

Belarus Country Report

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Summary

Relations between the European Union and Belarus have been mostly absent for the period of 1996-2008. Basic legal documents that would regulate bilateral relations and ensure Belarus' full participation in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) have not been ratified or adopted because of the authoritarian nature of the governing regime of President Aliaksandr Lukashenka. Ratification of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) was frozen in 1997. Belarus does not enjoy full benefits of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), there is no ENP Action Plan in place.

Following the warming up of relations between Belarus and the EU in 2008, high-level political contact resumed and technical cooperation began to move forward. In light of the new political setting, the Joint Interim Plan (JIP) is being currently prepared by the European Commission (EC), which is aimed to resemble an Action Plan and will outline the path of reforms for Belarus in areas of economy, law, justice and security, and other. Among issues to be offered for Member States' consideration is conclusion and implementation of visa facilitation and readmission agreements. Prospects for long term visa liberalisation may be included in the JIP too, if agreed upon by the EU Member States.

The EU has not yet begun official talks with Belarus on visa facilitation and readmission agreements, however several technical assessment missions to Minsk by EU experts took place. In its October 25, 2010 statement the Council of the EU declared the readiness to receive proposals from the Commission on initiation of visa negotiations with Belarus. On 12 November 2010, the Commission recommended that the Council authorises the Commission to open negotiations on agreements to facilitate the procedures for issuing short-stay visas and on readmission between the European Union and Belarus. The post-election crackdown in Belarus seriously worsened its relations with the European Union but did not touch the plans regarding visa facilitation talks. On February 28 the EU's Council empowered the Commission to start negotiations for visa facilitation and readmission agreements with Belarus.



This study was undertaken as part of *Paving the Road towards Visa-free Travel between the Eastern Partnership countries and the EU*, a project of PASOS (Policy Association for an Open Society), supported by the Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative (LGI) of Open Society Foundations.

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Previously the European Union tied visa facilitation for Belarus with a number of political conditions that official Minsk should fulfil. The absence of political will among numerous Member States of the EU and the reluctance of the Belarus government to address the EU conditions prevent central EU institutions from solving the problem of high visa fees for Belarusian citizens. Additionally, the EU lacks understanding that the visa issue is one of a few real policy tools that can be used to leverage positive political and social changes in Belarus. The question of visa policy towards Belarus instead of being a tool of government-to-government political conditionality should be used as an instrument of proactive policy.

Research results show that more opportunities for the citizens of Belarus to travel to the EU will lead to the mindset change in favour of pro-European choice of Belarusian citizens. It especially implies for modifying the consciousness of senior citizens, who are characterized by distinctive conservatism and anti-European attitudes.

If the political framework allows, visa facilitation and readmission agreements between the EU and Belarus could be completed within the 1-1,5 year period. The prospect of visa liberalisation negotiations depends on the EU internal discussions and attitudes towards its Eastern neighbours, as well as the domestic political, economic and social developments in Belarus.

In terms of its technical preparedness for the visa liberalisation dialogue with the EU, Belarus could qualify as ready for the beginning of negotiations albeit numerous shortcomings. The country is equipped to issue biometric travel documents as of 2012; issues of travel documents and their issuance, identity cards, border management, and privacy and data protection are being addressed. According to the assessment by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the country is a leader in combatting of human trafficking, although it does not fully comply with all standards yet. The government demonstrates significant and sustained efforts towards progress. Some elements of the Anti-Money Laundering/ Combatting the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) regime have been developed by the relevant government structures in Belarus. The anti-corruption programme for 2007-2010 has been adopted by the President, although the issue of corruption remains a serious threat to the national security. Implementation of the GRECO recommendations can not be evaluated yet since the agreement concerning immunities and privileges of GRECO has been signed in 2010. Belarus does not cooperate with Europol, but has bilateral agreements with the EU Member States.

Introduction: The state of affairs in the relations between Belarus and the EU

The EU-Belarus relations developed fast after Belarus acquired independence in 1991, but began worsen soon after the election of the President Lukashenka in 1994. In 1996-97 there were serious setbacks due to Belarus' move towards authoritarian rule. The EU grew concerned with the lack of separation of powers in Belarus, the absence of a dialogue between the authorities and the opposition, the worsening human rights conditions and the increasing restrictions on the freedom of the media and press.

After presidential elections in September 2001, the EU pointed out that "The European Union regrets that the Belarus authorities have not seized the opportunity afforded by these

presidential elections to engage their country fully on the path of democracy... The European Union will continue to support the transition to democracy and will hold consultations on the subject with all the political forces of Belarus which are prepared to work in the same direction"¹.

Initially, Belarus welcomed the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) concept and suggested specific areas for cooperation without, however, responding to the basic democratic requirements. Antidemocratic developments and serious human rights violations have made it impossible for EU-Belarus relations to develop further within the ENP framework. The EU remains willing to deepen its relationship with Belarus, including access to the full benefits of the ENP, once the Belarusian authorities clearly demonstrate their willingness to respect democratic values and the rule of law².

Within the framework of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) Belarus is involved in regional and cross-border cooperation projects in areas such as transport, border management and customs, migration and asylum, measures against human and drug trafficking, management of man-made and natural disasters, and other areas of regional and cross-border importance. There are three cross-border cooperation areas where Belarus is a participating country: Poland-Belarus-Ukraine, Latvia-Lithuania-Belarus and Baltic Sea Region.

After another flawed presidential election in March 2006, the Council of the European Union adopted restrictive measures against President Lukashenka and a number of government officials who were personally responsible for the violations of international electoral standards. These measures took the form of a visa ban and an asset freeze. These sanctions were adopted in addition to those taken by the Council on 24 September 2004 against four Belarusian officials identified as key actors in the disappearances of four Belarusian persons; and those taken on 13 December 2004 against two officials responsible for the October 2004 fraudulent elections and referendum as well as severe human rights violations in the repression of peaceful demonstrators. In March 2007, the list of sanctions was rolled-over until April 2008.

In November 2006, the European Commission published a non paper called "What the EU could bring to Belarus"³, which outlined how closer relations with the EU could benefit the Belarusian population economically and in terms of political rights, living standards, mobility and social security. But Belarusian government chose to ignore this message. The "twelve conditions" from the paper were largely unnoticed also by the Belarusian society.

President Lukashenka began to consider the EU as a possible foreign policy options only when Kremlin began to pressure for privatization of the key transit infrastructure in Belarus and raised energy prices to make Belarus comply (first gas row in 2006). The EU countries, firstly immediate neighbours to Belarus, began to consider the country as a key partner in boosting energy security in the region. Lukashenka, on his part, saw warming of relations

¹ Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the holding of presidential elections in Belarus. Brussels, 14 September 2001.

