

National Human Rights Index

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2025

General Human Rights Measures

Expert Commentary

The score:	1,7
Including scores by component:	
• State policy on human rights	1,4
• Interaction with civil society	1,2
• Interaction with international mechanisms	2
• Equality and non-discrimination	2,1

In assessing the state of general human rights measures in 2025, the Index experts recorded certain negative trends; however, their intensity did not result in a change in the overall score relative to 2024.¹ Among the key events and trends of 2025:

- adoption of Directive No. 12, systematically entrenching the ideologization of all spheres, including the private sector;
- first full year of real operation of the individual constitutional complaint mechanism;
- active participation by Belarus in international procedures (UPR, CEDAW) while the domestic trajectory of deterioration in the human rights situation remained unchanged;
- forced expulsion of political prisoners as a new form of extrajudicial action without any legal framework;
- qualitative shift in discrimination on grounds of SOGI – from the level of departmental acts to the level of a draft amendment to the Code of Administrative Offenses, with the systematic exclusion of the terms "gender" and "men who have sex with men" from state documents already occurring in practice;
- appointment of the former Prosecutor General as Chairman of the Supreme Court – an indicator of the state of judicial independence;
- doubling of the grounds for recognizing a family as being in a socially dangerous situation, including the addition of politically motivated offenses.

¹ https://belhelcom.org/sites/default/files/19_general_human_rights_measures_2024.pdf



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- **State Policy in the Field of Human Rights**

In 2025, there are no signs of improvement in the overall human rights situation in the country. Despite a significant deterioration in conditions for monitoring – owing to the state's adoption of additional measures restricting access to information of public significance – human rights defenders continue to document the systematic and large-scale persecution of dissidents and persons perceived as such, including pressure on human rights defenders, journalists, and activists. Despite the release of certain political prisoners pursuant to political arrangements outside the existing legal framework, the country continues to hold a significant number of political prisoners against whom the basic guarantees of conditions of detention in places of deprivation of liberty are persistently violated, while other mass and systematic violations of a broad range of civil and political, social, economic, and cultural rights continue.

Throughout the review period, the legislative formalization of arbitrary and discriminatory restrictions on human rights continued. In particular, the practice of introducing restrictions on access to professions and activities through licensing mechanisms, the introduction of registries and lists, changes to attestation rules, codes of professional ethics, and conditions of employment, as well as through the establishment of controlled professional self-regulatory bodies, has expanded. In 2025, additional restrictions were introduced for tourist guides and interpreter-guides, and loyalty requirements were formalized for real estate agents (including an attestation mechanism, the possibility of deprivation thereof, and mandatory membership in a newly created "self-regulatory body"), auditors (through the introduction of new criteria of "impeccable business reputation"), insolvency administrators (through changes to attestation and re-attestation procedures),² and certain categories of banking employees (through updated business reputation criteria).³

At the same time, state control over certain spheres of public activity was tightened. In particular, during the review period, the formalization of liability for the "unlawful representation" of the country at international events commenced.⁴ Furthermore, the requirements for conducting sociological research were tightened through the introduction of additional accreditation criteria that exclude from this activity persons included on "terrorist" and "extremist" lists.⁵ In this regard, the review period was also marked by the persecution of persons for conducting research based on open-source data.⁶ An additional instrument of control over the cultural sphere was the entrenchment of mandatory registration of organizers of cultural and entertainment events in a corresponding registry.⁷

² <https://trends.belhelcom.org/storage/reviews/September2025/R9w7ZxqG2sk0HD6l3kVD.pdf> , p.11

³ <https://trends.belhelcom.org/storage/reviews/January2026/aLhKTZx4Pnk9NqjtRTRy.pdf> , p.13

⁴ <https://trends.belhelcom.org/storage/reviews/September2025/R9w7ZxqG2sk0HD6l3kVD.pdf> , p.15

⁵ <https://trends.belhelcom.org/storage/reviews/January2026/aLhKTZx4Pnk9NqjtRTRy.pdf> p.14

⁶ See the classification of a sociological study that used information from open sources, among other things, as "treason": [В измене государству обвинили трех минчан, которые проводили социсследования](#)

⁷ [Маніторынг парушэнняў культурных правоў і правоў чалавека ў дачыненні да дзеячаў культуры. Беларусь, 2025 год;](#) See also commentary to the right to culture 2025 <https://index.belhelcom.org/>



