights, including the right to freedom of expression. The investigation must lead to trials in order to ensure justice and accountability of the perpetrators of torture, ill-treatment and other human rights violations.

In that case, it is impossible, in the time being, to ensure accountability in Belarus, all Member States of the European Union need to support an independent, transparent, impartial, and thorough international investigation into reports of torture and ill-treatment, as well as other serious human rights violations, including harassment of journalists.

All structures of the European Union and all the EU Member States should be encouraged to do the following about the post-election situation in Belarus:

- to support the creation and activities of international independent bodies for investigation of mass violations of human rights, including the rights of journalists;
- to support the persons forced to leave the country by providing (temporary) protection and treatment of injuries received as a result of torture and ill-treatment; and, when cases fall under the provisions of the Geneva Convention, by providing asylum;
- to support human rights defenders and civil society organizations in their work on promotion and protection of human rights;
- to promote the involvement of the UN special procedures, the extension of the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus, as well as the reopening of the Country Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights;
- to monitor the development of human rights, democracy and the rule of law on the basis of the recommendations developed in line with the international law.

CONCLUSION

The persecution of journalists and media in Belarus after the 2020 elections is massive, systemic, and long-lasting. Just for doing their job, Belarusian journalists face violence, including torture, arbitrary detentions, and lengthy pre-trial detention, arbitrary convictions on administrative and criminal charges, searches. Media outlets face pressure, including various obstacles for publishing and even closure of publishers.

What is to be achieved:

- to release, unconditionally, all detained and convicted journalists, as well as media staff who have been jailed for performing their professional duties;
- to stop harassment of journalists for doing their job; to ensure safe working conditions and protection of the rights that have been violated;
- to end economic, legal, and political discrimination against independent media and online resources and to remove obstacles for their access to the audience;
- to introduce a moratorium on the latest changes in the legislation in the sphere of freedom of expression, and to bring the legislation into line with the international legal obligations of the Republic of Belarus.

In order to do that, it is important to ensure that the state officials who take part in repression, including oppression of journalists and the media, as well as in the introduction of repressive norms into legislation, realize that their personal accountability is inevitable. This should be achieved by a prompt investigation by an independent and impartial body into all reports of torture, ill-treatment and other types of harassment for the exercise of human rights, including the right to freedom of expression. The investigation must lead to trials in order to ensure justice and accountability of the perpetrators of torture, ill-treatment and other human rights violations.

Since it is impossible, in the time being, to ensure accountability in Belarus, all Member States of the European Union need to support an independent, transparent, impartial, and thorough international investigation into reports of torture and ill-treatment, as well as other serious human rights violations, including harassment of journalists.

All structures of the European Union and all the EU Member States should be encouraged to do the following about the post-election situation in Belarus:

- to intensify use of the universal jurisdiction mechanisms in their legal systems to investigate crimes and mass violations of human rights, including those of journalists, and ensure accountability of perpetrators;

- to provide financial and practical assistance for the implementation of the recommendations of international human rights organizations and the European Union to the government of Belarus.

- to support the creation and activities of international independent bodies for investigation of mass violations of human rights, including the rights of journalists;
- to support the persons forced to leave the country by providing (temporary) protection and treatment of injuries received as a result of torture and ill-treatment; and, when cases fall under the provisions of the Geneva Convention, by providing asylum;
- to support human rights defenders and civil society organizations in their work on promotion and protection of human rights;
- to promote the involvement of the UN special procedures, the extension of the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus, as well as the reopening of the Country Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights;
- to monitor the development of human rights, democracy and the rule of law on the basis of the recommendations developed in line with the international law.

