

National Human Rights Index

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2022

The right to health:

Expert Commentary

The score: 4.4

Including scores by component:

- General principles 3.8
- Maternal, child and reproductive health 4.8
- Healthy natural and workplace environments 4.4
- Disease prevention 4.7
- Medical and nursing care in case of illness 4.2

A description of the basic situation with the implementation of the right to health can be found in the commentary to the 2019 assessment. Assessing the state of the right to health in 2022, the Index experts gave lower scores than in 2021.

• **General principles**

In 2022, the level of availability of sufficient functioning health and medical care facilities, goods and services has decreased as a result of the political crisis and repressive policies of the state.

Thus, private medical centers faced numerous unscheduled inspections, as a result of which gross violations of the law were allegedly revealed and the activities of the centers were suspended.¹ Since May 30, laboratories of private health organizations have lost the right to conduct PCR testing for the presence of SARS-CoV-2 on a paid basis for traveling abroad with the issuance of results in Russian and English. This became possible only on the basis of 53 laboratories of the Ministry of Health.²

Moreover, experts note that after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, some hospitals in the Gomel region³ began to treat the Russian military, thereby making it difficult to carry out planned and

¹ <https://t.me/minzdravbelarus/5406>; <https://news.zerkalo.io/life/16045>; <https://t.me/minzdravbelarus/5406>; <https://t.me/minzdravbelarus/6542>; <https://t.me/minzdravbelarus/6977>; <https://t.me/minzdravbelarus/7309>; <https://t.me/minzdravbelarus/8060>

² <https://minzdrav.gov.by/ru/dlya-belorusskikh-grazhdan/COVID-19/provedenie-platnykh-ptsr-issledovaniy-za-predely-belarusi.php>

³ In Gomel, Bragin, Mozyr



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emergency surgeries for Belarusian citizens.

According to experts, the Belarusian government's support for Russian military aggression against Ukraine has also led to a decrease in the level of provision of sufficient medicines, while the demand for them has increased significantly. In particular, the supply of medicines from Ukraine was stopped.⁴ Moreover, representatives of the state also recognized the problem with the supply of drugs and equipment of "Western" production.⁵ The sanctions imposed on Belarus were cited as the reason.⁶ According to experts, there are much more significant and long-standing obstacles to the purchase of foreign-made goods.⁷ However, experts draw attention to the fact that the sanctions do not directly, but really affect the provision of medicines and equipment, forcing pharmaceutical companies to leave Belarus. As an additional factor, experts also note repressions against pharmaceutical companies.⁸

Despite the positive statistics on the staffing of doctors and nurses provided by the Ministry of Health⁹, in reality, the situation with the provision of medical workers continued to deteriorate - during the year, the shortage of medical personnel constantly increased.¹⁰ The decrease in the number of medical personnel is due to the departure of doctors abroad¹¹ due to unsatisfactory working conditions and low

⁴ <https://t.me/minzdravbelarus/4653>

⁵ <https://web.telegram.org/z/#-1209625827>; <https://t.me/minzdravbelarus/4976>;
https://t.me/government_by/126; <https://t.me/minzdravbelarus/5827>

⁶ https://t.me/government_by/166; https://t.me/government_by/126

⁷ Thus, according to the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus dated December 10, 2020 No. 717, the conditions for the admission of goods of foreign origin are established. In particular, goods and suppliers are allowed to participate in such procurement procedures if less than two proposals have been submitted, containing information on the supply of goods originating from the Republic of Belarus or the states from which the goods have been granted national treatment in accordance with international treaties of the Republic of Belarus, and meeting the requirements of the procurement documentation. This rule also applies to medical products, and is often a significant restriction for the purchase of medical devices:

<https://pravo.by/document/?guid=12551&p0=C22000717&p1=1&p5=0>

⁸ <https://www.belarus.kp.ru/online/news/5022451/>; <https://www.belarus.kp.ru/online/news/5006389/>;
<https://www.belarus.kp.ru/online/news/4992975/>

⁹ http://minzdrav.gov.by/ru/dlya-spetsialistov/kadry-i-obrazovanie/?sphrase_id=434663

