

State of the Internet and Digital Rights in the Republic of Belarus (2019-2025)

This document presents a comprehensive analysis of the internet environment and the sphere of digital rights in the Republic of Belarus for the period from 2019 to 2025. It examines the deep contradiction between a high level of technological development and the systematic suppression of rights and freedoms in the online space. On one hand, Belarus demonstrates high internet penetration rates, covering more than 91% of the population, and developed infrastructure, including a widespread transition to fiber-optic networks (GPON) and broad mobile coverage. On the other hand, this development serves as a backdrop for total state control over information flows.

The key instrument of control is the structural monopolization of internet infrastructure by state or state-affiliated companies. RUP "Beltelecom" dominates the fixed access market, while it, together with RUP "NCOT", controls the external internet gateway. In addition, the entire fourth-generation (4G) mobile infrastructure belongs to a single state operator "beCloud". This architecture is supported by an extensive legislative framework that grants bodies such as the Operational-Analytical Center (OAC), the Ministry of Information, and the KGB broad powers for extrajudicial website blocking, internet shutdowns under the pretext of "threats to national security", and prosecution of citizens.

The consequences of such a policy manifest in gross and mass violations of human rights. Authorities regularly resort to internet shutdowns to suppress protest activity, as happened in 2020. Thousands of independent information resources, human rights organizations' websites, and opposition sites have been blocked. An atmosphere of fear and self-censorship has been created, in which citizens are prosecuted criminally and administratively for likes, comments, reposts, and even subscriptions to resources deemed "extremist" by the authorities. In response, citizens massively use VPN services, which, in turn, are subject to state blocking attempts, turning the digital space into a field of constant confrontation.

Disclaimer

This document was partially generated using several large language models (LLM). The information presented in it is based on the analysis and generalization of data from the specified sources; however, the process of its structuring, generalization, and presentation was carried out using artificial intelligence technologies. It is recommended to use this text as a starting point for further research and to cross-check critically important data with primary sources.

State of the Internet and Digital Rights in the Republic of Belarus (2019-2025)	1
Disclaimer	2
1. General Information	4
1.1. Geographical Location	4
1.2. Population	4
1.3. Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	5
1.4. Main Economic Characteristics	6
1.5. General Political Situation	7
2. Internet	8
2.1. National Domain	8
2.2. Number of Users	8
2.2.1 Fixed Internet	9
2.2.2. Mobile Internet	11
2.3. Internet Access Speed and Service Quality	13
2.4. Development of Providers and Autonomous Systems	14
2.5. IPv6 Penetration	17
2.6. Connectivity Index	18
3. Internet Legislation	22
3.1. Principles of Internet Governance	22
3.1.1. Regulation	22
3.1.2. Regulatory Bodies and Responsible Persons	23
3.2. Market Monopolization	24
3.3. Internet Shutdowns by Order of Authorities	24
3.4. Legislation on "Words on the Internet"	25
3.5. Legislation on Internet Blockings	26

3.5.1. Legislation	26
3.5.2. Blocking Procedures	27
3.5.3. Registries of Blocked Internet Resources	27
3.5.4. Development of Blockings	28
4. Human Rights Violations on the Internet	29
4.1. Internet Shutdowns by Order of Authorities	29
4.2. Criminalization of Statements on the Internet	30
4.3. Persecution of Media and NGOs	31
5. Civil Society in Internet Governance	33
5.1. Organizations	33
5.2. VPN and Means of Bypassing Blockings	34
5.2.1. Status of VPN Services	34
5.2.2. Number of VPN Users	35
5.2.3. Cases of Persecution for Using VPN	38
5.2.4. Monitoring of Blockings	39
6. Conclusion	40
Sources	42