RECOMMENDATIONS: FILLING THE VACUUM OF JUSTICE

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- to support the creation and activities of international independent bodies for investigation of mass violations of human rights, including the rights of journalists;
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- to monitor the development of human rights, democracy and the rule of law on the basis of the recommendations developed in line with the international law.
# List of State Bodies, State Organizations, and Officials Related to the Criminal Prosecution of Journalists and Bloggers, as well as Those Responsible for the Use of Violence and Torture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№</th>
<th>Full name/position of a specific person or the name of a state body</th>
<th>Journalist/blogger or media outlet</th>
<th>Date/period</th>
<th>Type of harassment</th>
<th>Reference to the paragraph of the report</th>
</tr>
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<td>Katsiaryna Andreyeva (Bakhirvalav), Belarus</td>
<td>Detention by GUBOPiK officers on November 15, 2020</td>
<td>Detention with the use of violence, breaking into the apartment.</td>
<td>1.1.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Andrei Shved, aka Andrei Shved, Director of the Investigative Committee</td>
<td>Liudmila Ivanenka, aka Lyudmila Ivanenka</td>
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<td>Criminal prosecution, initiation of a criminal case, taking into custody, bringing charges, sending the case to court.</td>
<td>1.1.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dzianis Shaman, aka Denis Shaman, and Ihar Kudelia, investigators of the Frunzenski (Minsk) district department of the Investigative Committee, colonel of justice</td>
<td>Katsiaryna Andreyeva (Bakhirvalav), Belarus</td>
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<td>Leading investigative activities in the criminal case against the journalists</td>
<td>1.1.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Natalia Buhuk, aka Natalia Buguk, judge of the Frunzenski district court in Minsk</td>
<td>Katsiaryna Andreyeva (Bakhirvalav), Belarus</td>
<td>February 18, 2021</td>
<td>Convicting and sentencing the journalists to 2 years in prison.</td>
<td>1.1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Alena Ananich, aka Elena Ananich, and Piotr Ariou,aka Piotr Ariou, judges of the Frunzenski district court in Minsk</td>
<td>Katsiaryna Andreyeva (Bakhirvalav), Belarus</td>
<td>April 23, 2021</td>
<td>Conferring the verdict to the journalists in court of appeal</td>
<td>1.1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Andrei Shved, aka Andrei Shved, Director of the Investigative Committee</td>
<td>Katsiaryna Barysevich, TUT.BY.</td>
<td>November 19, 2020 – January 22, 2021</td>
<td>The Prosecutor General’s Office initiated a criminal case against the journalist, pressed charges and referred the case to court.</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Svitalina Bandarenka, aka Svetlana Bondarenko, and Iryna Kastiukenka, judge of the Maskouski district court in Minsk</td>
<td>Katsiaryna Barysevich, TUT.BY.</td>
<td>March 2, 2021</td>
<td>Conviction of the journalist and sentencing her to 6 months in prison.</td>
<td>1.2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Liudmila Ivanenka, aka Lyudmila Ivanenka, and Iryna Kastiukenka, prosecutor, deputy head of the Minsk Prosecutor’s Office Department</td>
<td>Katsiaryna Barysevich, TUT.BY.</td>
<td>February 19 – March 2, 2021</td>
<td>Took part in the trial as a public prosecutor</td>
<td>1.2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Alaksandr Laursanchuk, aka Alexander Lavrenchuk, and Dzianis Ivashyn, &quot;Novy Chas&quot;</td>
<td>Dzianis Ivashyn, &quot;Novy Chas&quot;</td>
<td>March 12, 2021 – present</td>
<td>Criminal prosecution, initiation of a criminal case, taking into custody, bringing charges against the journalist.</td>
<td>1.3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ihar Marshala, aka Igor Marshala, and Daria Chultsova, Belsat (Bakhvalava), Belsat</td>
<td>Employees of Press Club Belarus: Yulia Slutskaya, Ali Sharko, Piotr Slutski, Siarhei Alsheuski, Siarhei Yakupau, Ksenia Lutsikina.</td>
<td>December 22, 2020</td>
<td>Making a decision to detain the staff of a journalist organization, to search their apartments and the office of Press Club Belarus, transferal of the case to the Investigative Committee.</td>
<td>1.4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Ihar Marshala, aka Igor Marshala, and Daria Chultsova, Belsat (Bakhvalava), Belsat</td>
<td>Employees of Press Club Belarus: Yulia Slutskaya, Ali Sharko, Piotr Slutski, Siarhei Alsheuski, Siarhei Yakupau, Ksenia Lutsikina.</td>
<td>May 18, 2021</td>
<td>Making a decision to detain the staff of TUT.BY, to search their homes and the office of TUT.BY, transferal of the case to the Investigative Committee.</td>