(<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=PESC/01/152&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>)

² Belarus Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013.

³ What the EU could bring to Belarus, Non-Paper

(http://ec.europa.eu/delegations/belarus/documents/eu_belarus_non_paper_1106.pdf)

with the EU as a pure political manoeuvre that should not have led to any substantial political liberalization.

After Belarus' failure to support Russia in the war with Georgia the threat of economic sanctions from the Eastern neighbour, on the backdrop of the unwinding economic crisis, forced the official Minsk to search for alternative sources of financing deficits and attracting investments. Belarus released political prisoners, resumed cooperation with the IMF, and joined the new EU Eastern Partnership program. The visa sanctions against most regime protagonists were suspended.

To summarize, the main causes of rapprochement with the European Union were as follows: declining of the Union State project and increasing political and economic pressure from Russia; need for western investments and loans; conflict in Georgia and EU's interest to bring Belarus closer to the European Union.

A number of high-level visits from and to the country, including visits of Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner and then the EU High Representative for Common and Foreign Security Policy Javier Solana took place. The EU-Belarus dialogue meetings at ministerial level helped strengthening political contacts. As of 2008, the Commission engaged with Belarus in intensified talks on sectoral reforms (energy, transport, environment, customs and border management, agriculture and rural development, financial services and product regulation, standards and conformity assessment). The EU-Belarus Human Rights dialogue was launched in 2009.

Until today, the EU has no contractual relations with Belarus. The only legal basis for bilateral trade relations is the EU-USSR Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) which still applies. Although the European Union and Belarus signed the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) in 1995, this agreement, as well as the Interim Agreement, was frozen in 1997. Currently, the European Commission is in the process of developing the Joint Interim Plan (JIP) that will resemble an ENP Action Plan, but contain fewer provisions due to absence of a ratified PCA between the EU and Belarus.

Belarus is amongst the few states in Europe that have not stated its intent to join the EU. Similarly, the European Union has not offered membership prospects for Belarus either.

Due to the authoritarian rule of the President Lukashnka and his self-isolationist policies, Belarus has received far less assistance than its neighbours. EC technical assistance to Belarus has, in line with the 1997 General Affairs Council Conclusions, been limited "to humanitarian or regional projects or those which directly support the democratisation process". Under the National Tacis Programme, since 2004 assistance has been focusing on support for civil society, higher education cooperation and alleviation of the consequences of the Chernobyl catastrophe.

Assistance provided under the National Indicative Programme for Belarus (2007-11) focuses on the two priority areas of "Social and Economic Development" and "Democratic Development and Good Governance". An allocation of €20 million was initially earmarked for the period 2007-2010. Following the positive developments in EU-Belarus relations in 2008, the overall allocation was increased to €30 million for the same period, with an allocation of €5 million per year for 2007 and 2008 and €10 million per year for 2009 and 2010. The national indicative programme is now extended to include the year 2011 with an

additional indicative allocation of €16.07 million (this includes €1.07 million for Comprehensive Institution Building preparatory measures under the Eastern Partnership)⁴.

1. Implementation of the Community Readmission Agreement and Visa Facilitation Agreement

Belarus has not concluded VFA and Readmission Agreements with the EU. The issue of visa facilitation has been tied with political conditions that Minsk had to fulfil. Due to the new EU's approach the talks on VFA are to start in 2011.

The EU's visa policy towards Belarusian citizens is regulated by the EU Visa Code. Unlike its neighbours, Belarusians are obligated to pay 60 Euro for a Schengen visa and the visa application procedure is still complicated and often even humiliating for them.

Though informal technical consultations on visa procedures simplification started in February 2008⁵, the official negotiations on visa facilitation have not began yet.

For many years the European Union tied visa facilitation for Belarus with a number of political conditions that official Minsk should fulfil. The absence of political will among numerous Member States of the EU and the reluctance of the Belarus government to address the EU conditions prevent central EU institutions from solving the problem of Schengen visas for the Belarusians. Additionally, the EU lacks understanding that the visa issue is one of a few real policy tools that can be used to leverage positive political and social changes in Belarus. A certain 'mindset change' in Brussels and among member states is necessary. The question of visa policy towards Belarus instead of being a tool of government-to-government political conditionality should be used as an instrument of proactive policy.

The visit of EU's Commissioner Stefan Fule to Minsk in November 2010 was a very good sign for perspectives of VFA agreement for Belarus. In his statement Mr. Fule announced that Belarus-EU talks on visa facilitation would start next year and would not be dependent on Belarus' progress in domestic political issues.

On 12 November 2010 the Commission recommended that the Council authorises the Commission to open negotiations on agreements to facilitate the procedures for issuing short-stay visas and on readmission between the European Union and Belarus⁶.

The Commission proposed to the Member States a list of facilitations which relate to issuing multiple-entry visas with a long period of validity for bona fide travellers, waiving/reducing the handling fees for specific categories to be defined, setting deadlines for processing visa applications, as well as a possible exemption from the visa obligation for holders of diplomatic passports.

⁴ National Indicative Programme for Belarus (2007-11).

⁵ Interview with the Head of the consular department of Belarus' MFA A. Giro (<http://mfa.gov.by/ru/publications/mass-media/cfe8b1721eafb1f1.html>)

⁶ Commission recommends the negotiation of Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements with Belarus, International Consortium "EUROBELARUS" (<http://eurobelarus.info/content/view/5876/78/>)

The post-election crackdown in Belarus seriously worsened its relations with the European Union but fortunately this did not touch the plans regarding visa facilitation talks. In the EU's Council Conclusions of January 31st the Council "recalls the importance it attaches to facilitating people-to-people contacts with Belarus to the benefit of the Belarusian population at large. It looks forward to the start of negotiations for visa facilitation and readmission agreements with Belarus, once the negotiating directives have been adopted. Pending the conclusion of such agreements, the EU will encourage the optimal use of the existing flexibilities offered by the Visa Code, in particular the possibilities for Member States to waive and reduce visa fees for certain categories of citizens"⁷. On February 28 2011 the Council gave a mandate to the Commission to conduct negotiations on VFA/RA with Belarus.

In December 2010 Head of the Department for Migration and Citizenship at the Ministry of Internal Affairs Alexei Begun stated that Belarus was fully ready for negotiations with European Union over visa regime simplification. It was noted that first biometric passports will appear in Belarus by 2012 and that the final decision concerning this issue will be made in 2011⁸.