1. General Information

1.1. Geographical Location

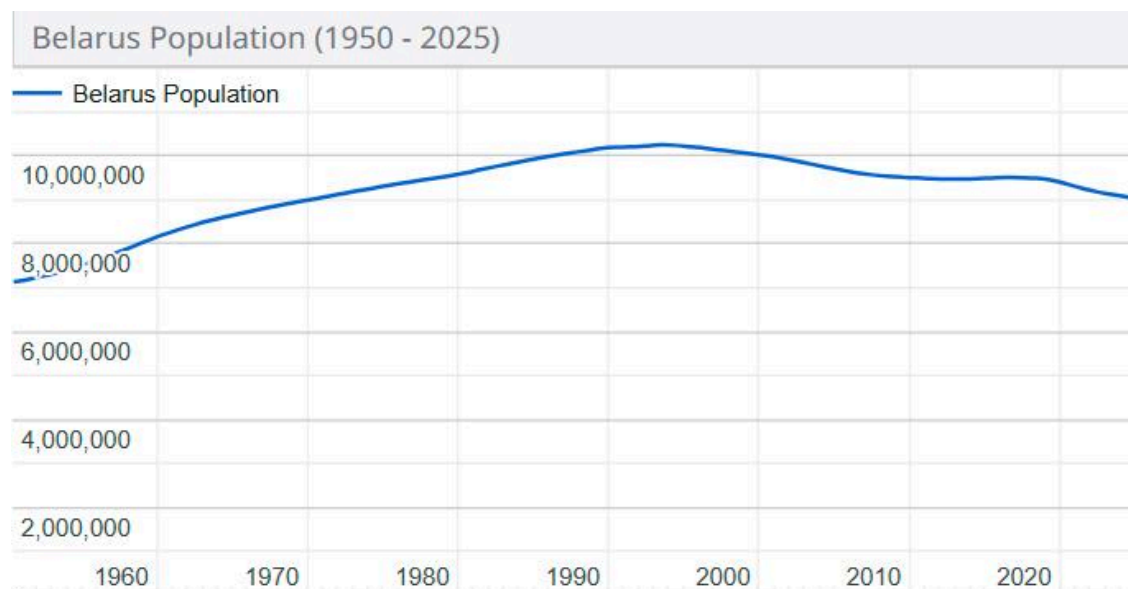
The Republic of Belarus is a state located in the center of Europe and belonging to Eastern Europe¹. The country is landlocked and borders five states: the Russian Federation to the east and north, Ukraine to the south, Poland to the west, Lithuania and Latvia to the northwest¹. Its geographical location determines an important transit role between Europe and Asia, as well as between the Baltic and Black Seas¹. The territory of Belarus is predominantly flat, with hilly areas, lowlands, swamps, and a large number of rivers and lakes¹. The total area of the country is 207,600 km².¹

1.2. Population

Belarus ranks 97th in the world and 7th in the CIS in terms of population¹. As of January 1, 2024, the country had 9,155,978 people, with the urban population share being 78.6% (7,198,285 people)¹. The largest city is the capital Minsk¹. According to the 2019 census, the ethnic composition of the population is predominantly Belarusians (85%), as well as Russians, Poles, Ukrainians, and other nationalities¹.

Since 1994, Belarus has experienced a steady trend toward population decline, which continued from 2019 to 2025⁴. This dynamic is due to both natural demographic processes and migration flows, which likely intensified after the political events of 2020⁶. The decrease in population, especially of working age, and the possible outflow of qualified personnel, including from the IT sector, affect the country's economic potential and the formation of the user base for digital services.

Graph 1: Dynamics of Belarus's Population (1950–2025)