<td>1.5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Name of the Person</td>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Date of Event</td>
<td>Actions</td>
<td>Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Dmitry Hara, aka Dmitry Gora, Дмитрий Горя, Chairman of the Investigative Committee of Belarus</td>
<td></td>
<td>Since May 18, 2021</td>
<td>Criminal prosecution, initiation of a criminal case, taking into custody, bringing charges against 15 employees of TUT.BY.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Dmitry Hara, aka Dmitry Gora, Дмитрий Горя, Chairman of the Investigative Committee of Belarus</td>
<td>Blogger Raman Pratasevich</td>
<td>May 23, 2021</td>
<td>Criminal prosecution, initiation of a criminal case, taking into custody, bringing charges against Raman Pratasevich</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Kiryl Kislov, aka Kirill Kislov, Кырыл Кислов, Head of the Zavodski district of Minsk Department of Internal Affairs (Zavodski RUVD)</td>
<td>Journalist Yahor Martsinovich, &quot;Nasha Niva&quot;</td>
<td>August 11, 2020</td>
<td>Officers of the Zavodski RUVD, which is headed by Kislov, beat the journalist and other detainees on the premises of the police department.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Yauhen Shapetska, Yegney Shaptoko, Еўгень Шапётка, Head of the Center for the Isolation of Offenders of the Minsk City Department of Internal Affairs (Akreitsina jail)</td>
<td>Aliona Dubovik (Shcharbinskaya), &quot;Belsat&quot;</td>
<td>August 10-13, 2020</td>
<td>Police officers, led by Yauhen Shapetska, severely beat the journalist, inflicting serious injuries.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Maksim Mikhovich, aka Максим Михович, commander of the OMON of the Brest Regional Department of Internal Affairs</td>
<td>Yauhen Nikolayevich, &quot;Media-Polesie&quot;</td>
<td>August 10, 2020</td>
<td>OMON officers, led by Maksim Mikhovich, severely beat the journalist, inflicting serious injuries.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Dzianis Shaman, aka Denis Shaman, Дзяніс Шаман, Денис Шаман, head of the Frunzenski (Minsk) district department of the Investigative Committee, colonel of justice</td>
<td>Natalia Lubneuskaya, &quot;Nasha Niva&quot;</td>
<td>August 10, 2020</td>
<td>Dzianis Shaman failed to open a criminal case with respect to the shooting of a journalist and inflicting grievous bodily harm on her.</td>
<td>2.4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Dzianis Shaman, aka Denis Shaman, Дзяніс Шаман, Денис Шаман, head of the Frunzenski (Minsk) district department of the Investigative Committee, colonel of justice</td>
<td>Iryna Ankhouskaya, Belsat</td>
<td>August 11, 2020</td>
<td>Dzianis Shaman failed to open a criminal case with respect to the shooting of a journalist and inflicting bodily harm on her.</td>
<td>2.5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Yauhen Shapetska, Yegney Shaptoko, Еўгень Шапётка, Head of the Center for the Isolation of Offenders of the Minsk City Department of Internal Affairs (Akreitsina jail)</td>
<td>Stanislau Ivashkevich, Belsat</td>
<td>August 9, 2020</td>
<td>Police officers, led by Yauhen Shapetska, severely beat the journalist, inflicting serious injuries.</td>
<td>2.6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Viktor Krautsevich, aka Viktor Krautsevich, Віктар Кравцёвіч, Head of the OMON of the Hrodna regional police department</td>
<td>Ruslan Kulevich, Hrodna, life</td>
<td>August 11, 2020</td>
<td>OMON officers, led by Viktor Krautsevich, severely beat the journalist, inflicting serious injuries.</td>
<td>2.7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Vadzim Siniauski, aka Vadim Sinyavski, Head of the Kastytischki district police department (RUVD) of Hrodna</td>
<td>Ruslan Kulevich, Hrodna, life</td>
<td>August 11, 2020</td>
<td>Police officers, led by Vadzim Siniauski, severely beat the journalist, inflicting serious injuries.</td>
<td>2.7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Viktor Krautsevich, aka Viktor Krautsevich, Віктар Кравцёвіч, Head of the OMON of the Hrodna regional police department</td>
<td>Ivan (Yan) Roman</td>
<td>August 11, 2020</td>
<td>OMON officers, led by Viktor Krautsevich, severely beat the journalist, inflicting serious injuries.</td>
<td>2.8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>№</td>
<td>Full name/position of a specific person or the name of a state body</td>
<td>Who was persecuted (journalist/blogger or media outlet)</td>
<td>Date/period</td>
<td>Type of harassment</td>
<td>Reference to the paragraph of the report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1 | - Kastrychnitski district of Minsk Department of Internal Affairs (RUVD)  
- Aliaxandr Rudzenka, aka Aleksandr Rudenko, Александр Руденко, judge of the Kastrychnitski district court of Minsk  
