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## REPRESSIONS

On August 23, the 1st-year student of Brest State University, political prisoner Raman Karpuk was [sentenced](#) to 3 years of general regime colony for sending letters to members of election commissions of the February referendum urging them not to falsify the voting results. The court in Brest found Raman guilty in violating Part 2 of Art. 191 of the Criminal Code (Obstruction of the exercise of electoral rights, the right to participate in a referendum). The young man has been in custody since February 8 and was expelled from the university.

22-year-old student of the Belarusian State Academy of Aviation, political prisoner Aliaksandr Zahdai [was sentenced](#) to 2.5 years in prison for sharing information about the movement of aircraft in Baranavichy with “unidentified persons.” Judge Valiantsina Kunitskaya in Brest found him guilty of violating Part 1 of Art. 361-4 of the Criminal Code (Promoting extremist activities).

On August 3, the regime’s police [detained](#) Halina Patayeva, Ph.D. in Geography, founder of the Viapol travel agency, former associate professor at the Department of Economic Geography of Foreign Countries of the Faculty of Geography at the Belarusian State University. Following her detention, a pro-government Telegram channel posted a video of Halina saying that she had shared materials of Belarusian independent media in social networks in 2020. The same channel claimed that the woman faces punishment for “distribution of extremist materials.” Reports suggest that Halina was detained several hours after screenshots of her Facebook posts condemning the regime were published in a Telegram channel of regime supporters.

Presumably on August 5, 23-year-old BSUIR employee, software engineer Viktoryia Zhdanovich, was [detained](#). In a video posted on the pro-government Telegram channel, the woman claims she had participated in the 2020 protests and blocked traffic, as well as followed channels recognized as “extremist” by the authorities.

On July 25, a teacher of Belarusian language and literature of one of the capital's gymnasiums was allegedly [detained](#) and accused of participating in mass protests and "blocking the roads" in 2020.

On August 22, a Telegram channel reported the [detention](#) of the Belarusian State University Faculty of International Relations student Aliaksandra Kandratsienka, who was the administrator of the One Step Closer project, linking school leavers with students of the faculty.

Sniazhana Rahach, former lecturer at the Department of Political Science, Sociology and Social Management of the Belarusian National Technical University, [who had been detained](#) in late July, [was released](#). The court fined her for "disobedience to the police".

## REGIME'S POLICY

Belarusian universities face [a shortage](#) of applicants for multiple programs. Mainly, there are not enough applications for military programs (Military Academy), some programs at the Faculty of Physics, as well political science, theology and Belarusian philology at Belarusian State University. Many programs at Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics, National Technical University and State Agrarian Technical University remained unpopular with the prospective students, too. However, a most unclaimed program was the "Public Order Police" at the Police Department of the Academy of the Interior Ministry: only 56 people applied, although the Academy could accept 145. Education expert Sviatlana Matskevich believes that the shortfall at the universities may be attributed to political and social reasons, which include migration of a large number of young people abroad following the protests, unwillingness to associate their lives with the security forces due to the ongoing war against Ukraine, the state pressure on IT companies, as well as the low overall level of Belarusian higher education, its failure to keep up with global trends.

Belarusian State University, the largest university in Belarus, [raised](#) its tuition fees, following the State Economic, Linguistic, Medical Universities and the State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics. On average, education will cost 10% more than earlier.

The government raised the fee for a set of school textbooks in schools by almost 10%. In the new school year, it will be 16 rubles (\$7), and it has to be paid by October 1.

Starting fall 2022, the state will [accredit](#) all non-state educational institutions – private schools and gymnasiums, kindergartens, pre-school development centers – in the first year of their activity. Previously, educational institutions had more time – up to the first year of graduation – to pass the state accreditation, which is necessary to issue graduation certificates to graduates. Education Minister A. Ivanets said the new requirement is aimed “to motivate the leadership to educate young people according to the principles of state ideology.” Also, the ministry noted that in the future all educational institutions, including pre-school child development centers, would have to obtain a license to carry out their activities.