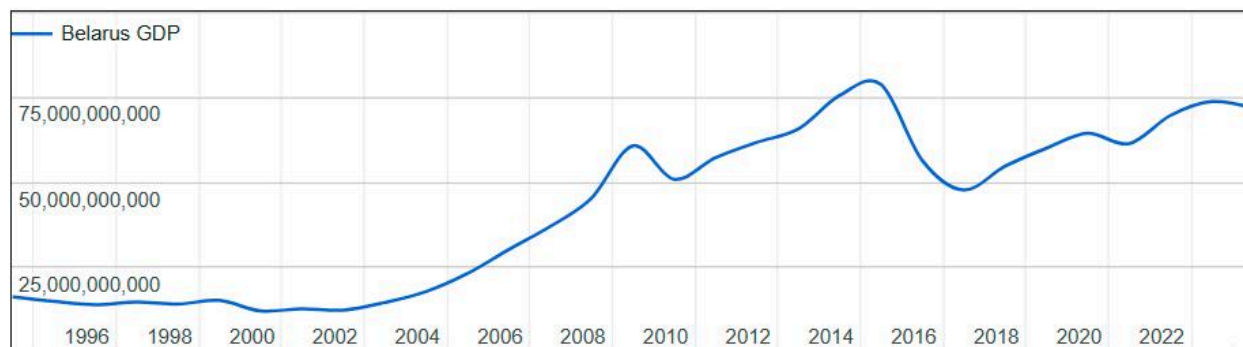


Source: *worldometers.info*

1.3. Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

The Belarusian economy belongs to the category of upper-middle-income countries¹¹. From 2019 to 2024, the country's GDP showed volatility. After growth in 2019¹², there was a slight decline in 2020 amid the COVID-19 pandemic¹². In 2021, the economy recovered¹², but in 2022, there was a significant drop (-4.7%)¹², largely due to the introduction of international sanctions after the events of 2020 and complicity in the aggression against Ukraine. In 2023 and 2024, there was notable economic recovery (growth of 3.9% and 4.0% respectively), exceeding initial forecasts¹². However, according to forecasts from international organizations, growth rates are expected to slow in 2025¹⁰.

The GDP dynamics directly affect state expenditures, including investments in digital infrastructure and control tools, as well as the accessibility of internet services for the population and the overall state of the ICT sector. Economic shocks, such as the 2022 recession, and the subsequent recovery closely tied to the Russian market, highlight the vulnerability of the Belarusian economy and its dependence on external factors, which indirectly affects the digital sphere.

Graph 2: Dynamics of Nominal GDP of Belarus (1993–2023)**Belarus GDP (Nominal, \$USD) 1993-2023**

Source: *worldometers.info*

1.4. Main Economic Characteristics

Economic growth in Belarus in 2023–2024 was driven by domestic demand (consumption and investments) and external demand from Russia, especially in sectors related to the defense industry and import substitution¹⁵. Key sectors of the economy are manufacturing (including food production, petroleum products, machinery – tractors, trucks), services, agriculture, and construction²⁷. The IT sector, previously an important growth driver, has faced difficulties in recent years related to the outflow of specialists and the impact of sanctions, although signs of stabilization were observed in 2024¹⁵.

Structural problems of the Belarusian economy include: high dependence on the Russian economy, which intensified after 2020 due to reorientation of trade flows and investments¹²; the impact of Western sanctions restricting access to technologies and markets¹⁵; labor shortages¹⁵; high import intensity of GDP³¹; risks of economic overheating and inflation restrained by administrative measures¹⁵; deterioration of the trade balance¹⁵; low economic diversification and inefficiency of the significant state sector¹⁵. The recovery after the 2022 decline has been strongly tied to the Russian market, increasing vulnerability to external shocks and potentially contributing to further synchronization of economic and possibly digital policy with Russia. At the same time, structural weaknesses limit the potential for long-term sustainable development, including in the field of digital technologies, despite existing state development programs³².

1.5. General Political Situation

Belarus is a presidential republic³ with an authoritarian system of government³. Alexander Lukashenko has held the post of president since 1994³, his legitimacy is contested by many countries and domestic opposition, especially after the 2020 presidential elections³. In January 2025, he was re-elected for a seventh term in conditions that international observers assessed as undemocratic⁶.

The political situation is characterized by the dominance of pro-government forces and harsh suppression of opposition and civil society, especially after the mass protests of 2020⁶. Laws adopted after 2020 have significantly restricted freedoms of assembly, speech, and association, criminalizing dissent under the pretext of fighting "extremism" and "terrorism"⁶. Most opposition parties were liquidated or did not pass re-registration before the 2024 parliamentary elections and the 2025 presidential elections⁶. As of early 2025, only four pro-government parties are officially registered: "Belaya Rus", Communist Party of Belarus, Liberal Democratic Party of Belarus, and Republican Party of Labor and Justice⁴⁰.

The 2022 constitutional amendments elevated the status of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly, headed by Lukashenko, which is seen as further consolidation of power⁶. Belarus maintains close integration ties with Russia within the Union State, CSTO, EAEU, and SCO⁶. Dependence on Russia has significantly increased after 2020, including economic support and the placement of Russian tactical nuclear weapons on Belarusian territory⁶. Administratively, the country is divided into six regions and the city of Minsk with special status¹. Regions are divided into districts¹.

The highly centralized authoritarian political system, suppression of dissent, and growing dependence on Russia create a context in which internet governance and digital rights are viewed by the authorities primarily through the lens of state security and control. Measures taken to restrict freedoms offline are reflected and intensified in the digital space, where the internet is perceived as a potential source of threats to regime stability.

2. Internet

2.1. National Domain

The Republic of Belarus has two top-level national domains (ccTLD): .by and the Cyrillic .бел³.