¹⁰In June, 3,905 specialist physicians and 3,393 nurses were needed nationwide: <https://news.zerkalo.io/economics/16528.html?tg>; 4,603 specialist physicians and 3,552 nurses were needed in October: <https://news.zerkalo.io/economics/16528.html?tg>; only At the beginning of November, 1,505 nurses were needed in Minsk (1,351 in October) and 1,411 medical specialists (1,300 in October <https://komtrud.minsk.gov.by/employment/statistics.php>). See also the Report of the Medical Solidarity Fund "Assessment of the number of doctors in the Republic of Belarus at the end of 2022. Comparison of official statistics and data from open sources." <https://civicmonitoring.health/post/doctors-count/Report>

¹¹According to the statement of the Minister of Health of Poland, thanks to the simplified employment procedure in 2022, about 1000 doctors from Belarus came to Poland: <https://www.rynekzdrowia.pl/Finanse-i-zarzadzanie/Juz-ponad-2-tysiace-nowych-lekarzy-z-zagranicy-pracuje-w-polskim-systemie-zdrowia,236634,1.html>



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wages, as well as repression against them.¹²

Experts point out that despite the State's attempts to increase the level of wages by introducing allowances set differently depending on the complexity and intensity of the work performed, such allowances have been insignificant when adjusted for inflation¹³. Moreover, from July 1, additional payments to the salaries of medical personnel for working with patients with coronavirus were officially canceled, despite the fact that in some regions the load was not significantly reduced.¹⁴ The salaries of medical personnel remained below the national average.¹⁵ The problem of significant overtime in violation of labor legislation remains. In May 2022, the Ministry of Health began an experiment with the provision of paid services to patients of state medical institutions on weekends. The Ministry of Health believed that such an experiment would not only meet the needs of patients, but also help doctors get additional salaries.¹⁶ Experts, however, point out that such an experiment would only increase the workload on doctors, further reducing their rest time.

In 2022, doctors continued to face government repression. Thus, a well-known Vitebsk doctor Uladzimir Martov, former head of the anesthesiology and resuscitation department of the Vitebsk Emergency Hospital, who openly spoke about the situation with coronavirus and criticized the incidence statistics from the Ministry of Health was detained¹⁷; Yulia Zharankova, Doctor of the Republican Scientific and Practical Center for Pediatric Oncology, Hematology and Immunology, who supported Viktor Babaryka and was a member of the Free Trade Union of Belarus; Head of the Laboratory of Genetic Aliaksandr Meleshko, a member of the Free Trade Union of Belarus¹⁸; gastroenterologist in Baranovichi (Brest region) Aliaksandr Trofimov; anesthesiologist of the oncological dispensary in Mogilev Dmitry Morozov; anesthesiologist and resuscitator of the Children's City Clinical Hospital No. 2 in Minsk Tatyana Tolochko.¹⁹

The Medical Solidarity Foundation reported that at the end of 2022, at least 17 doctors had been

¹² Report of the Medical Solidarity Foundation "Repressions against Medical Workers"
<https://civicmonitoring.health/post/repressions-report/> ; <https://news.zerkalo.io/life/5424.html>

¹³ Resolution of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Belarus No. 57 "On Amendments to the Resolution of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Belarus of June 13, 2019 No. 52":
<https://pravo.by/document/?guid=12551&p0=W22238288&p1=1&p5=0> ; <https://president.gov.by/ru/events/v-belarusi-budet-povyshena-zarabotnaya-plata-medicinskim-rabotnikam>;
<http://minzdrav.gov.by/ru/sobytiya/minzdrav-derzhit-na-zhestkom-kontrole-poryadok-vyplat-nadbavok-meditsinskim-rabotnikam/>

¹⁴ <https://news.zerkalo.io/life/15306.html?tg>

¹⁵ <https://news.zerkalo.io/economics/22370.html?tg>

¹⁶ <https://t.me/minzdravbelarus/5416>

¹⁷ https://t.me/zerkalo_io/37258

¹⁸ <https://t.me/profbelonline/544>; <https://t.me/profbelonline/542>

¹⁹ <https://news.zerkalo.io/life/18353.html?tg> ; <https://www.dw.com/ru/vrachi-v-tjurne-istorii-belorusskih-medikov-politzakljuchennyh/a-62543557?maca=rus-Red-Telegram-dwbelarus>