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The development of "anti-extremism" legislation continued: amendments were adopted that facilitate its arbitrary application to a broader range of forms of expression.⁸ Throughout the review period, the pace of additions to the "List of Extremist Materials," the lists of persons and organizations implicated in "extremist" and "terrorist" activities, and the list of printed publications prohibited for distribution showed no signs of decreasing.⁹ Further normative acts were also adopted restricting freedom of expression, freedom and personal security, the right to privacy,¹⁰ and other civil and political rights.¹¹

Violations of socioeconomic rights persisted and developed. In particular, the possibilities for political persecution were expanded through the update of the grounds for recognizing a family as being in a socially dangerous situation;¹² excessive requirements were introduced for the receipt of unemployment benefits; and ideologically conditioned restrictions on the rights of self-employed persons working in the field of education were imposed.¹³ Violations of the rights of migrant workers were noted in connection with the new regulation of labor migration.¹⁴

Moreover, the review period was marked by intensified pressure on "persons not engaged in the economy": following a statement by Aliaksandr Lukashenka on the need to step up work with "social parasites," measures worsening the situation of this group of persons were recorded across the country, including requirements to appear before employment commissions, threats of administrative liability for non-appearance,¹⁵ an increase in housing and utilities tariffs applied in full, which places not only

⁸ See the update to the legal framework governing the list of "extremist" crimes, which allows any offense under the Special Part of the Criminal Code to be classified under this category if it is committed "on the grounds of racial, national, or religious hatred or discord, political or ideological enmity, as well as on grounds of enmity or discord toward any social group," which significantly broadens the scope for classifying various forms of expression as "extremist": the new version of Council of Ministers Resolution No. 575, supplemented by Annex 3, which contains a list of extremist crimes; for a more detailed analysis of the changes, see: [обзор борьбы с «экстремизмом» в Беларуси за апрель-июнь 2025](#)

⁹ [Human rights situation in Belarus in 2025](#)

¹⁰ See the expansion of the list of organizations where personal searches, searches of belongings and documents, and searches of vehicles are permitted (<https://trends.belhelcom.org/storage/reviews/June2025/Clq6C5o1M23dmNqxCufy.pdf>, pp. 12–13); the creation of a new automated system for recording and storing data on the movement of postal items, with 24/7 access for law enforcement agencies without proper judicial safeguards (<https://trends.belhelcom.org/storage/reviews/September2025/R9w7ZxqG2sk0HD6L3kVD.pdf>, p. 17); a proposal (currently at the draft stage) to expand the group of citizens subject to mandatory fingerprint registration, continuing the trend of discrimination against individuals with foreign residence permits or similar documents (<https://trends.belhelcom.org/storage/reviews/January2026/aLhKTZx4Pnk9NqjtRTRy.pdf>, pp. 9–10) and so on.

¹¹ See the relevant indicators in the expert commentary on the 2025 assessment of these rights: <https://index.belhelcom.org/>

¹² <https://trends.belhelcom.org/storage/reviews/June2025/Clq6C5o1M23dmNqxCufy.pdf> p. 13

¹³ <https://trends.belhelcom.org/storage/reviews/June2025/Clq6C5o1M23dmNqxCufy.pdf> p. 15

¹⁴ See the adoption of Decree No. 202 "On Strengthening the Role of Employers in the Field of External Labor Migration" and the Ministry of Internal Affairs' commentary on the decree, which instrumentalizes migrants: <https://trends.belhelcom.org/storage/reviews/September2025/E1Kulm8dVxmXUDkWNIA3.pdf>, pp. 19–20

¹⁵ <https://trends.belhelcom.org/storage/reviews/September2025/R9w7ZxqG2sk0HD6L3kVD.pdf> p. 24



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the "economically inactive" persons themselves but also those residing with them in an unequal position.¹⁶

The elaboration and adoption of programmatic documents consolidating the ideological orientation of state policy continued. In April 2025, Directive No. 12 "On the Implementation of the Fundamentals of the Ideology of the Belarusian State" was issued – the first comprehensive normative legal act systematically governing the sphere of ideology and establishing uniform standards for ideological work, including personal accountability of heads of organizations for its quality, as well as an expansion of its scope to include the private sector. The related Directive No. 11 "On Improving the Functioning of the System of Government Bodies and Administration, and on Strengthening Executive Discipline," adopted in its development, proclaims executive discipline a priority state objective.¹⁷

In 2025, systemic discrimination on grounds of political views – real or imputed – persisted and intensified, while discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, and other bases became further institutionalized (see the corresponding indicator below).

