



Student Arrests in Belarus

For almost a month, Belarusians across the country have been standing for their rights and demanding justice in peaceful protests. Just after the rigged elections of president Lukashenko, tens of thousands citizens have been demonstrating in the streets and showing their displeasure with the regime. Regardless of the unprecedented violence and tortures of detainees in isolation centres, Belarusians are willing to build democracy and to restore the rule of Law peacefully.

Students, being a significant part of the protest and one of the most vulnerable social groups in Belarus, are now being pursued by Lukashenko's regime and detained by the riot police. During the 1st and 2nd of September, the first days of student strikes, approximately 100 students were detained and sentenced to arrest from 6 to 15 days in infamous Belarusian isolation centres.

With a great disturbance and outrage, Belarusian Students' Association, the Brotherhood of organizers of student self-government and the European Students' Union note that the student activists are being summoned for interrogations to the Department for Combating Organized Crime and Corruption. Furthermore, administrations of universities are either staying silent or even calling riot police into the universities while students are demanding a dialog with them.

At least 1 case is known of a rector of Belarusian State Academy of Arts who was fired for openly supporting the anti-violence protest movement. Additionally, BSA is aware of cases of scientists and teachers in universities pursued for their disagreement with the regime and support they are showing for their students.



As members of the European Higher Education Area since 2015, the state of Belarus committed to introduce structural educational reforms and tools based on the values freedom of expression, autonomy for institutions, independent student unions, academic freedom. Freedom from the current dictatorship is essential for the realisation of these commitments.

The European Students' Union together with the Belarusian Students' Association and the Brotherhood of organizers of student self-government:

1. Demand the Belarusian Ministry of Internal Affairs to free all detained students immediately and stop the use of riot police, brutality and detainment of peaceful protesters.
2. Condemn the ignorance and complicity of university management who allow police surveillance and brutality towards students inside the university walls.
3. Demand justice for victims of police brutality and persecution.
4. Call upon the European Higher Education Area to use all the international pressure on the Ministry of the Education in Belarus in order to ensure the rights of Belarusian students are protected.

The whole European community should stand up for the rights of the students in Belarus. Years of cooperation in the area of higher education equals wasted time if students are to be persecuted, harrassed and detained inside of their universities by the help of the higher education leadership.