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convicted or charged under criminal articles in politically motivated cases, and at least 205 doctors had been dismissed by management or resigned on their own because of their civic position.²⁰

In 2022, at least 35 orthopedic traumatologists were detained on suspicion of corruption, many of whom were heads of hospital departments. Presumably, the reason for the persecution is related to the purchase of German-made prostheses, and, in particular, recommendations from doctors to install a German prosthesis instead of a Belarusian one in order to receive additional payments from the supplier of prostheses. As a result, the doctors were released on the condition of pleading guilty, compensating for "damages" in a multiple and transferring them to another institution determined by the Minister of Health.²¹ Nevertheless, the mass detention of doctors of such a narrow profile caused a decrease in the level of medical care provided to the population, temporarily suspending it.²²

At the same time, during 2022, there were numerous complaints about long queues at polyclinics, forcing people to be on the street²³, and long waits for ambulances.²⁴ Although the authorities cited the high incidence of COVID-19 as justification for such delays, one of the real reasons for the problems described is also the lack of medical personnel. Thus, about 2.5 thousand senior students of medical universities were sent to clinics and hospitals to help treat patients with coronavirus infection.²⁵

In 2022, problems with the physical and economic accessibility of health facilities, goods and services continued. After the outbreak of the armed conflict in Ukraine, there was a significant increase in prices for foreign drugs.²⁶

On October 7, the Ministry of Health introduced a moratorium on increasing prices for medicines, medical products, medical equipment and medical services.²⁷ In addition, during the year, state bodies made other attempts to regulate prices for medical services. At the same time, experts assess such measures as negative.

For example, in order to protect the rights of patients, in May 2022, the State Control Committee sent recommendations to medical centers demanding that they recalculate the cost of inflated services, as

²⁰ https://t.me/belhalat_by/7962

²¹ <https://www.sb.by/articles/letom-maski-ne-nuzhny.html>; https://t.me/belta_telegramm/121047;
<https://news.zerkalo.io/life/15486.html?tg>; <https://news.zerkalo.io/life/12830.html?tg> ; https://t.me/pul_1/5293

²² <https://news.zerkalo.io/life/13082.html>; <https://news.zerkalo.io/life/12301.html>

²³ <https://news.zerkalo.io/life/9376.html?tg> <https://news.zerkalo.io/life/9304.html>

²⁴ <https://news.zerkalo.io/life/9380.html?tg>

²⁵ <https://t.me/minzdravbelarus/4366> ; Order of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Belarus No. 113 "On Some Issues of Conducting Examination of Temporary Disability":
http://minzdrav.gov.by/upload/dadvfiles/law/%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B8%D0%BA%D0%B0%D0%B7_%D0%9C%D0%97_2022_113.pdf

²⁶ https://news.zerkalo.io/life/11417.html?utm_source=news.zerkalo.io&utm_medium=news-bottom-block&utm_campaign=relevant_news

²⁷ <https://t.me/minzdravbelarus/7358>



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well as provide citizens with the right to choose services without imposing unnecessary tests, consultations, and procedures.²⁸ And in August, the Ministry of Health adjusted the instruction on the procedure for establishing and applying tariffs for paid medical services. In particular, the issues of payment for services for radiology and ultrasound diagnostics were settled.²⁹ Experts note that such measures equalize wages regardless of the level of qualification of specialists, the quality of materials and equipment used, which leads to a decrease in motivation for advanced training and will only increase the level of migration.

Despite the model Regulation on the inter-district center providing specialized and high-tech medical care, developed by the Ministry of Health, which contributes to improving the availability and quality of specialized and high-tech medical care for patients regardless of their place of residence³⁰, experts note that the state lacks the latest technologies, as well as a sufficient number of highly qualified medical personnel to provide such services. According to experts, the situation in regional cities continues to deteriorate. It is known about the problem of transport accessibility, which makes it difficult to receive high-quality medical care in district centers.