At the same time, effective remedies against violations continue to be unavailable; moreover, the Index experts record a deterioration in the situation with the independence of the judiciary in connection with the appointment as Chairman of the Supreme Court of former Prosecutor General Andrei Shved, who has consistently made public statements of an accusatory character toward dissidents, as well as the continued operation of defective mechanisms of institutional control over the judiciary.¹⁸ Access to adequate legal assistance continues to narrow as a result of persistent pressure on the Bar and lawyers' refusals to take on the defense in politically motivated cases. In total, in 2025, at least 1,254 persons were convicted in politically motivated criminal cases, and at least 30 more in the framework of proceedings *in absentia*.¹⁹

At the same time, established practices of restricting access to information of public significance persisted, including the absence of official statistics in a number of key areas or their selective publication,²⁰ the opacity of decision-making, the restriction of access to national resources from abroad, and other measures.²¹ Additional restrictions were also introduced: in particular, public access

¹⁶ <https://trends.belhelcom.org/storage/reviews/January2026/aLhKTZx4Pnk9NqjtRTRy.pdf> p. 17

¹⁷ See analysis of the adopted acts here:

<https://trends.belhelcom.org/storage/reviews/June2025/Clq6C5o1M23dmNqxCufy.pdf> p.10

¹⁸ See the commentary to the right for fair trial 2025: <https://index.belhelcom.org/>

¹⁹ [За 2025 год осудили не менее 1 254 человека: результаты уголовного преследования](#)

²⁰ See, for example, the case of the failure to provide timely information regarding the results of the re-registration of religious organizations: <https://www.lawtrend.org/monitoring-issledovania/ezhemesyachnye-monitoringi/monitoring-situatsii-so-svobodoj-assotsiatsij-i-polozheniem-organizatsij-grazhdanskogo-obshhestva-v-respublike-belarus-dekabr-2025>

²¹ See the commentary to the right for freedom expression 2025: <https://index.belhelcom.org/>



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to the electronic schedule of court hearings on the Supreme Court's website was closed, which significantly narrowed the possibilities for monitoring judicial activity and the scale of repression.²²

2025 was the first full year of operation of the institution of the constitutional complaint (introduced by the constitutional referendum of 2022, it became available from October 2024 on the basis of Article 152 of the Law of 8 January 2014 No. 124-Z "On Constitutional Judicial Proceedings," as amended by the Law of the Republic of Belarus of 17 July 2023 No. 284-Z).²³ In 2024 the Constitutional Court managed to consider only 2 complaints, and in 2025 – 17.²⁴ The overwhelming majority of applications (12) ended in a refusal to initiate proceedings at the stage of preliminary examination. Final decisions on the merits were issued in respect of 5 complaints, and in two of those cases the provisions were found to be unconstitutional in full or in part (the Tax Code regarding income from agricultural products²⁵ and the Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Neglect²⁶).

2025 was marked by the practice of the forced removal of 189 political prisoners released pursuant to political arrangements.²⁷ This practice is accompanied by absolute uncertainty – including legal uncertainty – both for the political prisoners themselves, who are subjected to inhumane transportation and as a rule are removed without the personal and procedural documents necessary to exercise their rights outside the country, and for the state authorities, which continue to take actions that presuppose the presence of the released persons on the territory of the country.²⁸

Throughout the review period, practices of transnational repression against human rights defenders, journalists, public figures, and others perceived by the state as dissidents persisted and developed, including the initiation of proceedings in absentia with subsequent entry onto international wanted lists, the seizure of property, the conduct of searches at residences in Belarus, and attempts at recruitment through various forms of pressure, including pressure on family members.²⁹

In 2025, the presidential elections^{*30} were held with gross violations of international standards for democratic and free elections, in the absence of the minimum conditions for free discussion of public

²² ["Это не признак оттепели". – правозащитники "Вясны" о том, как режим уничтожает доказательства своих преступлений](#)

²³ <https://etalonline.by/document/?regnum=H11400124>

²⁴ [Конституционный Суд Республики Беларусь](#)