- Volha Niaborskaya, aka Olga Neborskaya, Ольга Неборская, judge of the Kastrychnitski district court of Minsk  
- Center for the Isolation of Offenders of the Minsk City Police Department (Minsk GUVD) | Aliaksei Sudnikau, TUT. BY  
- Nadzeya Kalinina, TUT. BY  
- Siarhei Shchohaleu, Komsomolskaya Pravda in Belarus  
- Maria Eshalevich, Komsomolskaya Pravda in Belarus | 1 – 4.09.2020 | - detention, - administrative arrest. | 3.1. | |
| 2 | - Partyzanski district of Minsk Department of Internal Affairs (RUVD)  
- Mikhail Khoma, aka Михаил Хома, judge, Chairman of the Partyzanski district court of Minsk | Euhenia Douhaya, Reform.by | 9-12.10.2020 | - detention, - ill-treatment, - administrative fine | 3.2. | - left Belarus |
| 3 | - Partyzanski district of Minsk Department of Internal Affairs (RUVD)  
- Natalia Dzidkova, aka Natalia Dedkova, Наталья Федоровна Максимович, judge of the Partyzanski district court of Minsk | Dzmitry Soltyn (Buyanau), Belsat | 1-14.11.2020 | - detention, - torture (infliction of bodily harm), - destruction of equipment, - administrative arrest, - threat of criminal prosecution | 3.3. | |
| 4 | - Leninski district of Mahiliou Department of Internal Affairs (RUVD)  
- Vasili Karniayerka, aka Vasilik Korneenko, Вацлав Корнеенко, officer of Leninski RUVD of Mahiliou  
- Viktorya Palikava, Viktoria Poljakova, judge of the Leninski district court of Mahiliou  
- Temporary detention center (IVS) of Mahiliou Department of Internal Affairs | Aliaksandr Burakou, Deutsche Welle,  
- Uladzimir Laptsevich, Mahiliou Rehiyon | 12.05.–01.06.2021 | - detention, - ill-treatment, - administrative arrest | 3.4. | |
| 5 | - Hlubokaye district Department of Internal Affairs (Vitebsk region)  
- Ludmila Vashchanka, aka Lyudmila Vashchenko, Людмила Степановна Ващенко, judge of the Hlubokaye district court, Vitebsk region  
- Pastavy district Department of Internal Affairs (Vitebsk region)  
- Natalia Maksimovich, aka Наталия Федоровна Максимович, judge of the Pastavy district court (Vitebsk region)  
- Sharkauashchyna district Department of Internal Affairs (Vitebsk region)  
- Aksana Tabola, aka Oksana Tabola, Оксана Георгиевна Табола, judge of the Sharkauashchyna court (Vitebsk region) | Dzmitry Lupach, Belsat | 25.02.2021 | - detentions, - administrative fines | 3.5. |
**LIST OF STATE BODIES, STATE ORGANIZATIONS, AND OFFICIALS RELATED TO PERSECUTION OF MEDIA OUTLETS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Media outlets that have been subjected to pressure</th>
<th>State bodies that persecute media</th>
<th>Officials of state bodies related to the persecution of the media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Withdrawal of the media status and shutting down the Internet portal TUT.BY | TUT.BY | Ministry of Information Department of Financial Investigations of the State Control Committee Ministry of Internal Affairs Prosecutor General’s Office State Committee of Forensic Examinations Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs National Expert Committee for evaluation of information products for elements of extremism. Supreme Court Economic Court of Minsk | Uladzimir Piartso, aka Vladimir Pertsov, Первозванин Борисович, Minister of Information, Игорь Лутский, aka Igor Lutsky, Луцкий Игорь Владимирович, Minister of Information (until 05.04.2021; at present – Deputy Head of the President’s Office of the Republic of Belarus), Андрей Кунцевич, aka Andrei Kuntsevich, Кунцевич Андрей Михайлович, First Deputy Minister of Information. Experts of the National Expert Commission for evaluation of information products for elements of extremism (authors of the Expert opinion on the presence of extremist materials on TUT.BY): - Аляксандр Ивановіч, aka Aleksandr Ivanovics, Professor of the Department of Legal Informatics of the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs; - Татяна Лапуніна, aka Tatsiana Lapunina, Лапуніна Татьяна Альбертовна, Head of the Speech and Economic Research Department of the State Committee of Forensic Examinations. | Луцкий Игорь, Minister of Information, Minister of Information (until 05.04.2021; at present – Deputy Head of the President’s Office of the Republic of Belarus), Константин Шулян, aka Konstantin Shulgan, Шульган Константин Константинович, Minister of Telecommunications and Information Technology of Belarus Андрей Павличенка, aka Andrey Pavlyuchenko, Павличенко Андрей Юрьевич, Head of the Operational and Analytical Center under the President Татьяна Туровша, aka Tatjana Turumsh, Туровша Татьяна Юрьевна, Deputy Director for Commercial Activity at RUE “National Traffic Exchange Center” Аляксей Ивашкін, aka Aleksey Ivashkin, Ивашкин Алексей Александрович, Head of RUE “BelGIE” Татьяна Скапетс, Tatjana Skapets, Скапет Татьяна Николаевна, judge of the Centralny district court of Minsk |}