The government of Belarus is in a win-win situation when it comes to the question of Schengen visas for its citizens. Success in lowering visa fees would be credited to the authorities. Similarly, possible failure to sign a visa facilitation and readmission agreement could be used by the state propaganda for undermining the EU credibility and suggesting its hostility towards ordinary citizens of Belarus. Few contacts between the Belarusian and the EU citizens play in government's favour too: limited travel opportunities for Belarusians help to control the public opinion. It is a comfortable situation for the government of Belarus: to carry out the policy of isolation with the hands of the EU itself⁹.

In October 2010 Belarus and Lithuania signed the Agreement on the Procedure for the Mutual Travels of Border Area Residents which significantly simplifies the rules implied to local border traffic. The agreement foresees that certain groups of border area residents will be able to cross the border if in possession of a special local border traffic permit. Holders of the permits will be able to stay on the territory of the other country (in the border area of 50 km) for 90 days per each six months. Holders of these permits will not have the right to work. Similar agreements were signed in 2010 with Poland and Latvia.

Belarus considers abolition of its visas for tourists from the European Union hoping for an influx of tourists from Europe and intending to improve the country's image. The main lobbyist of this idea is the Ministry of sports and tourism. If the draft decree prepared by the Ministry is approved, the citizens of EU countries travelling to Belarus with the purpose of tourism will be able to enter the territory of Belarus, without payment of consular fees but with a valid passport and a return ticket.

⁷ Council conclusions on Belarus. 3065th FOREIGN AFFAIRS Council meeting. Brussels, 31 January 2011 (http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/119038.pdf)

⁸ Belarus fully ready for negotiations with European Union over visa regime simplification (<http://www.tvr.by/eng/society.asp?id=39964>).

⁹ Dzianis Melyantsou and Vitali Silitski, How to Lower Schengen Visa Fees for Belarusians. BISS, 2008. (http://www.belinstitute.eu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=185:none&catid=3:eu&Itemid=28&lang=en)

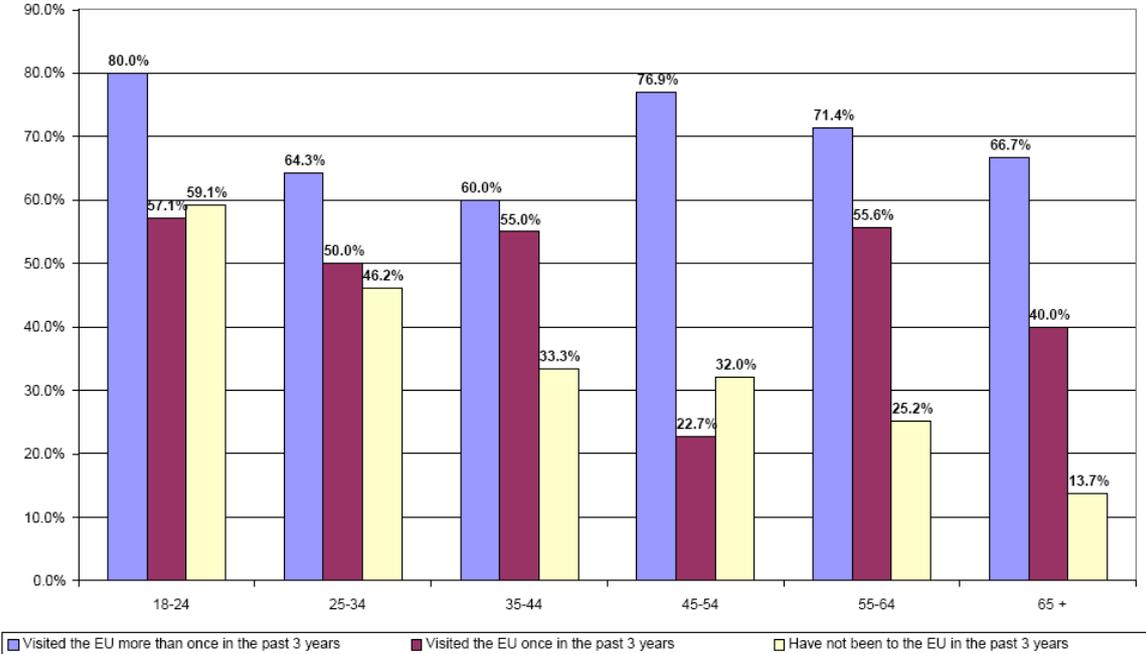
According to recent public opinion polls, free travel to the EU is of the most expected improvements the Belarusian people expect from the improved EU-Belarus relations (See table 1. below).

Table 1. The answers to the question: “Since autumn 2008 we witness the warming of relations between Belarusian authorities and the European Union. What do you personally expect from this process? (more than one answer is possible)¹⁰

<i>Variants of answers</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Possibility for the Belarusians to travel freely to the EU for study and work</i>	<i>37.7</i>
<i>Belarus will get closer to the European standards of politics, economy and culture</i>	<i>29.3</i>
<i>European investments and technologies to come to Belarus</i>	<i>27.8</i>
<i>Belarus will become a full member of the EU in some time</i>	<i>21.2</i>
<i>I do not care</i>	<i>21.1</i>

Free travel to the EU is highly important for mindset change in favour of pro-European choice of Belarusian citizens. The recent research¹¹ conducted by the Belarusian Institute for Strategic Studies (BISS) shows that lowering travel barriers led to an increase in pro-European attitudes in Belarus, hence an expansion in the social base of those who support changes (See Table 2. below).

Support for accession to the EU depending on the frequency of visits to the EU, in age groups



¹⁰ IISEPS national poll, December 2009 (<http://www.iiseps.org/12-09-05.html>)

¹¹ Belarus and the World: Geopolitical Choice and Security in the Context of the Economy and Culture. BISS-2010 (http://www.belinstitute.eu/images/doc-pdf/sa_010610_en_geopolit.pdf)

The reserve for increasing support for Belarus' orientation toward the EU lies primarily in reducing the "visa barriers" between the Union and Belarus. It ought to be noted that this resource will be efficient for the most part in modifying the consciousness of senior citizens, who are characterized by distinctive conservatism and anti-European attitudes.