²⁵ <https://www.kc.gov.by/document-86823>

²⁶ <https://www.kc.gov.by/document-87363>

²⁷ [189 принудительно депортированных: ситуация с политзаключенными в 2025 году в цифрах 23.12.2025](#)

²⁸ Including attempts to locate them and consider placing them under preventive supervision, which indicates a lack of legal mechanisms for implementing such arbitrary decisions

²⁹ [Transnational Repression in Belarus: A Brutal Tool of the Persecution of Dissent by the Lukashenka Regime – iSANS; "Even abroad, you remain within the reach of the state." How Belarusians were persecuted outside the country in 2025?](#)

³⁰ The term "elections*" as it applies to the 2025 election campaign is used by the "Human Rights Defenders for Free Elections" campaign with an asterisk to emphasize the conditional nature of this term, since any free and fair election campaign presupposes, above all, conditions in which rights and freedoms are fully realized, including freedom of speech,



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issues, for the formation of political positions and for competition, and without independent observation. The electoral process at all stages was subject to administrative control by the authorities.³¹

- **Interaction with civil society**

Freedom of association – particularly with respect to the activities of organizations connected with human rights protection – remains effectively inaccessible in practice. Experts particularly noted the situation of the criminal prosecution of a volunteer engaged in monitoring politically motivated trials (in February 2025 the case was considered on appeal)³² as both a symbolic and practical indicator of the state of civic space.

Numerous obstacles to the registration and operation of organizations persist, as does liability for participation in the activities of an unregistered organization. Despite a reduction in the scale of liquidations of NGOs – attributable more to the completion of the main phase of the sector's "cleansing" – repression against organizations both within the country and, especially, in exile continues; conditions for the liquidation of organizations in Belarus on arbitrary grounds remain in place. In 2025, the list of "extremist formations" was expanded by at least 324 entities of various types, including informational and human rights resources, political parties, cultural initiatives, diaspora associations, and others.³³

Throughout the review period, the trend toward the statification of the sector and the involvement of civil society organizations in support of the state ideology persisted. At the same time, access to funding – both domestic and foreign – for organizations operating within the country remains fully state-controlled and substantially limited.³⁴

Despite certain technical positive measures that presuppose minimal and controlled public involvement in the development of draft normative legal acts and programs,³⁵ the mechanisms for civil society participation in decision-making remain in general ineffective and inaccessible to independent organizations, while pro-government organizations with privileged access to interaction with the state do not provide adequate representation of the interests of the relevant groups. Instances where a relatively active expression of public outrage led to changes or the reversal of the most absurd provisions (the licensing of residential care homes; restrictions on private tutors – online lessons via Zoom remained permitted) are, in the view of experts, indicative of the state's occasional recognition

freedom of peaceful assembly and association, the right to participate in the governance of one's state, and freedom from discrimination – conditions that are currently virtually nonexistent in Belarus

³¹ [Elections*2025. Final analytical report on the results of observation of the election of the President of the Republic of Belarus | Human right defenders for free elections 2025](#)

³² [Vital Chopik – Political prisoners and repressed in Belarus](#)

³³ See for details: [Свобода ассоциаций и правовое положение организаций гражданского общества. Обзор за 2025 год](#)

³⁴ [Freedom of association and legal environment for civil society organizations. Review for 2025. Belarus | Lawtrend – Исследования Образование Действия](#)

³⁵ Ibid.



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of its own overregulation and of its retreating – not out of respect for rights, but out of the pragmatics of manageability.

Engagement with civil society in the context of the preparation and submission of state reports to international human rights mechanisms is predominantly of a formal character. In particular, in 2025, the absence of any meaningful mobilization even of pro-government organizations in the process of preparation for the Universal Periodic Review was noted.

- **Interaction with international mechanisms**

During the review period, the human rights situation in Belarus was examined within the framework of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR): the authorities submitted a national report and participated in the procedures related to its consideration.³⁶ As noted above, the participation even of pro-government organizations in UPR preparations remained minimal; the discussion of related issues took place in the context of broader events devoted to the Sustainable Development Goals agenda.³⁷

In 2025, the periodic report of Belarus was also examined by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) (see the "equality and non-discrimination" indicator below).³⁸

Experts noted that no publicly verifiable system for the recording and implementation of treaty body recommendations exists. The recommendations on LGBTQ+ issues made by several bodies were not only not implemented in 2025 – the proposed legislative changes move in the opposite direction.