**Blocking media websites**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Websites</th>
<th>blocking media websites</th>
<th>Ministry of Information Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology Operational and Analytical Center under the President RUE “National Traffic Exchange Center” RUE “BelGIE” Centrally district court of Minsk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpress</td>
<td>Nasha Historia Astatsiarotha: dzetsi! Dodo BelGazeta Komsomolskaya Pravda in Belarus Narodnaya Volya Svobodnaye Novosti Plus Novy Chas</td>
<td>The Ministry of Information Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology The Prosecutor’s Office’s Office, as well as territorial structural divisions of the Prosecutor’s Office Republican Unitary Enterprise &quot;Belpochna&quot; Republican Unitary Enterprise &quot;Belsoyuzpechat&quot;</td>
</tr>
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<td>Interpress</td>
<td>Nasha Historia Astatsiarotha: dzetsi! Dodo BelGazeta Komsomolskaya Pravda in Belarus Narodnaya Volya Svobodnaye Novosti Plus Novy Chas</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Denial of print media access to press distribution networks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enterprises</th>
<th>denial of print media access to press distribution networks</th>
<th>Uladzimir Piartso, aka Vladimir Pertsov, Первозванин Борисович, Minister of Information Игорь Лутский, aka Igor Lutsky, Луцкий Игорь Владимирович, Minister of Information (until 05.04.2021; at present – Deputy Head of the President’s Office of the Republic of Belarus) Константин Шулян, aka Konstantin Shulgan, Шульган Константин Константинович, Minister of Telecommunications and Information Technology of Belarus Андрей Павличенка, aka Andrey Pavlyuchenko, Павличенко Андрей Юрьевич, Head of the Operational and Analytical Center under the President Татьяна Туровша, aka Tatjana Turumsh, Туровша Татьяна Юрьевна, Deputy Director for Commercial Activity at RUE “National Traffic Exchange Center” Аляксей Ивашкін, aka Aleksey Ivashkin, Ивашкин Алексей Александрович, Head of RUE “BelGIE” Татьяна Скапетс, Tatjana Skapets, Скапет Татьяна Николаевна, judge of the Centralny district court of Minsk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise</td>
<td>denial of print media access to press distribution networks</td>
<td>Uladzimir Piartso, aka Vladimir Pertsov, Первозванин Борисович, Minister of Information Игорь Лутский, aka Igor Lutsky, Луцкий Игорь Владимирович, Minister of Information (until 05.04.2021; at present – Deputy Head of the President’s Office of the Republic of Belarus) Константин Шулян, aka Konstantin Shulgan, Шульган Константин Константинович, Minister of Telecommunications and Information Technology of Belarus Андрей Павличенка, aka Andrey Pavlyuchenko, Павличенко Андрей Юрьевич, Head of the Operational and Analytical Center under the President Татьяна Туровша, aka Tatjana Turumsh, Туровша Татьяна Юрьевна, Deputy Director for Commercial Activity at RUE “National Traffic Exchange Center” Аляксей Ивашкін, aka Aleksey Ivashkin, Ивашкин Алексей Александрович, Head of RUE “BelGIE” Татьяна Скапетс, Tatjana Skapets, Скапет Татьяна Николаевна, judge of the Centralny district court of Minsk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Media outlets that have been subjected to persecution**