Research results leave no doubts that should visa formalities become easier the number of trips to the EU by Belarusian citizens will increase significantly (roughly as much as it fell after the visa regime tightened in 2007). Consequently, the potential of "open doors" in modifying the public consciousness remains significant even though the Belarusians are "notorious" home-lovers. Notably, the transformation potential of free travel is most evident in the group of the respondents who have frequently visited the EU, which stresses the importance of an easier access to multiple-entry visas.

To summarize, Belarus is generally prepared to negotiate, conclude and implement the VFA/RA agreements. The Council of the European Union has made a decision to start negotiations with Belarus. But the talks could be negatively influenced by the complicated political relations between Minsk and Brussels.

2. Document security

Belarus adopted a law "On Civil Registry" in July 2008. According to the law an electronic data base of all citizens and persons without citizenship is created in Belarus. Personal data in the registry are certified by an electronic signature of an authorised official of a state body (Ministry of Internal Affairs, Labor Ministry, Ministry of Justice and Social Security, Ministry of Taxes etc.) which enters these data into the registry. The registry is managed by Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the implementation of the law "On Civil Registry" is supervised by the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Belarus¹².

Belarus doesn't issue machine-readable biometric passports yet but it is well prepared to introduce them once it is necessary. The issue of biometric passport has been addressed in the framework of the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) programme "MIGRABEL-MIGRAMOL: Strengthening of Migration Management in the Republic of Belarus and Moldova" (2007-2009). The project discussed the use of biometric technologies for migration management in the region, in Belarus in particular, within four key areas – travel documents and their issuance, identity cards, border management, and privacy and data protection. MIGRABEL Phase II foresees further modernisation of the national passport issuance system of Belarus, as well as establishment of the biometric control at the Belarus/EU border¹³. During the first stage of the project, specialists from Belarusian government agencies took part in five working visits to Germany, France, the UK, Austria and Sweden. They became acquainted with the operation of the world's leading manufacturers of passports, chips and personalization equipment. Belarusian experts have also studied the experience of transition to biometric identification papers in the above mentioned countries.

In the framework of the MIGRABEL project in July 2009 the Belarusian Ministry of Interior has bought scanners and all other necessary equipment to produce biometric passports. First

¹² "О регистре населения". Закон Республики Беларусь от 21 июля 2008 г. № 418-З (<http://lewoniewski.com/news/text/doc84.htm>)

¹³ International Organization for Migration (<http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/activities/europe/eastern-europe/belarus>)

pilot samples of the document have been introduced (they are used by Belarusian sailors)¹⁴. During the second stage of the project, the legislative basis is to be developed. The Ministry announced that Belarus plans to issue biometric travel documents as of 2012 followed by issuance of biometric passports¹⁵. According to the Minister of Internal Affairs A. Kuleshov the process of biometric passports introduction to the general public could be organized within two or two and a half years after adoption of the decision by the President¹⁶. The passport will cost about 30 Euro. It will contain a non-contact chip, a digital photo, fingerprints (10 fingers) and will fully comply with ICAO and ISO standards.

According to Deputy Interior Minister of Belarus Yevgeniy Poluden Belarusian biometric passports will meet cutting-edge standards. “Our task is to ensure the right of citizens of our countries to the freedom of movement. Belarus is now getting ready to introduce biometric documents. The experience of Russia and international experience are taken into account (...) Belarus plans to start issuing biometric travel documents in 2012 and later on biometric passports,” said Yevgeniy Poluden¹⁷.

The legislation obliges a citizen to change (or receive) a passport on reaching 16, 25, 45 and 100 years old. The holder of an expired passport is a subject to article 179 of the Administrative Code of the Republic of Belarus, which provides a penalty of a warning or a fine of up to 3 basic units (about 25 Euro).

Now administrative responsibility for the loss of passport has been cancelled. A person who has lost his passport should report to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Department of Citizenship and Migration) where the lost passport’s data is inputted in electronic data base and the document is claimed invalid.

3. Illegal immigration

a) Border management

There are several laws that constitute the legislative framework of the border management system in Belarus. They are: “On state border of the Republic of Belarus” (2008), “On Border Service Agencies of the Republic of Belarus” (2008), and “On procedures of departure from the Republic of Belarus and entry to the Republic of Belarus” (2009). The state border are managed by the State Border Committee of Belarus, which ensures border security, coordinates activities of state agencies in the sphere of border management policy and border security. In 2010 the Border Service Institute was established. President of Belarus approves annual state border security policy and border security efforts to be implemented in the country.

For the present moment Belarus has two undemarcated borders – with Ukraine and with Russia. The Belarusian-Ukrainian treaty on the delimitation and demarcation of the 1,145-kilometer border had been under preparation for five years. It was finally signed on May 12,

¹⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Biometric_passport_of_belarus.jpg

¹⁵ “Belarusian biometric passport to meet all world standards”, Belteleradiocompany, 2010 (<http://www.tvr.by/eng/society.asp?id=33508>)

¹⁶ У беларускаго біометрычнага пасапрта будзет 72 кілобайта памяці, naviny.by, March 31 2009 (http://naviny.by/rubrics/society/2009/03/31/ic_articles_116_161930/)

¹⁷ Cutting-edge standards for Belarusian biometric passports, BELTA-2010 (<http://news.belta.by/en/news/society?id=566146>)

1997. One year later, President Lukashenka announced that Belarus would not ratify the treaty until Ukraine repaid its debt. The two countries have been in a dispute over the debt since 1992, when Ukraine withdrew from the Soviet Union's ruble zone. Minsk insists that Ukraine failed to supply a large amount of goods to Belarus, and that Belarusian companies paid for the goods but never received them. Kyiv argues that the debt was owed by Ukrainian companies, not by the Ukrainian government. While meeting with the then Ukrainian president, Viktor Yushchenko, in November 2009, Alyaksandr Lukashenka promised that the Belarusian legislature would consider ratifying the treaty.

The treaty was ratified by the House of Representatives on April 2, 2010 and approved by the Council of the Republic (upper parliamentary house) on April 26. Belarus and Ukraine were expected to exchange instruments of ratification in the summer 2010 but Minsk demanded at the last minute that Ukraine pay \$130 million, a state debt that it allegedly owes to Belarus¹⁸. Nevertheless Belarus has started the preparations for the state border demarcation. According to the Head of the Belarus's State Border Committee Ihar Rachkouski this process could take about 10 years and more than 12 mln Euro¹⁹.

According to some sources, preliminary talks on delimitation of Belarus-Russia border are being held, but demarcation of this border is not planned.

Belarus completed the demarcation with Latvia on 18 February 2009 and with Lithuania on 19 June 2008.