Experts draw attention to some positive changes. For example, in cooperation with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the State has organized mobile outpatient clinics for people living with HIV, accompanied by an infectious disease doctor. Previously, only NGO social workers were present in such mobile outpatient clinics.

In 2022, mobile teams were organized in each region and in Minsk to provide emergency dental care to patients with COVID-19.³¹

At the same time, experts note serious problems in ensuring access to health care facilities, goods and services without any discrimination and numerous violations of medical ethics.

Persons deprived of their liberty are not given the opportunity to receive proper medical examinations, necessary medical care and treatment whenever the need arises. There is no mechanism for independent and objective medical examinations and documentation of injuries.

²⁸ https://t.me/kgk_oficial/721; https://news.zerkalo.io/economics/14537.html?utm_source=news.zerkalo.io&utm_medium=news-bottom-block&utm_campaign=relevant_news

²⁹ Decree of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Belarus No. 69 "On Amendments to the Resolution of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Belarus of February 3, 2015 No. 14": <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=12551&p0=W22238483&p1=1&p5=0>

³⁰ Standard Regulations on the Inter-District Center: https://minzdrav.gov.by/upload/lcfiles/%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B8%D0%BA%D0%B0%D0%B7_%D0%9C%D0%97_2022_1099.pdf ; Instructions on the procedure for providing medical care to patients with life-threatening conditions – acute coronary syndrome and acute cerebrovascular accident: https://minzdrav.gov.by/upload/lcfiles/%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B8%D0%BA%D0%B0%D0%B7_%D0%9C%D0%97_2022_1100.pdf

³¹ <https://t.me/minzdravbelarus/4299>



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There is ample evidence that prison administration would not give political prisoners medication; intentionally create conditions that promote the development of diseases or exacerbate pre-existing diseases; refuse to provide medical care or provide it poorly.

Thus, Mikalai Autukhovich, who went on a hunger strike because of the blocking of correspondence, was placed in a punishment cell, being severely dehydrated, his lips and tongue were dry. Nicholas was very weak and could not stand on his feet, but the prison doctor believed that his condition allowed him to participate in court hearings. The request to call an ambulance was denied. Uladimir Gundar, who has a disability of the second group (Vladimir does not have one leg), was also placed in a punishment cell, where he went on a dry hunger strike for 11 days. It is known that during the transfer from one correctional facility to another, Uladimir was forced to move without crutches. Vladimir was placed in a cell in his underwear, handcuffed to the bars. Galina Derbysh, a 60-year-old pensioner with a disability of the second group, cancer and heart problems, was also placed in a punishment cell for a period of 10 days, she was not given the necessary medicines, so she lost consciousness several times. The woman was held in solitary confinement for 15 months. Sergei Rezanovich, who suffers from diabetes, also reported health problems. His condition deteriorated so much during the trial that he could not testify. Lyubov Rezanovich was kept in cramped solitary confinement and often sought medical help. For the fact that M. Autukhovich demanded to call doctors for her at the first court session, he was removed from the courtroom. During the court hearing, pensioner Irina Melkher spoke about the unbearable conditions of detention and expressed concern that she might not receive medical care on time.³² Andrei Voynich, sentenced to 7 years in a high-security penal colony, is terminally ill and needs an urgent liver transplant, visited a transplantologist every month before his arrest. After the stage, Andrei ended up in a punishment cell, he could not send medicines and contact him, he had to seek a medical examination together with a lawyer.³³ Pavel Kuchinsky with the last stage of cancer was sentenced to 4 years and 9 months in a high-security colony. His condition deteriorated markedly in prison, the inflammatory process began. When Pavel's mother brought the results of the examination to the investigator with a request for help, she said that Pavel allegedly did not complain and his relatives "are delaying the process with these actions."³⁴ Maria Kolesnikova was hospitalized with peritonitis due to perforation of the ulcer and underwent surgery. It is known that before getting into