- TUT.BY
- Masheka.by
- Mediazona.by
- Naviny.online
- Svobodnye Novosti
- Narodnaya Volya
- Pravda in Belarus
- Astsiarozhna: dzetsi!
- Nasha Historia
- Intex-press
- BelGazeta
- Dudu
- Astsiarozhna: astsi!
- Nasha Perspektiva
- Nasha Gazeta
- Intex
- Intex-press
- Nasha Perspektiva
- Narodnaya Volya
- Pravda in Belarus
- Astsiarozhna: astsi!
- Nasha Historia
- Intex-press
- BelGazeta
- Dudu
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Law</th>
<th>Owner of the legislative initiative / the state body that prepared a draft law</th>
<th>Officials (state bodies) who were involved in the preparation of the draft law</th>
<th>The Standing parliamentary commission, considering the draft</th>
<th>MPs involved in the adoption of a draft law</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Law No. 110-Z of 24.05.2021</td>
<td>Ihar Lutski, Igor Lutski, Луцкий Игорь Владимирович, Minister of Information (until 05.04.2021; at present – Deputy Head of the President's Office; signed the justification for the need to adopt the Law; presented the draft Law to the House of Representatives.</td>
<td>Uladzimir Ptartsou, aka Vladimir Pertsov, Пертсов, Яцко-Владимир Борисович, Minister of Information (since 05.04.2021); presented the draft Law to the members of the Council of the Republic.</td>
<td>Permanent Commission on human rights, ethnic relations, and the media (Chamber of Representatives)</td>
<td>Chamber of Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>On Amendments to Laws on Mass Media Issues</em></td>
<td>Council of Ministers</td>
<td>The Ministry of Information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BY