Belarus has not adopted a National Integrated Border management Strategy yet. But according to experts Belarus has rather effective border management, which is recognised and positively assessed by experts from the EU and leading international organisations. A number of projects were implemented jointly by the European Commission, the UNDP and Belarusian government in this field.

In 2002, the Belarusian border guards received equipment worth 445,000 Euro in total under the project "Strengthening of Border Control at the Belarusian-Ukrainian Border". In 2003 – 2005, in the framework of the programmes "Fighting Trafficking of Women in Belarus" and the BUMAD Programme on fight against illegal drugs ("Programme for the Prevention of Drug Abuse and the Fight Against Drug Trafficking in Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova") the State Border Committee of Belarus received equipment worth 255,000 Euro. A national info-network on drugs and trafficking of human beings was set up and technical capability for finding and detaining narcotic substances on land border crossing points was improved. The third stage of the BUMAD was focused on personnel training by the Border Committee jointly with the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

In 2005 – 2006 "Improvement of Border management in Belarus" (BOMBEL-1) project was implemented with overall budget 4.7 mln Euro. Main aims of the programme were:

- To carry out comprehensive training for Belarusian border guards in the area of improvement of border protection and compliance with the EU standards;

¹⁸ Belarus, Ukraine to exchange ratification instruments for border treaty, Belarus News-2010 (http://naviny.by/rubrics/english/2010/07/21/ic_articles_259_169381/)

¹⁹ Демаркация белорусско-украинской границы потребует 10 лет и 51 млрд. рублей, Belarus News-2010 (http://naviny.by/rubrics/politic/2010/01/19/ic_news_112_324541/)

- To improve the automated system of passport control and integrated system of communication of the Border Committee (air border crossing points were equipped with modern equipment);
- To renovate and bring the Canine Centre of the Border Committee in Smorgon up to the European standards;
- To organize an international conference on cross-border cooperation with the participation of representatives of the countries determining Border Security in Europe;
- To create at the Belarusian-Polish border in Brest a modern centre for detaining illegal migrants in compliance with European standards;
- To purchase equipment for detecting radioactive substances and carry out appropriate training for border guards.

In September 2006, the EU/UNDP project "Enhancing the System of Immigration Control at the State Border of the Republic of Belarus" (BOMBEL-2) was launched with an overall budget 9.066 mln Euro. The project implementation resulted in:

- seven mobile border posts;
- new equipment in the three mobile border posts at the border with Ukraine;
- new cars purchased for subdivisions;
- a system of detection and registration of trespassers;
- an automated system of border control at all border crossing points of the Belarusian border which allowed the abolition of exit stamps for Belarusian citizens.

In January 2010 The European Commission has granted 7 million Euro to implement the third stage of the Enhancing Border Management in the Republic of Belarus (BOMBEL-3) Programme. It is aimed at creation of a modern data transmission network on the basis of fiber-optic technology on the Western border of Belarus - with the EU countries. The total length of the fiber-optic communication lines will be more than 600km, special equipment will be installed at 50 facilities. The project will help modernize the telecommunication infrastructure of the border services on the Belarusian-Polish border, create a reliable high-speed transport network and lay down the conditions for developing an integrated system of border protection with the use of the latest technical means. All works are planned to be finished in June, 2012²⁰.

Cooperation between law enforcement agencies within Belarus is mainly reflected in joint special actions. As an example could be mentioned the special action 'Illegal Migrant', which was carried out by law enforcement officers in cooperation with the border guard and the KGB in Belarus in November 2008. During the Illegal Migrant action over 1,150 foreigners and around 250 Belarus citizens faced administrative proceedings for violating rules of stay. In view of major violations of migration laws 150 foreign citizens were deported, with 51 of them escorted out of the country.

In October 2010 the first joint tactical exercises of Belarusian and Lithuanian border guards took place. On a regular basis Belarusian State Border Committee cooperates with Russia's Border Service, Border Committee of Ukraine, border guards of Latvia and Poland. Recently Belarus also has established contacts with border security agencies of France, Finland, Germany, Austria, Hungary and Slovakia.

²⁰ BOMBEL-3 will help upgrade telecommunication infrastructure on Belarus-Poland border, Rachkovsky says. BELTA, 29.03.2010 (<http://news.belta.by/en/news/society?id=509524>)

In October 2009 the Heads of the Belarusian Border Committee and the EU's border agency FRONTEX signed a memorandum of cooperation. The agreement expands capabilities of Belarus and the European Union in joint border protection. The document provides for sharing information, traineeship, education, joint operations and a lot of other things.

b) Migration management

The migration and asylum issues in Belarus are regulated by the following main legal documents:

- Law of the Republic of Belarus on Refugees (third edition, adopted in 2002, in force since 18.07.2003)
- Instructions on the refugee status determination procedure (Resolution of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of 30.06.2003 No. 77)
- Rules of stay of refugees (Resolution of the Council of Ministers of 30.05.2003 No. 728)
- Law on Citizenship (2002)
- Rules of Stay of Foreigners (Resolution of the Council of Ministers of 25.10.2000 No. 1654)
- Regulations on Deportation of Foreigners (Resolution of the Council of Ministers of 25.10.2000 No. 1653)
- Law on Immigration (1998)
- Law on Legal Status of Foreigners and Stateless Persons in the Republic of Belarus (1993)

Belarus adopts biannual state programs to counteract trafficking in human beings and illegal migration. On 2 October 2010, the President of Belarus signed Decree No. 518 on the State Programme to Counteract Trafficking in Human Beings, Illegal Migration and the Related Unlawful Acts for the years 2011-2013. The programme places the main emphasis on expansion of media coverage related to counteraction against trafficking in human beings, illegal migration and other unlawful acts, such as production, placement and broadcast of updated materials, social TV and other media products. Relevant agencies monitor financial flows coming from countries with migration problems, send victims of human trafficking to rehabilitation centres, address international organizations and public associations²¹.

Other activities on combating human trafficking include development of cooperation with international institutions, attraction of financial resources for information campaigns and research.

According to the Chief of Belarus' Office of the International Organization for Migration Dejan Keserovic, *Belarus is an indisputable leader in combating of human trafficking* and its national legislation in this sphere complies with all international standards²².

Belarus participates in the following international and regional initiatives in the field of asylum, migration and border management:

- The 1996 CIS Conference and its Follow up Process
- The Budapest Process

²¹ BELTA, 04.10.2010 (<http://news.belta.by/en/news/president?id=585810>)

²² "Осозанный шаг", Народная газета, 29.09.2010 (http://www.ng.by/ru/issues?art_id=50270)

- The International Border Guard Conference (The Söderköping Process)
- The Söderköping process

Belarus became a member of IOM in 2005, following several years of participation in the work of the international organization as an observer state.