³² <https://spring96.org/ru/news/109260>; <https://spring96.org/ru/news/108119>

³³ <https://news.zerkalo.io/life/8234.html?tg>; Facebook, Natalia Voynich: <https://www.facebook.com/100076739236674/posts/107002185201089/>

³⁴ <https://prisoners.spring96.org/ru/person/pavel-kuczynski>, similar cases: Oleksandr Feduta - <https://telegra.ph/ZHonka-Alyaksandra-Fyaduty-Kamernyya-chytann%D1%96-zb%D1%96raecca-nadrukavac-u-Narodnaj-Vol%D1%96-10-07>; Valentin Fedorenko - <https://www.svaboda.org/a/32081034.html> ; Mikalai Statkevich - <https://news.zerkalo.io/life/27282.html?tg> , <https://www.facebook.com/marina.adamovich.3/posts/pfbid02OHL9PGNZSPTA7UfpVcYU6vioMR46H5dG7ckYUnOhC4ff04dXqtqdOxYYbvtvDe9XL>; Vitaliy Prokopchuk - <https://t.me/viasna96/12844>; Nasta Loiko - <https://t.me/viasna96/15313> ; Volodymyr Telepun - <https://t.me/viasna96/13696> , <https://t.me/viasna96/13760> ; Olga Klaskowska - <https://t.me/viasna96/11193> ; , Dmitriy Mishakovsky - <https://t.me/viasna96/10993>



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the punishment cell, Maria did not complain about her health.³⁵ It is reported that political prisoner Yury Kovaleu is forcibly in a psychiatric hospital. His acquaintance expressed fears that Yuri was being injected with medications that could only worsen his health.³⁶

Former inmates, speaking about the conditions of detention, also reported that it was difficult to get into the sanitary part of the penitentiary, and in case of admission, receiving medical care was not guaranteed. The opportunity to go to the hospital is provided only in case of critical condition of the prisoner.³⁷

The health system continues to be used as a mechanism of repression outside prisons. For example, activist Nina Bahinskaya is often taken to the Republican Scientific and Practical Center for Mental Health in the Minsk microdistrict of Navinki "to prove her inadequacy," but "doctors refuse to hospitalize her."³⁸

Experts note the continuing problems of gynecological aggression and negative attitudes towards LGBTIQ+ people, however, they note that in 2022 these phenomena began to be openly demonstrated. For example, in October 2022, the Secretary General of the Belarusian Red Cross Society (a doctor by training) in a program on the state TV channel STV called homosexual relations a perversion, as well as a mental disorder and a disease that needs to be treated.³⁹

According to experts, in the Republican Scientific and Practical Center of Cardiology, priority care is provided to civil servants, while other patients cannot get medical care for a long time.

Experts note that the authorities manipulate the concept of "confidentiality" and use it in situations where it is necessary to hold a medical worker accountable for disclosing information on high-profile, socially significant cases. At the same time, experts say, in COVID-19 reports from hospitals, the faces, as well as the names of patients in intensive care, have not been appropriately hidden.

Experts point to the deterioration in the quality of health care goods and services, which is a consequence of the repressive policy of the state. For example, after the mass arrests of traumatologists, doctors in inter-district centers were forced to perform prosthetic surgeries, which they were not sufficiently trained in. As a result of the mass exodus of doctors and, accordingly, the shortage of medical personnel, doctors are often forced to perform operations that require more specialists than are available, which affects the quality of care provided.

As a result of pressure on intermediaries supplying European medical products, patients are offered analogies of lower quality.

³⁵ <https://news.zerkalo.io/economics/27340.html?tg>

³⁶ <https://spring96.org/be/news/109760>

³⁷ <https://t.me/belsat/91113>; <https://spring96.org/be/news/107161>; <https://spring96.org/ru/news/110298>

³⁸ <https://t.me/pozirkonline/12778>

³⁹ <https://news.zerkalo.io/life/24293.html>



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- **Maternal, child and reproductive health**

Despite the State's efforts to improve the provision of medical care to pregnant women, women in childbirth and newborns⁴⁰, experts note that the measures taken do not have a significant impact on improving the situation in the field of maternal and reproductive health. Experts draw attention to the continuing problems of falsification of statistics, gynecological aggression, and the outflow of personnel.