The .by domain was delegated on May 10, 1994⁴⁸. The code BY comes from the English name of the country at that time – Byelorussia⁵¹. Initially, administration was handled by the company "Open Contact", but from 2010-2012, the technical administrator is LLC "Reliable Programs" (hoster.by)⁵¹. The sponsoring organization and main administrator of the domain zone is the Operational-Analytical Center under the President of the Republic of Belarus (OAC)⁵¹. Registration of second-level domains in the .by zone is open to all without residency restrictions⁵¹. However, third-level domains in .gov.by and .mil.by zones are reserved for state and military needs⁵¹. The domain name must consist of 2-63 characters (Latin letters, numbers, hyphen), with restrictions on using the hyphen at the beginning, end, and certain positions⁴⁸. Registration of names containing obscene language or violating legislation is prohibited⁴⁸.

The Cyrillic domain .бел was delegated on February 12, 2015⁵⁰ and became the second largest Cyrillic ccTLD in the world after .РФ⁴⁹. It allows registration of domain names using letters from the Belarusian and Russian alphabets, numbers, hyphens, and apostrophes⁵⁶. The technical administrator is also hoster.by⁵³ under the supervision of OAC⁵⁵. Registration rules are similar to .by, including requirements for name length after transliteration to Latin⁵⁶. OAC control over national domains⁵¹ is part of the overall system of state internet governance. Presidential Decree No. 60 obliges Belarusian legal entities conducting activities in the country to use national domains and host sites in Belarus⁵⁷, which enhances the possibilities for state control over the national segment of the network.

2.2. Number of Users

The level of internet penetration in Belarus is one of the highest in the Eastern Europe and CIS region⁷. According to DataReportal, as of January 2025, the number of internet users was 8.26 million people, corresponding to 91.5% of the population⁶⁰. A year earlier, in January 2024, this figure was 8.48 million users (89.5% penetration)⁷. FRED data (based on World Bank) show growth in penetration from 82.8% in 2019 to 91.5% in 2023⁶².

- Sources of user data:
 - DataReportal (2024, 2025):⁷

- FRED (World Bank data, 2019–2023):⁶²
- Freedom House (citing official statistics/DataReportal):⁷
- ITU (International Telecommunication Union):⁶³

The high level of internet penetration creates a broad audience for digital services and information, but simultaneously makes this audience an object of state regulation and control. The slight decrease in the absolute number of users noted by DataReportal between 2024 and 2025⁶⁰ may be related to statistical error as well as the ongoing reduction in the overall population of the country⁴. The contrast between high access levels and strict restrictions on content and user rights is a key feature of Belarus's digital landscape⁷.

2.2.1 Fixed Internet

Fixed broadband penetration (BB) in Belarus is at a high level. According to official data as of the end of 2023, the penetration level was 35 subscribers per 100 inhabitants⁷. The total number of fixed BB subscribers reached 3.2 million in 2022 and 2023⁷, and according to more recent data (end of 2023 / beginning of 2024) – 3.28 million⁶⁶. GPON (fiber-optic) technology is actively replacing outdated DSL lines; by the end of 2023, the number of GPON subscribers exceeded 2.95 million⁷.

Graph 3: Dynamics of the Number of Fixed Broadband Subscribers in Belarus (2019–2023)