For now there is no mechanism for monitoring of migration flows going through Belarus. Belarus does not have readmission agreements with third countries either.

c) Asylum policy

According to the Constitution, Republic of Belarus can grant asylum for persons persecuted in other states for political and religious beliefs or ethnicity. The decision on granting asylum is made by the President of the Republic of Belarus. In accordance with the laws of the Republic of Belarus asylum applications are accepted from individuals residing on the territory of Belarus and forced to leave their home country because of persecution for their political or religious beliefs or ethnicity. The applicant must submit substantial evidence of persecution by the government on those grounds. A foreigner seeking for asylum in Belarus shall personally apply to the department of the Ministry of Interior in the area of his temporary residence with a written request addressed to the President of Belarus.

The Law of the Republic of Belarus ‘On Granting of Refugee Status, Subsidiary and Temporary Protection in the Republic of Belarus’ has entered into force since July 2009. According to this instrument, refugees in the Republic of Belarus enjoy the same social and economic rights, as well as rights relating to education, as do the nationals of Belarus. Besides, they are granted the right to family reunification, financial assistance, residence in specially equipped places, exemptions in registration at the place of residence, as well as the right to judicial protection on an equal basis with the nationals of Belarus.

Voluntary return is an alternative to unlawful migrants and potential refugees who were refused or withdrawn their applications for any reason. Since 2007, the IOM Mission in Belarus has implemented the program of assisted voluntary return of migrants to their countries of origin. Within the framework of the program 107 migrants applied for assistance and 67 migrants were granted such assistance (including consulting, issuance of documents for departure, payment of the reintegration grant, medical examination, etc.).

According to UNHCR Representative in Belarus Sholeh Safavi Belarus and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) cooperate most successfully in refugee and migration related areas²³. UNHCR has implemented a number of projects in Belarus including renovation of a temporary accommodation centers for refugees. There are such facilities in Minsk, Vitsebsk, Homel and Brest.

According to the UNHCR report prepared in August 2007 Belarus’s asylum related legislation and implementation falling short of international standards. There were enumerated the following concerns: Access to territory and lack of border monitoring procedures; quality of RSD procedures; conditions of reception; Undocumented asylum

²³ <http://www.radiobelarus.tvr.by/eng/news.asp?type=cont&id=20822&date=28.02.2011>

seekers and lack of identification procedures; lack of Convention travel document; need for greater advocacy and training; lack of State integration programs for refugees.

Integration-related assistance provided by the state is quite limited due to a general poor social and economic situation in the country. Access to lawful employment is difficult due to lack of recognition of diplomas, qualifications which do not match the market demand, discrimination, lack of awareness of employers of refugees rights. In 2003-7, UNHCR implemented several LI projects to help refugees become self-reliant including 2 successful refugee-run Social Enterprises in Homel and Hrodna.

4. Public order and security

a) Fight against organised crime, terrorism and corruption

Belarus has ratified The UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime with protocols in 2003.

Belarus has national programs on fight against crime, corruption and trafficking in human beings. In 2007, the law on fight against organized crime was adopted by the National Assembly²⁴. The State Committee on fight against organized crime has been operating since 1991. Every two years the President of Belarus approves a state program against crime and corruption, which provides for a set of measures against crime, including organizational, legal and practical steps aimed at combating specific types of criminal offenses.

Belarus is a source and transit country for women, men, and children trafficked from Belarus and neighbouring countries to Russia, Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Latvia, Austria, the Netherlands, Israel, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Turkey, Egypt, Ukraine, and the Republic of Togo for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation and forced labour.

According to the U.S. State Department Trafficking in Persons Report (June 2009), the Government of Belarus does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. However, it is making significant efforts to do so. The government demonstrated sustained efforts to prosecute and punish trafficking offenders, though support for victim assistance programs remained limited. It demonstrated sustained public awareness and trafficking prevention activities. The government funds an anti-trafficking training academy. The education ministry distributed a manual for teachers on activities aimed at preventing human trafficking.

Concrete measures have been taken in relation to counteracttrafficking in persons aimed at improving and updating the current legislation; establishing special-purpose units of law-enforcement agencies targeted to combat trafficking in persons; developing international cooperation to combat and suppress the most dangerous crimes, trafficking in persons included; raising awareness of the young women who are thinking of foreign employment;

²⁴ О борьбе с организованной преступностью. Принят Палатой представителей 23 мая 2007 г. (<http://www.pravo.by/WEBNPA/text.asp?RN=H10700244>)

developing the system of social support that may provide assistance to potential and actual victims of trafficking.

Belarusian law prohibits trafficking in persons for the purposes of both sexual exploitation and forced labour through Article 181 of its criminal code, which prescribes penalties ranging from five to 15 years' imprisonment, in addition to the forfeiture of assets. These penalties are sufficiently stringent and are commensurate with penalties prescribed for other grave crimes.

The Republic of Belarus has signed the following international treaties and other documents:

- The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;
- The Convention on the Protection of Children and Cooperation in International Adoption;
- The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;
- The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

When it comes to the Anti-Money Laundering (AML)/ Combatting the Financing of Terrorism (CFT) regime, Belarus has developed some of its elements. Money laundering is criminalized. Financial institutions are obligated to monitor and report financial transactions subject to special control and take other measures to deter money laundering (ML). Two specialised agencies exercise financial intelligence responsibilities. ML offenses are investigated and prosecuted. Nevertheless, gaps and misalignments in the current legal and institutional arrangements, as well as incomplete implementation undermine the full effectiveness of the AML/CFT regime. The authorities are aware of *the need to update and reshape the present AML/CFT regime and they are well advanced on a reform agenda*²⁵. They demonstrated a desire and intention to comply with international standards and have drafted a new AML Law in line with the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommendations.

The Anti-corruption programme approved by the President of Belarus for the period of 2007-2010 pays special attention to inspections in spheres that are most corruption prone: construction of state subsidized property, provision of living quarters from the state-owned housing stock, provision of land plots by local authorities, deliveries of oil products and sales of products of the fuel-energy and petrochemical industries, credit-financial and banking spheres, licensing of some types of activities, sales of the material resources which were once in the ownership of the Armed Forces.