Despite the positive change noted by experts in the form of the return of quality cervical cancer screening programs, insufficient attention is paid to older women in terms of encouraging them to undergo screening.

During 2022, the Ministry of Health took certain measures to protect children's health. Thus, the list of medical indications for education at home⁴¹, has been expanded, a new list of medical indications has been determined, in which students will be exempt from final exams after the 9th grade⁴², as well as a list of diseases that are medical grounds for exempting students from studying certain subjects⁴³.

Experts, however, noted serious challenges in providing adolescents with a healthy and supportive environment that ensures they can participate in decisions about their health, develop life skills, acquire information, receive advice and choose their lifestyles.

In particular, the practice of public arrests of teenagers continued in 2022. The children were gathered in the assembly hall of the executive committee or the police department, a teenager suspected of a

⁴⁰ Order of the Ministry of Health No. 419 "On the provision of medical care to pregnant women in the context of COVID-19 morbidity":

https://minzdrav.gov.by/upload/dadvfiles/law/%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B8%D0%BA%D0%B0%D0%B7_%D0%9C%D0%97_2022_419.pdf; Resolution of the Ministry of Health No. 34 "On Approval of the Clinical Protocol "Provision of Medical Care in Neonatology": <https://minzdrav.gov.by/ru/novoe-na-sayte/utverzhdn-klinicheskij-protokol-okazanie-meditsinskoy-pomoshchi-v-neonatologii/> ; Order of the Ministry of Health No. 396 "On Combined Screening of Pregnant Women of the 1st Trimester":

https://minzdrav.gov.by/upload/dadvfiles/law/%D0%9F%D0%A0%D0%98%D0%9A%D0%90%D0%97_%D0%9C%D0%97_2022_396.pdf ; Order of the Ministry of Health "On the organization of the republican medical council on prenatal problems in the fetus" No. 362: https://minzdrav.gov.by/upload/dadvfiles/law/%D0%9F%D0%A0%D0%98%D0%9A%D0%90%D0%97_%D0%9C%D0%97_2022_362.pdf

⁴¹ Resolution of the Ministry of Health No. 50 "On Determining Medical Indications for Education at Home": <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=12551&p0=W22238317&p1=1&p5=0>

⁴² Resolution of the Ministry of Health No. 51 "On Determining the List of Diseases That Are Medical Grounds for Exemption of Students from Final Tests": <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=12551&p0=W22238414&p1=1&p5=0>

⁴³ Decision No. 76 of the Ministry of Health "On the List of Diseases That Are Medical Grounds for Exemption of Pupils from Studying Certain Academic Subjects": <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=12551&p0=W22238561&p1=1&p5=0>



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crime was brought, the charges were read, the teenager was handcuffed and taken out.⁴⁴ Both detained adolescents and children who are forced to watch public detention can experience severe psychological trauma, causing problems with social adaptation and full development, as well as with the formation of perceptions and awareness of personal dignity. Such experiences can be traumatic, creating feelings of helplessness, powerlessness and fear.⁴⁵

In 2022, the ideologization of education continued, expressed in the formation of the "only correct opinion" among children. The "wrong" opinion of the president, the state and politics in general, and its public expression, leads to threats and insults from teachers. Experts note that against the backdrop of the war in Ukraine, the militarization of education has also been added to the ideologization of education: in addition to involving children in military-oriented events, military-patriotic camps have also been created.⁴⁶ According to experts, such an environment, being a propaganda of a socially dangerous lifestyle, negatively affects the development of personality and mental health of a child.

There is also a lack of quality education for children in the field of sexual and reproductive health. Firstly, such education does not pay due attention to men's health issues, resulting in a low level of reproductive health among men. Secondly, "traditional values" continue to be imposed on children, including gender stereotypes and negative attitudes towards LGBTQ+ people.⁴⁷

- **Healthy natural and workplace environments**

There is still a lack of effective policies for the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases. Moreover, cases of work-related injuries are carefully concealed. Experts note that in 2022, the practice has become more systematic when, when investigating accidents at work, people are forced to admit and formalize that the incident occurred outside the workplace, thereby providing the "necessary" statistics.