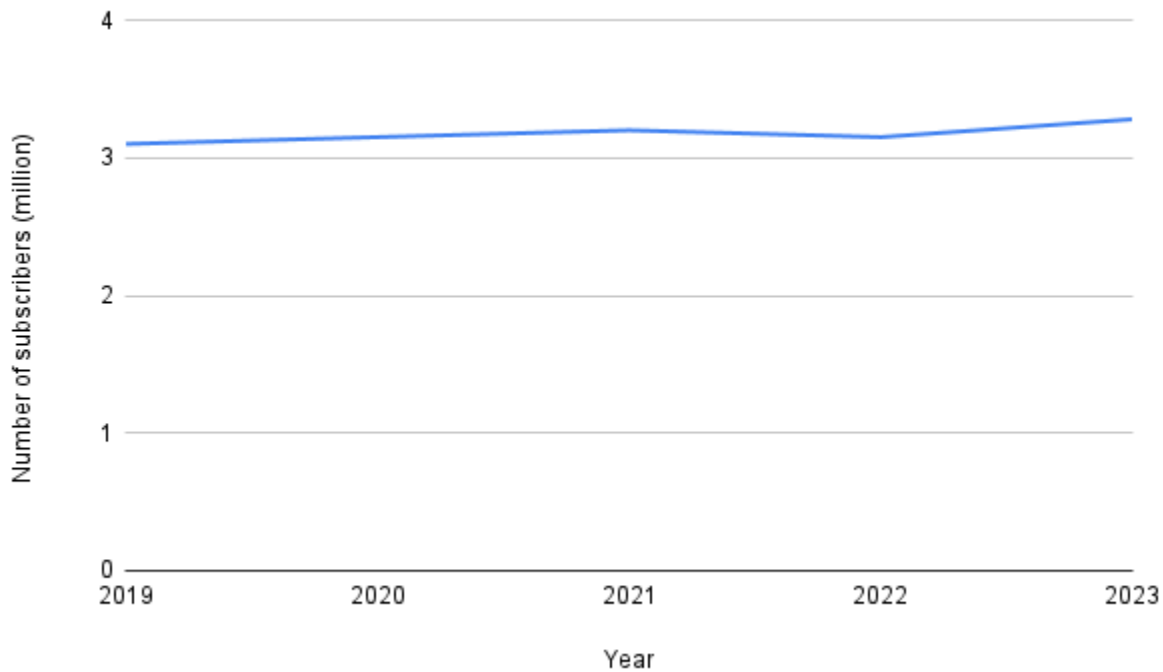


Table 1: Dynamics of the Number of Fixed Broadband Subscribers in Belarus (2019-2023)

Year	Number of Subscribers (mln.)	Source(s)
2019	~3.1 (estimate)	-
2020	~3.15 (estimate)	-
2021	3.2	63
2022	3.1 - 3.2	7
2023	3.2 - 3.28	7

Note: Data for 2019–2020 are estimates based on trends and data for subsequent years. Slight discrepancies in data for 2022–2023 may be related to different data collection dates or methodologies.

The fixed BB market in Belarus is characterized by a high degree of monopolization. The dominant player is the state enterprise RUP "Beltelecom"⁷. Its market share is estimated at 70% (2008 data)⁷⁰, 78.4% (likely 2021/2022)⁷¹, 81% (2020)⁶³, more than 80% (2022)⁶⁵, and 78% (2023)⁷. The largest private provider is UP "A1", but its share is significantly smaller – about 10% in 2020⁶³. There are other smaller providers, such as SOOO "MTS", "Cosmos Telecom", "Delovaya Set", IP TelCom, Netberry, Unet, Flynet, MTIS, and others⁷², but their combined market share is small.

Table 2: Largest Fixed Internet Providers and Their Market Shares (Estimate for 2023)

Provider	Market Share (approx.)	Website	Source(s) of Share
RUP "Beltelecom"	78%	https://beltelecom.by/	7
UP "A1"	10–15%	https://www.a1.by/ru/	63 (estimate)
SOOO "MTS"	<5%	https://www.mts.by/	(estimate)
Others	<5–7%	–	(estimate)

Such significant dominance by the state operator "Beltelecom" in the fixed BB market is a key factor facilitating state control over the access infrastructure. The lack of real competition limits choices for consumers and potentially restrains innovation, while simplifying for the authorities the implementation of regulatory and restriction measures on the overwhelming majority of fixed connections.

2.2.2. Mobile Internet

Mobile internet is widespread in Belarus. The mobile BB penetration level was estimated by the government at 103% as of the end of 2023⁷, and by ITU at 94.5% as of the end of 2021⁶³. The total number of active mobile connections as of the beginning of 2025 reached 11.9 million, equivalent to 129.7% of the population (indicating the use of multiple SIM cards per person)⁷⁴.

According to GSMA Intelligence, about 94.6% of mobile connections are broadband (3G/4G/5G)⁶⁰.