The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus, analyzing the period from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, noted that the government had responded to communications from special procedure mandate holders and had taken measures aimed at improving the situation of individual prisoners.³⁹ However, engagement with special procedures remains selective: half of the communications recorded in the OHCHR database receive no response.⁴⁰

In February 2025, the Group of Independent Experts on the Human Rights Situation in Belarus, established in 2024, presented its first report. It confirmed the conclusions of OHCHR that certain large-scale human rights violations committed by the state in the context of the suppression of any opposition to the current government amount to crimes against humanity.⁴¹

³⁶ See the commentary to the right to participate in public affairs 2025: <https://index.belhelcom.org/>

³⁷ <https://sdqs.by/zasedanie/zasedanie-soveta-po-ustojchivomu-razvitiyu-proshlo-v-minske/>

³⁸ CEDAW/C/BLR/CO/9:

<https://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=OfvTjvBYphle6FYqb%2FN0J%2BZ0irR1rEmwzOf4Nh5FDiklnLFI9U9QqOb3Y3%2BUvl1gWorzqjGc1Zfv4RgDMrJrAg%3D%3D>; "Severe reprisals against women human rights defenders" [What did CEDAW say in its recommendations to Belarus?](#)

³⁹ [A/HRC/59/59](#), para 6

⁴⁰ <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TmSearch/Results?page=1>

⁴¹ [Belarus: Human rights violations remain rampant, some amounting to crimes against humanity, UN Group of Experts says | OHCHR](#)



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In June 2025, a special session was held at the 113th Session of the International Labour Conference,⁴² devoted to the situation in Belarus and conducted as a follow-up to the application of Article 33 of the ILO Constitution.⁴³ The session again established Belarus's systematic non-compliance with its obligations under ILO Conventions Nos. 87 and 98, including the continuing pressure on independent trade unions and trade union activists, and the absence of progress in implementing the recommendations of the ILO Commission of Inquiry and ILO supervisory bodies. The ILO appointed a Special Envoy for Belarus,⁴⁴ conferring upon him a mandate to engage with the government and social partners with a view to facilitating the release of detained trade union activists, the recognition of independent trade unions, and coordination with UN agencies to ensure concerted action.

- **Equality and non-discrimination**

In 2025, the situation with equality and non-discrimination in the country remained unsatisfactory.

Throughout the review period, the state policy of systemic discrimination on grounds of political views – real or imputed – persisted and developed. The increasing complexity of the ecosystem of "anti-extremism" legislation and the expansion of the grounds for its arbitrary application⁴⁵ continue to allow not only for the politically motivated criminal prosecution of dissidents, but also for the creation of distinct legal categories – including "persons implicated in extremist activities" and persons who have committed crimes "of an extremist nature" – with the subsequent restriction of the rights of such persons both within the criminal justice sphere (see the "humanization" of criminal legislation introduced in 2025, the operation of which does not extend to persons accused of committing crimes "of an extremist nature")⁴⁶ and beyond it.

In particular, in 2025 the establishment of discriminatory filters for admission to professions and the exercise of certain activities continued: see the "state policy in the field of human rights" indicator above for the creation of politically motivated restrictions for real estate agents, auditors, and

⁴² [International Labour Conference addressed the persecution of workers and independent trade unions in Belarus](#)

⁴³

https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/%40ed_norm/%40relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_886022.pdf

⁴⁴ [Decision concerning the composition, agenda and programme of standing bodies and meetings | International Labour Organization](#)

⁴⁵ See the update to the legal framework governing the list of "extremist" crimes, which allows any offense under the Special Part of the Criminal Code to be classified under this category if it is committed "on the grounds of racial, national, or religious hatred or discord, political or ideological enmity, as well as on grounds of enmity or discord toward any social group," which significantly broadens the scope for classifying various forms of expression as "extremist": the new version of Council of Ministers Resolution No. 575, supplemented by Annex 3, which contains a list of extremist-oriented crimes; [Обзор борьбы с «экстремизмом» в Беларуси за апрель-июнь 2025](#)

⁴⁶ In 2025, Law No. 61-Z "On Amendments to the Codes on Criminal Liability" came into force, providing for a revision of penalties for a number of criminal offenses and the introduction of more lenient forms of punishment. As part of these amendments, penalties for 97 criminal offenses were revised, among other changes. In 65 cases, more lenient penalties were introduced, including 24 offenses for which imprisonment was the only possible penalty prior to the amendments: [Обзор борьбы с «экстремизмом» в Беларуси за январь-март 2025](#)