Belarusian universities are [introducing](#) Modern Political Economy as a new compulsory subject. The curriculum, among other things, includes a module on Geopolitics and Geoeconomics with 12 hours allocated for its study. Historian and education expert Pavel Tsierashkovich says merits in the development and popularization of geopolitics belong, among others, to figures of Nazi Germany, and the emphasized tendentiousness of the discipline led to its classification as a pseudo-science. In addition, Tsierashkovich warns that geopolitics textbooks largely coincide with the texts of the odious scholar with fascist views Alexander Dugin, whose books are also listed as literature for study.

The director of the Patriot Polatsk sports club Siarhei Firsau [shared](#) photos of himself with a group of children participating in the club, whose bodies bear a Z letter, symbol of Russian aggression against Ukraine. The man had previously signed the pro-regime letter of the athletes.

## CIVIL SOCIETY AND EDUCATION

In early September, the Belarusian kindergarten and school “[I am at home](#)” will [open](#) in Warsaw, handing out Polish certificates. Lessons and classes are planned to be held in two languages – Polish and Belarusian.

Colleagues of the philosopher, political prisoner Uladzimir Matskevich [created](#) a website with his books, interviews, lectures and other materials. In addition, at the

beginning of August, a fundraising [campaign](#) was launched to record and publish U. Matskevich's audiobook "Freedom and Thinking: Essays on Civil Society" (in Russian).

The Golden Age Online University [invites](#) teachers and experts to hold online classes, lectures or workshops in all fields of knowledge. The organizers will also assist them in choosing the topics and format of classes and in developing the curriculum.

On August 5, [Institute for Democracy and Social Market in Belarus and Eastern Europe](#) held an online [conference](#) "Education: State or Public Domain?". The conference discussed such issues as "The individual and the state in education: roles, rights and obligations", "Education between the common good and the market offer", "Common goals and different values: is it possible?" Among the conference's experts were: Ekaterina Deikalo, international lawyer, human rights education expert, Volha Shparaha (Education Office for a New Belarus), Maryna Sokolova (Education Office for a New Belarus, Belarusian Education on the Way of Change Program). The conference was moderated by education expert Andrei Laurukhin. The recording of the event is [available](#) on the channel of the Belarusian Christian Democracy party.

Tatiana Shchytsova, Dr. habil. in Philosophy and Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya's Representative on Education and Science, shared her [opinion](#) on why teachers and school administrators were massively involved in falsifying election results and whether a different scenario was possible in 2020 elections if polling stations had not been located in schools. Shchytsova notes that the problem is not with teachers as a separate professional group, but with the fact that civic consciousness cannot be developed under authoritarianism. She also stresses that an authoritarian regime contributes to moral corruption and destroys the healthy atmosphere in schools.

In the new [issue](#) of the Thinking is Healthy project the Belarusian politician Anatoli Liabedzka talks with the education expert Pavel Tsierashkovich about the militarization of education in modern Belarus, the ideological "purges" at the universities following the protests, the prospects that still remain for Belarusians who want to get a decent education, and the possible reform of education in the future.

Representative on Education and Science at Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya's Office  
Tatiana Shchytsova and expert on education, Ph.D. in Philosophy Andrei Laurukhin

gave an interview to the news portal Malanka.Media to [comment](#) on the ideologization and militarization of education in Belarus, which in recent months has been actively implemented by officials in cooperation with the law enforcement agencies. The experts shared their views on what goals the officials are pursuing, how the ideological pressure affects the quality of education and what influence the integration of the educational systems of Russia and Belarus might have on the Belarusian education.

Belarusian poet Andrei Khadanovich [recorded](#) a video explaining why he considers it inappropriate to teach Russian literature in Belarusian schools. Even Pushkin, he said, promotes imperial ideas.