Graph 4: Dynamics of the Number of Mobile Subscribers in Belarus (2019–2025)

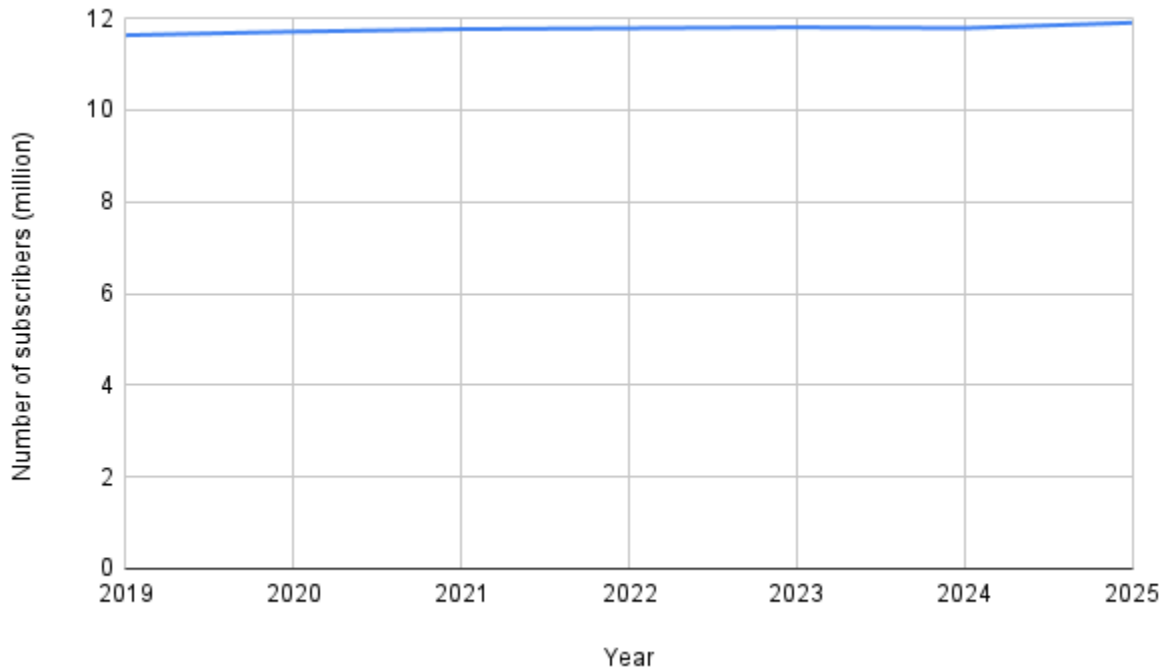


Table 3: Dynamics of the Number of Mobile Subscribers in Belarus (2019–2025)

Year	Number of Subscribers (mln.)	Penetration (%)	Source(s)
2019	11.627	124	75
2020	11.704	125	75
2021	11.760	127	75
2022	~11.78 (estimate)	~127 (estimate)	-
2023	~11.8 (estimate)	~128 (estimate)	-
2024 (end)	11.782	127.2	74 (calculated)

2025 (beginning)	11.9	129.7	74
------------------	------	-------	----

Note: Data for 2022–2023 are estimates. Data at the beginning of 2025 from DataReportal (11.5 mln / 127%) slightly differ from official data^{60, 74}.

On the Belarusian mobile market, there are three main operators:

- **SOOO "MTS":** A joint venture of RUP "Beltelecom" (51%) and Russian PAO "MTS" (49%). The largest operator with 5.7 mln subscribers (data for mid-2024⁷, April 2022⁶³, October 2020⁷⁷). Occupies about 46–48% of the market⁷⁷. Website: <https://www.mts.by/>⁷³.
- **UP "A1":** Part of Telekom Austria Group (América Móvil). Number of subscribers – 4.959 mln (September 2024)⁷⁹, 4.889 mln (June 2022)⁸⁰. Market share estimated at 41–43%⁶³. Website: <https://www.a1.by/ru/>⁷³.
- **ZAO "BeST" (life:)):** Since 2022, fully owned by Turkish company Turkcell⁶³. Number of subscribers – 1.5 mln (November 2023⁸², March 2024⁷). Occupies about 12–13% of the market. Website: <https://life.com.by/>⁷³.

An important feature of the market is that all three operators provide 4G (LTE) services through the infrastructure of the single state operator **SOOO "Belarusian Cloud Technologies" (beCloud)**, which holds a monopoly on 4G infrastructure⁷. This structure, combining competition at the service level with a monopoly on key infrastructure (4G), creates a centralized point of control for the state, allowing influence on mobile internet access for all users simultaneously, for example, through speed throttling or complete shutdowns during socio-political tension.