Measures taken by the state in the previous years, including the implementation of a Governmental Programme for the Years 2002-2006 to Accelerate the Fight against Corruption allowed to improve the legislative basis and define basic entering points and forms of prevention. However, *corruption continues to undermine the country's socio-economic development and therefore remains a serious threat to the national security*.

Belarus has signed the agreement concerning immunities and privileges of GRECO representatives and evaluators only in January 2010, therefore it is too early yet to evaluate its progress in implementation of the GRECO recommendations.

²⁵ Republic of Belarus: Detailed Assessment Report in Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism, IMF 2007.

In 2008, the Belarus' National Assembly approved the Law on Information, Informatization and Data Protection, which a legal basis for international cooperation in this area. Under the given law, the President and the Council of Ministers define and implement the country's information and privacy policies. The State Center on Informational Security and the National Academy of Sciences defined technical measures to protect information and keep a registry of the providers of said data.

At present, Belarus has no cooperation agreement with the Europol and cooperates only with law-enforcement bodies of some EU member-states on bilateral basis.

b) Judicial co-operation in criminal matters

The Belarus's courts system consists of district courts, regional courts, and the Supreme Court. Higher courts serve as appellate courts but also serve as courts of first instance. There are also economic courts, and a Supreme Economic Court. Trials are generally public unless closed on grounds of national security. Litigants have a right to counsel and, in cases of need, to appointment of counsel at state expense.

The president appoints all district level and military judges. The 1996 constitution gives the president the power to appoint 6 of the 12 members of the Constitutional Court, including the chief justice. The Council of the Republic appoints the other remaining 6 members of the Constitutional Court. The judiciary is not independent and is under the influence of the executive. Legislation concerning independence of the judiciary was passed in 1995, but as of 2003, the laws were not implemented. The Constitutional Court was established in 1994, and adjudicates serious constitutional issues. The Constitutional Court has no power to enforce its decisions. Prosecutors are responsible to the Procurator General who is appointed by the Council of the Republic according to the 1996 constitution. The offices of prosecutors consist of district offices, regional and republic level offices.

The procedure of execution in the Republic of Belarus of decisions of foreign courts, international arbitration tribunal (court of referees) is determined normally by international agreements of the Republic of Belarus and by the national legislation. Decisions of courts of foreign states, which have not concluded an agreement on legal assistance with the Republic of Belarus, may be recognized and executed on a reciprocity basis.

Bilateral agreements on legal assistance and legal relations on civil, criminal and others matters have been concluded between the Republic of Belarus and the following states:

Czech Republic (25.11.2002)
China (10.06.1993)
Cuba (01.11.2002)
Hungary (01.11.2002)
Latvia (09.02.1995)
Lithuania (11.07.1993)
Poland (30.07.1995)
Vietnam (17.10.2001)
Egypt (20.10.2010)
Bulgaria
India

Also with the following countries of the CIS The Minsk Convention on Legal Assistance and Legal Relations in Civil, Famili and Criminal Matters has been concluded [19.01.1994]: Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

Belarus has not developed relations with Eurojust yet.

In modern Belarus the development of the judicial power is an attempt to increase overall performance within the framework of an authoritative political system. In practice it means that a cardinal reform of the court system is possible, but direct dependence on the executive power of national and regional levels still remains.

The state chief executive officers can freely influence verdicts if a certain case, for whatever reasons, has acquired political, social or economic importance to the authorities. Through the majority of other cases the judge can still keep some autonomy. Thus, in 2009 in the sphere of politically and socially motivated control no visible changes occurred, the development of the judicial system was connected with the rest of the judicial activity including the overwhelming majority of criminal, civil and administrative cases.

Judicial reform is guided by two things: how well the “requirements” and “commissions” of President Lukashenka are performed as well as the items of directive No 2. The will of the president, as a rule, is emphasized more than references to international standards, constitutional principles etc. In publications judicial system officials also often refer to presidential speeches. Despite the fact that in recent years legislative conditions for specialized courts were created and the necessity for such courts repeatedly reaffirmed in documents and in speeches of officials, this process is now practically frozen. Specialized boards as an intermediate stage to creation of courts were not created either.

The same situation applies to appeals that are made for investigation of civil and criminal cases. The necessity to be able to make appeals is reflected in various documents and confirmed in publications of officials, but these rational expectations have not been realized. The major factors connected with the absence of structural reform are: insufficient organizational and legal preparation, the necessity of additional financial expenses and resistance of a part of the judicial community. The absence of progress in structural reform of the general courts negatively affects the overall performance of the judicial system, which is admitted by the heads of the judicial power and the Ministry of Justice. In 2008 an attempt was made to reform the Constitutional Court at the expense of transfer of additional functions that was unforeseen in the constitution. First of all, it was a question of the obligatory preliminary control of the bills, the order of which is fixed in a special decree of the president.

After reorganization of 2008 the primary activity of the Constitutional Court consists in performance of auxiliary functions in the legislative process. In 2009 considerable efforts of the heads of the Constitutional Court were directed at justifying reorganization. For this purpose various mechanisms of improving procedures of obligatory preliminary control were offered and adopted; also, suggestions on development of indirect access of citizens to constitutional justice were put forward

The basic problem of the Constitutional Court in the current political system is its nonfunctionality which can only be overcome through modifying the constitution, which is improbable in the near future²⁶.

c) Law enforcement co-operation

In accordance with national legislation, all investigations on the territory of the Republic of Belarus shall be carried out by competent national law enforcement agencies.

A request for legal assistance, letters rogatory or request for any judicial proceeding should be sent through diplomatic channels to the Ministry of Justice or the Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Belarus.

All other requests that require criminal intelligence checks, registration, data, identification of individuals, verification of information etc., i.e. check that do not require judicial authorisation should be sent through Interpol channels to NCB Minsk.

Where a country has an international treaty for police co-operation with the Republic of Belarus, the latter can render police assistance at any level. Belarus has close police ties with all C.I.S. countries, Lithuania, Latvia and Poland. Belarusian police carry out operations and act in concert with the law enforcement agencies of Russia and Ukraine, resulting from their history of structured co-operation.

d) Data protection

Belarus has not signed the 1981 Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data as well as the Convention's Additional Protocol on supervisory authorities and trans-border data flows.

Belarus does not have special legislation on data protection. In May 2009 the Law on Information, Informatization and protection of information entered in force. According to Article 32 of the law "transfer of personal data shall be allowed only on the basis of consent of the person this information relates to, or according to the legislation of the Republic of Belarus. (...) If personal data has been received with violations of these requirements (...), a party that has obtained such information shall not be entitled to use it and is bearing responsibility in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Belarus"²⁷. But the law does not establish a data protection authority nor does it say about a governmental body responsible for data protection.