Experts draw attention to the mass destruction of independent trade unions, the liquidation of human rights organizations, and the deprivation of lawyers' licenses, as a result of which there was virtually no opportunity to receive legal assistance in 2022.

The situation with regard to the provision of adequate supply of safe drinking water and basic sanitation services has remained unchanged - water quality is still unacceptable for consumption in many

⁴⁴ https://vk.com/club149477314?w=wall-149477314_10818

⁴⁵ Belarusian Helsinki Committee, Analytical Report on Violations of Certain Rights of the Child, 2021-2022: <https://belhelcom.org/ru/document/analiticheskiy-doklad-o-narusheniyah-otdelnyh-prav-rebenka-shkola-pravoohranitelnye-organy>

⁴⁶ <https://president.gov.by/bucket/assets/uploads/documents/2022/160uk.pdf>

⁴⁷ For example, at one of the events of the School of Active Citizen, the deputy said that "after the service, boys will become even better, more courageous, more purposeful, and those who do not go to serve will be weak, "with hands like pianists" and will not be able to protect their woman from "an Asian attacker." The MP spoke about the West, which "imposes its policy and same-sex marriages on us," and advised girls to "think about motherhood": <https://news.zerkalo.io/life/25122.htm>



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localities. Experts noted an incipient alarming trend towards a decrease in the quality of wastewater treatment associated with the political crisis.

In 2022, Belarus terminated its participation in the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters of 25 June 1998. (Aarhus Convention).⁴⁸

According to experts, the authorities, allowing the exercises of the Russian military, as well as the launch of missiles and shells from the territory of Belarus, did not pay due attention to the detrimental impact of such actions on the environment.

At the same time, the liquidation of civil society organizations, including environmental ones, continued.

- **Disease Prevention**

In 2022, the level of access to basic preventive, curative and rehabilitation health services decreased as a result of the decreasing availability of sufficient staff, facilities, drugs and equipment, and other problems identified by experts in paragraph 1 of this commentary.

A high-quality and effective national policy to prevent alcohol abuse and the consumption of tobacco, drugs and other harmful substances is still lacking - the level of alcohol and tobacco consumption in the country remains high.

Experts note positive changes in the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases. In particular, there was more state social procurement, including in the field of HIV/AIDS prevention, and projects of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria continued. In 2022, a new clinical protocol "Providing Medical Care to Patients with HIV Infection" was approved, which contains systematized modern approaches to the diagnosis and treatment of infection caused by the human immunodeficiency virus in adults and children. According to the Ministry of Health, the implementation of the norms of the clinical protocol will contribute to the use of new methods of diagnosis and treatment of patients (adults and children) with HIV infection in practical healthcare. The Ministry of Health claims that the protocol was developed taking into account modern clinical guidelines, medical technologies and medicines with proven clinical and clinical-economic efficacy.⁴⁹ Specialized

⁴⁸ Decree of the President No. 247 "On the withdrawal of the Republic of Belarus from an international treaty": <https://president.gov.by/bucket/assets/uploads/documents/2022/247uk.pdf>

⁴⁹ Decree of the Ministry of Health No. 73 "On Approval of the Clinical Protocol "Provision of Medical Care to Patients with HIV Infection": https://minzdrav.gov.by/upload/dadvfiles/CProtokol/%D0%9A%D0%9F_%D0%9E%D0%BA%D0%B0%D0%B7%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%B5_%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%B4%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%BC%D0%BE%D1%89%D0%B8_%D0%BF%D0%B0%D1%86%D0%B8%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%82%D0%B0%D0%BC_%D1%81_%D0%92%D0%98%D0%A7-%D0%B8%D0%BD%D1%84%D0%B5%D0%BA%D1%86%D0%B8%D0%B5%D0%B9_%D0%BF%D0%BE%D1%81%D1%82_%D0%9C%D0%97_25.07.2022_73.pdf



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organizations assess this protocol as progressive.⁵⁰

At the same time, experts draw attention to the liquidation of civil society organizations engaged in the protection of the rights of people living with HIV, as well as HIV-service organizations, which has a negative impact on the implementation of information and prevention programs in this area.