Table 4: Largest Mobile Internet Providers and Their Market Shares (Estimate for 2024)

Provider	Subscribers (mln, approx.)	Market Share (approx.)	Website	Source(s) of Subscribers/ Share
SOOO "MTS"	5.7	46–48%	https://www.mts.by/	7
UP "A1"	4.9	41–42%	https://www.a1.by/ru/	79

ZAO "BeST" (life:))	1.5	12-13%	https://life.com.by/	7
------------------------	-----	--------	---	---

2.3. Internet Access Speed and Service Quality

Data from international measurements show a significant gap between fixed and mobile internet speeds in Belarus. Fixed BB demonstrates relatively high indicators, while mobile internet significantly lags behind European standards.

According to Ookla Speedtest Global Index as of March 2025, the median download speed for fixed BB was 80.33 Mbps (83rd place in the world), and for mobile – only 19.11 Mbps (100th place)⁸⁴. There is positive dynamics compared to previous years: in May 2024, speeds were 63.06 Mbps and 11.55 Mbps respectively⁷, and in January 2024 – 62.06 Mbps and 11.94 Mbps⁸⁵. In May 2022, the indicators were even lower: 47.9 Mbps for fixed and 10.1 Mbps for mobile access⁶³.

The Digital Quality of Life Index (DQL) from Surfshark in previous years also indicated relatively low internet quality (speed, stability) in Belarus, despite its affordability⁸⁶. It is noted that quality and stability of connection may be affected by state interventions³². Low mobile internet speed may be related not only to technical limitations but also to the beCloud monopoly on 4G infrastructure⁸³, as well as possible traffic management practices (throttling), especially during periods of increased public activity⁷. This directly affects user experience, making access to multimedia content and alternative information sources difficult, often consumed from mobile devices.

- **Sources of speed data:** Ookla Speedtest Global Index⁷, Surfshark DQL⁸⁶, DigWatch³², Akamai⁸⁹.

2.4. Development of Providers and Autonomous Systems

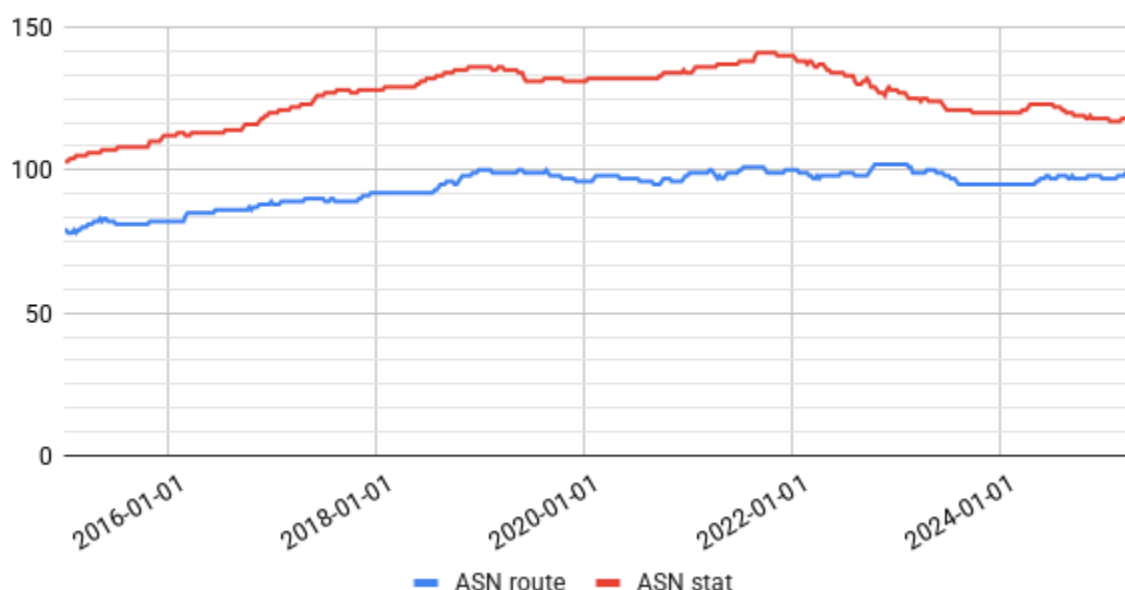
The number of Autonomous Systems (AS) registered and announcing routes from Belarus is an indicator of the structure and complexity of the national internet infrastructure. The authoritative source of AS data for the European region is RIPEstat⁹⁰.

The AS structure in Belarus likely reflects the overall centralization of internet governance, with dominance by state and major operators such as Beltelecom, NCOT (NTEC), MTS, A1⁹¹. Limited

growth in the number of independent AS actively participating in routing may indicate high barriers to market entry and further consolidation of state control over network paths. Such a structure facilitates the implementation of centralized measures for filtering and blocking traffic.