Council of Ministers

Ministry of Internal Affairs

Yauheni Kavalenka, aka Evgeny Kovalenko, Коваленко Евгений Иосифович -- Head of the Main State Legal Directorate of the President's Office,

Alexander Rakhamanau, aka Alexander Rakhamanov, Рахманов Александрович -- Deputy State Secretary of the Security Council,

Ivan Tsertsel, aka Ivan Tertel, Тертель Иван Станиславович -- Minister of Telecommunications and Information Technology

Drafted by:

Dzmitry Basko, aka Баско Дмитрий Викентьевич -- Deputy Chairman of the State Control Committee,

Mikhail Arda, aka Mikhail Orda, Орда Михаил Сергеевич -- Chairman of the Federation of Trade Unions of Belarus.

Ivan Kubrakou, aka Ivan Kubrakov, Кубраков Иван Владимирович -- Chairman of the Federation of Trade Unions of Belarus.

The draft law was prepared with the involvement of:

- Ministry of Justice
- Investigative Committee
- Prosecutor General's Office
- Committee of State Security (KGB)
- Ministry of Internal Affairs

Standing Commission on Housing Policy and real estate Development (Chamber of Representatives)

Standing Commission on Legislation and Statecraft (Council of the Republic)

Ihar Hezich, aka Igor Gedich, Гедич Игорь Николаевич;

Yury Dziarkach, aka Yuri Derkas, Дзяркач Юрий Николаевич;

Aleksandr Rakhamanau, aka Alexander Rakhamanov, Рахманов Александрович;

Kanstantsin Shulhan, aka Konstantin Shulgan, Шульган Константин Константинович;

Dzmitry Basko, aka Баско Дмитрий Викентьевич;

Mikhail Arda, aka Mikhail Orda, Орда Михаил Сергеевич;

Ivan Kubrakou, aka Ivan Kubrakov, Кубраков Иван Владимирович;

Ivan Kubrakou, aka Ivan Kubrakov, Кубраков Иван Владимирович -- Deputy Chairman of the State Control Committee,

Mikhail Arda, aka Mikhail Orda, Орда Михаил Сергеевич -- Chairman of the Federation of Trade Unions of Belarus.

Ivan Kubrakou, aka Ivan Kubrakov, Кубраков Иван Владимирович -- Chairman of the Federation of Trade Unions of Belarus.

Ivan Kubrakou, aka Ivan Kubrakov, Кубраков Иван Владимирович -- Deputy Chairman of the State Control Committee,

Mikhail Arda, aka Mikhail Orda, Орда Михаил Сергеевич -- Chairman of the Federation of Trade Unions of Belarus.

Ivan Kubrakou, aka Ivan Kubrakov, Кубраков Иван Владимирович -- Chairman of the Federation of Trade Unions of Belarus.
Aleh Slizheuski, aka Oleg Slizhevsky, Слижевский Олег Леонидович — Minister of Justice; presented the draft law to the members of the Chamber of Representatives and the Council of the Republic.

A wide range of specialists were involved in the preparation of the draft Law – “state bodies that determine and implement criminal law policy, MPs and judges, scholars, and the legal community”.