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insolvency administrators,⁴⁷ as well as for certain categories of banking employees.⁴⁸ The persecution of persons considered dissidents by the state at their places of work, the restriction of their access to the public sphere, and the exclusion of "unfavorable" content from audiences within the country through expanding lists of prohibited materials and literature continued.⁴⁹ Transnational persecution of dissidents and discriminatory treatment of political prisoners continued.⁵⁰

Throughout the review period, the conveyor-belt recognition of materials as "extremist" continued,⁵¹ as did the arbitrary expansion of other "extremist" and "terrorist" lists, and mass criminal prosecutions – including the "neighborhood chats case"⁵² and the "Hajun case."⁵³

The state policy with respect to the Belarusian language, its speakers, and the cultural products created in it remains particularly discriminatory. In 2025, Belarusian PEN noted the absence of institutional state support for the Belarusian language, documented violations of linguistic rights in the spheres of culture, education, book publishing, the activities of state institutions, and in places of deprivation of liberty – where the use of the Belarusian language became a basis for pressure and sanctions against prisoners.⁵⁴

In 2025, a fundamental turning point occurred – a transition to direct discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, and reproductive choice. In 2025, amendments to the Law on the Rights of the Child entered into force, expanding the list of "information that may harm the health and development of the child" (adding thereto information "aimed at propaganda of homosexual relations, gender reassignment, paedophilia, and childlessness").⁵⁵ In addition, a draft law "On Amendments to the Codes on Issues of Administrative Liability," providing for the imposition of liability for "the

⁴⁷ <https://trends.belhelcom.org/storage/reviews/September2025/R9w7ZxqG2sk0HD6l3kVD.pdf>

⁴⁸ <https://trends.belhelcom.org/storage/reviews/January2026/aLhKTZx4Pnk9NqjtRTRy.pdf>

⁴⁹ See: [Monitoring of violations of cultural rights and human rights of cultural figures. Belarus, 2025 – PEN Belarus](#)

⁵⁰ <https://spring96.org/ru/news/119418>

⁵¹ "As of the end of 2025, the 'Republican List of Extremist Materials' in Belarus totaled nearly 2,000 pages. By the end of 2025, more than 8,000 materials had been designated as extremist, nearly a quarter of which were added during 2025.": [Human rights situation in Belarus in 2025](#)

⁵² This case has become one of the largest repressive campaigns aimed at suppressing grassroots self-organization: various forms of local citizen engagement—ranging from organized initiatives to spontaneous gatherings—are labeled as "extremist" and subject to criminal prosecution. In a number of cases, defendants are charged, among other things, with receiving independent civic education, which, according to the prosecution, could have been used for subsequent participation in the country's political life: [The Yard Chats case: How neighbors' chats became a criminal case; Обзор применения антиэкстремистского законодательства \(октябрь–декабрь 2025\)](#)

⁵³ By invoking the overly broad wording of Article 361-4 of the Criminal Code (CC) ("Facilitation of Extremist Activity"), courts are convicting large numbers of individuals who have interacted in any way with the Telegram bot of the "Belaruski Hajun" project. In a number of cases, "other forms of aiding extremist activity" are interpreted as *expressing disagreement with the Russian Federation's "special military operation" on the territory of Ukraine* [Обзор применения антиэкстремистского законодательства \(октябрь–декабрь 2025\)](#)

⁵⁴ [Monitoring of violations of cultural rights and human rights of cultural figures. Belarus, 2025 – PEN Belarus](#)

⁵⁵ [«Защита» детей как предлог: почему новые поправки в Беларуси – это легализация гомофобии](#)



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dissemination, in any form, of information aimed at shaping citizens' perceptions of the attractiveness of homosexual relations, gender reassignment, childlessness, or the acceptability of paedophilia," passed its first reading.⁵⁶ TG House also notes other manifestations of discriminatory policy toward the LGBTQ+ community, including the formalization⁵⁷ of the approach to transgender identity as a "mental disorder," the consolidation and reproduction of an ideological discourse based on the juxtaposition of "traditional family values" and "Western ideology," and the persecution of community members.⁵⁸ The discriminatory policy in this respect is also reflected in the content of the list of printed publications prohibited for distribution, a significant portion of which consists of publications devoted to LGBTQ+ topics, sexual education, and the psychology of minors.⁵⁹