Experts have documented challenges in the design and effective implementation of immunization programs and other strategies to control infectious diseases. According to experts, in 2022, the practice of intentionally disposing of vaccines against certain infectious diseases in order to create satisfactory vaccination statistics has returned and become widespread.⁵¹

In 2022, Belarus also experienced a problem with access to the vaccine for the second COVID-19 booster shot. So, in July, it became known that the Sputnik V vaccine was used up and the dates of the new delivery are not known. Despite clear instructions, people began to receive a second vaccination with Sputnik Light in violation of the law.⁵² Moreover, in July, it turned out that not everyone can get protection against chickenpox due to the lack of vaccines in Belarus. The Ministry of Health, in response to the petition of citizens on this issue, indicated that vaccination against chickenpox is not provided for by the National Calendar of Preventive Vaccinations and the List of Preventive Vaccinations for Epidemic Indications.⁵³

Experts note that in 2022, a state social order in the field of tuberculosis appeared, however, there are still problems with viral hepatitis programs.

Among the positive changes, the launch of pre-exposure HIV prevention among men who have sex with men stands out. Moreover, testing programs have returned to their previous levels (before COVID-19), and access to tests needed by people living with HIV has been restored.

- **Medical and nursing care in case of illness**

Experts point out that a high-quality national physical and mental health policy is not being implemented.

On June 30, 2022, the Law "On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Their Social Inclusion" was adopted. In accordance with the law, the list of categories of persons with disabilities who have the right to be provided with means of rehabilitation on preferential terms or free of charge is expanded; there is an opportunity to receive monetary compensation for the independent purchase of rehabilitation equipment; A new type of institution is appearing - centers for social rehabilitation and habilitation of persons with disabilities.⁵⁴ At the same time, there are no effective programs to protect

⁵⁰ <http://hiv.by/news/vich-pozitivnye-lyudi-budut-poluchat-meditsinskuyu-pomoshch-v-sootvetstvii-s-rekomendatsiyami-voz>

⁵¹ <https://civicmonitoring.health/post/vaccine-budget/>

⁵² <https://news.zerkalo.io/life/17810.html?tg>

⁵³ <https://news.zerkalo.io/life/17470.html?tg>

⁵⁴ Law of the Republic of Belarus No. 183-Z "On the Rights of Disabled Persons and Their Social Integration":



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the health of people with disabilities.

Experts note that the emergency medical care system has returned to its previous level (before COVID-19). The general shortage of specialists does not have a significant impact on this type of care.

The effectiveness of treatment of common diseases, disorders and injuries at the local level has decreased due to the lack of medical personnel, drugs, and equipment. Nevertheless, experts draw attention to the recognition of this problem by the authorities and attempts to develop a mechanism for solving it.⁵⁵

Despite the availability of access to essential medicines, the availability of medicines in general decreased in 2022. In addition to what has already been pointed out by the experts (see paragraph 12 above) in 2022, there was a ban on the issuance of foreign medicines to persons with disabilities, interruptions in antiretroviral therapy⁵⁶, continued, and there was a problem with insulin, the Belarusian analogue of which is inferior to foreign ones in quality.

In the field of mental health care, there has also been a significant outflow of staff caused by the persecution of doctors in this field. Psychiatric institutions have become even more closed - access to health information has become difficult even for patients. The practice of abusing psychiatry to repress dissidents continued.

<https://pravo.by/document/?guid=12551&p0=H12200183&p1=1>

⁵⁵ For example, the Concept for the Development of Surgical Care in the Republic of Belarus for 2022-2025

<https://www.bsmu.by/downloads/universitet/lech/2022-1/1-22/10-1/prikaz1700.pdf>

⁵⁶ <http://hiv.by/news/diskordantnye-pary-vazhnost-soglasiya-partnera-na-blizost>

<https://pereboi.by/posts/?start=20>



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