The draft law was prepared with the involvement of:
- Investigative Committee
- Prosecutor General’s Office
- Committee of State Security (KGB)
- State Control Committee
- The Supreme Court
- National Center for Legislation and Legal Research of Belarus
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Internal Affairs
- Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs

Officials involved in the development of the draft law:
- Vadzim Ipatau, aka Vadim Ipatov, Ипатов Вадим Дмитриевич — Director of the National Center for Legislation and Legal Research of Belarus;
- Natalla Filipava, aka Natalia Filippova, Филиппова Наталья Николаевна — Deputy Minister of Justice;
- Yauheniya Paramonava, aka Evgeniya Paramonova, Парамонова Евгения Владимировна — Head of the Department of Supervisory Proceedings and Law Enforcement Practice of the Prosecutor General’s Office;
- Natalla Kachanava, aka Natalia Kachanova, Качанова Наталья Ивановна — Chair of the Council of the Republic (signed the resolution of the Council of the Republic on the approval of the draft law);
- Uladzimir Katovich, aka Vladimir Katovich, Катович Владимир Олегович;
- Alaksandr Bachyla, aka Alexander Bachilo, Бачило Александр Александрович — Deputy Chair of the Commission,
- Iryna Sachkouskaya, aka Irina Sachkovskaya, Сачковская Ирина Юльяновна;
- Maryna Liancheuskaya, aka Marina Lenchevskaya, Ленчевская Марина Александровна;
- Viktor Chaichyts, aka Viktor Chaichits, Чайчиц Виктор Иванович — Deputy Chair of the Commission;
- Alaksandr Dubau, aka Alexander Dubov, Дубов Александр Васильевич — Deputy Chair of the Commission, MP responsible for the draft law;
- Maryna Lancheuskaya, aka Marina Lenchevskaya, Ленчевская Марина Александровна;
- Ivan Mamaika, aka Ivan Mamayko, Мамайко Иван Андреевич;
- Aliaksandr Markovich, aka Alexander Markovich, Маркович Александр Иванович, MP responsible for the draft law;
- Uładzimir Kupava, aka Vladimir Kupava, Купава Владимир Викторович, senior member of staff of the Secretariat of the Chamber of Representatives.

Aleh Bakhura, aka Oleg Bakhura, Бахура Олег Иванович — Head of the Department of Criminal Law and Criminology of the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Uladzimir Andreichanka, Vladimir Andreichenko, Андрейченко Владимир Па lyon; — Chair of the Chamber of Representatives (signed the resolution of the Chamber of Representatives on the adoption of the draft law);

Standing Commission on National Security (Chamber of Representatives)

Chamber of Representatives

Uładzimir Andreichanka, Vladimir Andreichenko, Андрейченко Владимир Па lyon; — Chairman of the Chamber of Representatives (signed the resolution of the Chamber of Representatives on the adoption of the draft law);

Standing Commission on foreign affairs and national security (Council of the Republic)
Ivan Kubrakov, aka Ivan Kubrakov, Кубраков Иван Владимирович -- Minister of Internal Affairs, presented the draft law to the members of the Chamber of Representatives and the Council of the Republic.

The draft law was prepared with the involvement of:
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Internal Affairs
- State Border Committee
- Presidential Security Service
- Committee of State Security (KGB)

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Standing Commission on National Security (Chamber of Representatives)

Standing Commission on foreign affairs and national security (Council of the Republic)

Chamber of Representatives

Uladzimir Andreichanka, Vladimir Andreichenko, Андрейченко Владимир Павлович -- Chairman of the Chamber of Representatives (signed the resolution of the Chamber of Representatives on the adoption of the draft law);

Aleh Belakoneu, aka Oleg Belokonev, Велоконев Олег Алексеевич -- Chair of the Commission;

Aliaksandr Dubau, aka Alexander Dubov, Дубов Александр Васильевич -- Deputy Chair of the Commission;

Ihar Martynau, aka Igor Martyno, Мартыно Игорь Феликсович -- Deputy Chairman;

Aliaksandr Danchanka, aka Alexander Danchenko, Даченко Александр Михайлович, Chairman;

Maryna Liancheuskaya, aka Marina Lenchevskaya, Ленчевская Марина Александровна, MP responsible for the draft law;

Ivan Mamaika, aka Ivan Mamayko, Мамайко Иван Андреевич, senior member of staff of the Secretariat of the Chamber of Representatives.