In 2025, the CEDAW Committee examined the periodic report of Belarus.⁶⁰ Both in the CEDAW Committee's concluding observations and in civil society alternative reports, the persistence of systemic problems was noted, including the absence of comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation and adequate legal protection of women against discrimination, the continued existence of conditions impeding the safe operation of organizations defending women's rights, insufficient institutionalization of gender policy, and the continued particularly vulnerable position of certain groups of women – political prisoners, women human rights defenders, migrant women, and women who have experienced violence.⁶¹

According to expert information, the programmatic documents adopted in 2025 (state programs for 2026–2030, strategies) completely exclude the word "gender" and cognate terms. This terminology is retained only in UNFPA documents. The action plan developed in 2025 for the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was adopted under a different title, without the use of the word "gender." Similarly, organizations working with the group of men who have sex with men (MSM) – a key target group for HIV prevention – were compelled to completely alter the public-facing language of their work: the term "MSM" was replaced with "men's health." This impedes targeted preventive communication, although the organizations continue their work.

⁵⁶ <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=3941&p0=2025035001>; «Палата представителей» одобрила ввод наказания за «пропаганду нетрадиционных отношений»

⁵⁷ [Мониторинг репрессий и дискриминации в отношении ЛГБТК+ сообщества Беларуси в 2025 году](#)

⁵⁸ [Мониторинг репрессий и дискриминации в отношении ЛГБТК+ сообщества Беларуси в 2025 году](#)

⁵⁹ [Обзор борьбы с «экстремизмом» в Беларуси за январь-март 2025](#)

⁶⁰ [CEDAW/C/BLR/CO/9: Concluding observations on the ninth periodic report of Belarus - Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women](#)

⁶¹ CEDAW/C/BLR/CO/9 [Document Viewer](#); "Ситуация с домашним насилием ухудшилась". Официальный отчет Беларуси в КЛДЖ глазами правозащитной Коалиции; <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1DVmzAAWQl5Upzbz3EKb7DtTnqK9F5-5t>



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In 2025, Presidential Decree No. 202⁶² tightened the regulation of external labor migration: additional obligations were placed on employers not only with respect to the employment of foreign workers but also in the area of monitoring their private lives (verification of the validity of visas, identity documents, driving licenses, and other documents; monthly visits to migrant workers at their temporary place of residence or sojourn; responsibility for assessing language proficiency). Experts note that while formally similar to European practices of employer responsibility, this provision is drafted with a xenophobic logic – one of distrust toward migrant workers – and creates a conflict of interests: the employer simultaneously serves as a party to the employment contract and a state-appointed controller. For migrant workers, a regime of limited freedom of movement and choice of employment is created, with constant dual monitoring by both the employer and the state.

Based on the factual review of general measures and the review of the right to social security, the following brief supplement is provided to the "equality and non-discrimination" section as regards persons with disabilities.

Against the general backdrop of expanding discriminatory practices, 2025 was a period of notable legislative activity in the sphere of the rights of persons with disabilities, which experts attribute to the incremental implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and to two decades of civil society advocacy.

In the field of education, methodological guidelines for the inclusive education of children with ASD and ADHD were developed, the first sign language manuals for special schools were created, a large-scale survey of inclusion in 1,116 educational institutions was conducted with UNICEF support, and a long-term education concept to 2030 with an inclusive component was adopted. In the field of employment, as of January 2025, mandatory quotas for employers were introduced, along with a mechanism for subsidizing the hiring of persons with disabilities. In the field of social security, the right to a care allowance for Group I disabled persons was expanded (now including periods of inpatient treatment and rehabilitation), and the right to a benefit for families with children with disabilities after the child reaches the age of 18 was expanded.

At the same time, experts record a systemic gap between legislative innovations and practice: a shortage of tutors and support specialists makes the declared inclusion difficult to achieve in practice; the criteria for the recognition of disability continue to tighten; and the liquidated independent organizations for the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities have not been replaced by any alternative. The positive changes are targeted and paternalistic in character and do not alter the overall picture of the absence of systemic mechanisms for protection against discrimination on grounds of disability.

⁶² [Указ Президента Республики Беларусь от 21.05.2025 г. № 202 «О повышении роли нанимателей в области внешней трудовой миграции» – Pravo.by](#)



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