

# Daily protests and repressions, international reaction, Coordination Council – Belarus Civil Society Digest

For over 40 days, starting from August 9th, Belarusians continue daily peaceful protests. The most massive [rallies on Sundays](#) continue to gather hundreds of thousands of people in Minsk, despite the increasing brutality by the police. Lukashenka keeps pushing a rhetoric of Belarus' destruction by [external aggressors](#). Independent experts agree that Belarus is passing through the [most dramatic political crisis](#) in its history, as well as the [foreign policy default](#) and [human rights catastrophe](#).

- **The daily protests and solidarity actions** across the country [continue](#) in various forms – hanging white-red-white [flags](#) and ribbons, [repainting](#) city objects in national colors, [art](#) products, neighborhood evening [parties](#), [cyber](#) [partisans](#), public appeals by [lawyers](#), [university graduates](#), [parents of students](#), [musicians](#), and [football players](#), quitting the GONGOs, singings [flashmobs](#), dismissal of officials (e.g., [head](#) of the state Institute of Sociology), etc. In response, the authorities use new forms of pressure – [bills](#) for flag removal and [warnings parents](#) against taking children to rallies.
- **Strikes**. Amid intimidation and dozens of [new arrests](#) of strike committee leaders, the state enterprises continue an [Italian strike](#) and other “guerrilla”/hidden forms of protests, including anti-records in fulfilling monthly

plans at [Belaruskali](#) and [BelAZ](#). The Norwegian company Yara, a buyer of Belarusian fertilizers is [concerned](#) over the situation with Belarusian workers and [visits](#) Soligorsk this week.

- **Economy in recession.** [Currency withdrawal](#) by population accelerates to \$30 million per day. However, the currency rate is falling slightly, which is explained by the [continued sale](#) of gold and foreign exchange reserves. The [total debts](#) of large and medium-sized enterprises amounted to \$60 billion – that is more than the size of the Belarusian economy.
- **Civil society** continues monitoring, financial and other support to victims of repression – e.g., so far, the [Probono](#) platform that unites over 500 volunteers and 250 organizations has helped in solving over 2,500 issues. The initiative to help the [resigned police officers](#) continues. The new campaign [Honest University](#) will help students to be heard. To the moment, the [BY\\_help](#) initiative has paid \$400 thousand to 650 victims of violence. In total, aid funds to support Belarusians have raised [\\$6.2 million](#).
- **Coordination Council.** [MEPs](#) welcome the Coordination Council as an “interim representation of the people demanding democratic change”. Two out of seven leaders of the Coordination Council remain at large in the country – Nobel laureate Svetlana Alexievich and the representative of the strike committees [Sergei Dylevsky](#), released after 25 days of arrest. Others are [arrested](#) in criminal cases or forcibly taken abroad. [Svetlana Tikhanovskaya](#) in her address to the UN Human Rights Council reiterates the readiness for a dialogue with the authorities.
- **Repressions.** The authorities continue mass detentions to bring down a wave of protests – [over 770 people](#) were

detained during the last Sunday protests. It became known that the formal reason why Belarusian Catholic Church Head was banned to return to Belarus: his passport was declared [invalid](#). TUT.BY releases a document with the data of [over 1,100 people](#) who sought medical treatment during street events. [70 political prisoners](#) remain in jail, including [12 new political prisoners](#) this week. The opposition compiles "[Taraikovsky's List](#)" (by the name of the first protester killed) with those who torture and beat people.

- **Crackdown on independent media.** Eight journalists are [in jail](#) for administrative cases. Two photojournalists were sentenced to 11 days of arrest each, independent media react with [blank front pages](#).
- **International reaction.** The [EP](#) resolution indicates the non-recognition of Lukashenka as president of Belarus when his term expires in November. [OSCE](#) launches the Moscow Mechanism to examine human rights violations in Belarus. [IIHF](#) will review hosting the 2021 Ice Hockey World Championship in Minsk. The Verkhovna Rada of [Ukraine](#) does not recognize the Belarusian election. [Poland](#) wants the EU to pledge 1 billion euros to stabilize Belarus. [Putin](#) promises a \$1.5bn loan to Belarus. Lukashenka threatens to [close the borders](#) with Poland and Lithuania, but so far it remains rhetoric.
- **COVID-19.** This week the number of new infections exceeded 200 daily cases. Over 75,000 Belarusians positively tested for and 773 died [due to COVID-19](#). Lukashenka got the [Ig Nobel Prize](#) for "using the COVID-19 to teach the world that politicians can have a more immediate effect on life and death than scientists and doctors can".

*Belarus Digest prepared this overview on the basis of materials provided by Pact. This digest attempts to give a richer picture of the recent political and civil society*

*events in Belarus. It often goes beyond the hot stories already available in English-language media.*