5. External Relations and fundamental rights

Belarus does not have a Human Rights Action Plan.

²⁶ Andrei Kazakevich, JUDICIAL POWER: RELATIVE AUTONOMY AND ACCENT ON "FREEDOM" in Belarusian Yearbook 2009 (http://nmnby.eu/content/images/BY_2009_engl.pdf)

²⁷ Law Of The Republic Of Belarus "On Information, Informatization and Protection of information" (in Russian) - <http://www.pravo.by/webnpa/text.asp?start=1&RN=H10800455>

The registration procedure requirements for foreigners wishing to reside in Belarus is as follows: All foreigners visiting or residing in Belarus are required to register with the local office of the Citizenship and Migration Department of the Ministry of Interior (formerly OVIR) within 5 business days of arrival. The Law on the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons in the Republic of Belarus states that all foreign citizens may be granted permission for a temporary stay (up to 90 days within a chronological year), temporary residence (up to one year), or permanent residence. Belarusian Embassies and Consulates will issue visas for temporary stays²⁸. A temporary stay visa will allow to be present physically in Belarus for a maximum of 90 days within the 365-day period for which the visa is issued. Once a foreigner has spent 90 days in Belarus, at one time or through a combination of visits, he or she will not be eligible to receive another visa until the original 365-day period has passed. If a foreign citizen receives a visa for a temporary stay, but wish to remain in Belarus for longer than 90 days, he must apply for temporary or permanent residence with the Ministry of Interior.

All groups of Belarusian society potentially have access to travel and identity documents. However, according to the recently adopted “Law On The Order of Travelling Abroad” some categories of people have no right to leave Belarus (including persons under trial, top-managers of firms declared bankrupt etc.). Human rights defenders are worried that the government can use this law to prevent opposition activists to travel abroad.

Currently effective legislation does not contain explicitly the so called “Anti-discrimination law”, which regulates the principles for the equal treatment resting on the prohibition of discrimination and the means of legal protection against its violation. But the Belarusian Constitution proclaims that one of its fundamental principles is the equality of citizens “without any discrimination”. Belarus also has signed and ratified The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

Belarusian citizenship can be acquired: by birth, by naturalization, and by registration. Citizenship by birth can be acquired by a child if one of the parents is a Belarusian citizen or both of them are permanent residents of Belarus. Citizenship by naturalization can be gained if the applicant:

- had permanent residence in Belarus for 7 years preceding the application,
- has enough knowledge of one of state languages (Belarusian or Russian),
- has legal income,
- has no foreign citizenship, or will lose the foreign citizenship after acquisition of Belarusian citizenship, or has renounced his citizenship.

The required period of residence can be reduced for several categories of people, including ethnic Belarusians, the descendants of ethnic Belarusians born abroad, people who held Belarusian citizenship in the past, and people who have made significant contributions to development of Belarus).

Citizenship by registration can be acquired by:

²⁸ On Legal Status of Foreign Citizens and Persons Without Citizenship in the Republic of Belarus. Law of the Republic of Belarus - <http://zoneby.net/doc/news222.htm/4>

- people who hold USSR citizenship and were born in Belarus, or had a place of residence in Belarus before November 12, 1991, as well as their spouses who hold citizenship of USSR, and their descendants,
- a child of a Belarusian citizen,
- an adopted child.

There is no specific training for law enforcement and judiciary institutions involved in prosecution of crimes in the area of racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism in Belarus.

According to US State Department's Human Right Report²⁹ Belarus's government's human rights record remained very poor as government authorities continued to commit frequent serious abuses. The right of citizens to change their government was severely restricted. The government failed to account for past politically motivated disappearances. Prison conditions remained extremely poor, and reports of abuse of prisoners and detainees continued. Arbitrary arrests, detentions, and imprisonment of citizens for political reasons, criticizing officials, or for participating in demonstrations also continued. The government further restricted civil liberties, including freedoms of press, speech, assembly, association, and religion and continued to enforce politically motivated military conscriptions of opposition youth leaders. The government seized published materials from civil society activists and limited the distribution of a number of independent media outlets. State security services used unreasonable force to disperse peaceful protesters.

Prison and detention center conditions remained austere and posed threats to life and health. There were shortages of food, medicine, warm clothing, and bedding. Ventilation in cells and overall sanitation was poor. As a result, tuberculosis, pneumonia, and other communicable diseases were prevalent. The United Nations Development Program reported that none of the country's prisons fully complied with the World Health Organization's tuberculosis infection control guidelines and expressed concern over sexual and other types of harassment and violence in prisons.

The report by FIDH and Vyasna concluded that prison conditions in the country were "extremely unsatisfactory and amount to inhumane treatment." Those interviewed in preparation of the report included former prisoners and detainees, relatives of prisoners, defense attorneys, NGO members, and a former judge. Despite numerous requests to the Ministries of Interior and Justice, government officials refused to meet with FIDH representatives or approve requests to visit detention facilities. Former prisoners reported that medical check-ups were rare, conducted by underqualified medical personnel, and that examination results were often fabricated. Authorities failed to provide conditions necessary for maintaining proper personal hygiene. Prisoners often complained of malnutrition and low quality uniforms and bedding. Some former political prisoners reported that they were subjected to psychological abuse and often had to share a cell with violent criminals. They also reported that authorities neither explained nor protected their legal rights. Overcrowding in prisons, detention centers, and work release prisons ("khimiya") was a serious problem. Persons sentenced to khimiya, a form of internal exile, lived in prison barracks and were forced to work under strict conditions.

²⁹ 2009 Human Rights Report: Belarus. - BUREAU OF DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND LABOR, March 11, 2010.

The law permits family and friends to bring detainees food and hygiene products and to mail parcels to prisoners, but in many cases authorities did not respect the law.

Status of Ratification of the Main International Human Rights Treaties, Conventions and other instruments

International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (2007)	13 March 2007
International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (2002)	06 October 2004
Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (2004)	25 June 2003
Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2003)	25 June 2003
UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2003)	25 June 2003
International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (2001)	01 October 2001
Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1954)	23 August 2001
Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990)	01 October 1990
International Convention against Taking of Hostages (1983)	01 July 1987
Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1987)	13 March 1987
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1981)	04 February 1981
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1976)	12 November 1973
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1976)	12 November 1973
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1969)	08 August 1969
Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others (1951)	24 August 1956
Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1954)	11 August 1954