Graph 5: Dynamics of Autonomous Systems in Belarus (2015–2025)

ASN Stat



The graph shows that after a period of active growth from 2016 to 2022, the number of autonomous systems in Belarus stabilized and even slightly decreased.

Total registered AS (ASN stat): The peak was reached at the beginning of 2022 (almost 150 systems), after which a decline began. As of mid-2024, their number is around 120, close to your data (118).

Routable AS (ASN route): Their number stopped growing even earlier, around 2020, and has since fluctuated at a level slightly below 100 systems (latest data – 97).

Gap between registration and usage: There is a noticeable and stable gap between the number of registered AS and those that are actually announced on the internet. Currently, 21

autonomous systems (118 minus 97) are registered but not used for public routing. This may indicate the presence of systems for internal use, reservation, or "frozen" projects.

Saturation and stagnation: The growth in the number of new internet networks in Belarus has practically stopped since 2020–2022. This indicates political or economic factors restraining the emergence of new players (internet providers, hosting, large companies).

Low network density: Compared to its European neighbors, Belarus's internet landscape is characterized by significantly less diversity of independent networks. AS density per capita is 3–5 times lower than in Russia, Lithuania, and Poland.

Centralization: The low number of AS indicates that the internet market in the country is more consolidated around a few large providers, unlike more diversified and competitive markets in neighboring countries.

Analysis of Table 5 on the largest AS in Belarus paints a holistic picture: Belarus's internet landscape is characterized by low network density and high degree of centralization. The growth in the number of new networks has stopped, and access to the external world is controlled by several large state or state-affiliated structures.

Such a model ensures complete control over external traffic but limits competition and diversity of internet services, which is reflected in the significantly smaller number of autonomous systems per capita compared to all neighboring countries.

Table 5: Top 10 Largest Autonomous Systems in Belarus

#	Number of AS	Name	Web Site	Foreign neighbour count	Local neighbour count	Total neighbour count	Foreign neighbours share
1	60280	Republican Unitary Enterprise	https://www.ntec.by	72	4	76	95%

		"National Traffic Exchange Center"					
2	6697	Beltelecom	http://www.beltelecom.by	33	31	64	52%
3	12406	BN-AS Belarussian data communication service provider.		1	38	39	3%
4	60330	Belarusian Cloud Technologies		0	32	32	0%
5	51276	HD Ready (budovit)	https://www.hdready.com	26	0	26	100%
6	42772	Velcom (A1)	https://www.a1.by/en	0	11	11	0%
7	60337	Mediatech	http://mediatech.by	8	1	9	89%
8	25106	Mobile TeleSystems	http://www.mts.by	0	9	9	0%
9	28849	ASN-GLOBALONEBEL-COR		1	8	9	11%
10	56740	DataHata	https://www.datahata.by/	2	6	8	25%

Main conclusions from Table 5:

1. **High degree of centralization and state role:** The data confirm that access to the global internet is highly centralized and controlled by several key players affiliated with the state:

- AS60280 (NCOT) and AS6697 (Beltelecom): These two systems are the main gateways.
- NCOT (National Traffic Exchange Center) acts as the main international gateway. 95% of its connections are external. This is the point through which a significant part of the country connects to the global internet.
- "Beltelecom" is the largest transit operator with a more balanced profile (52% external connections), providing connectivity both within the country and beyond.
- AS60330 (beCloud) and mobile operators (A1, MTS): These major players have 0% direct foreign connections (peerings). This means that for access to the global internet, they fully rely on upstream providers, primarily NCOT and "Beltelecom".

2. **Specialized roles of players:** The table clearly shows the division of roles in the internet market:

- International gateways: NCOT, "Beltelecom".
- "Last mile" providers and internal infrastructure: Mobile operators (A1, MTS) and beCloud focus on developing networks within the country, buying transit for external access.
- Hosting and niche services: Systems like AS51276 (HD Ready) and AS60337 (Mediatech) have 100% and 89% foreign connections respectively. They practically do not exchange traffic within RB. This is a typical model for hosting providers or content providers whose clients and audience are predominantly abroad.
- Local providers: AS12406 (BN-AS) is a vivid example of a provider focused on the internal market. It has only 1 foreign peering and 38 local.

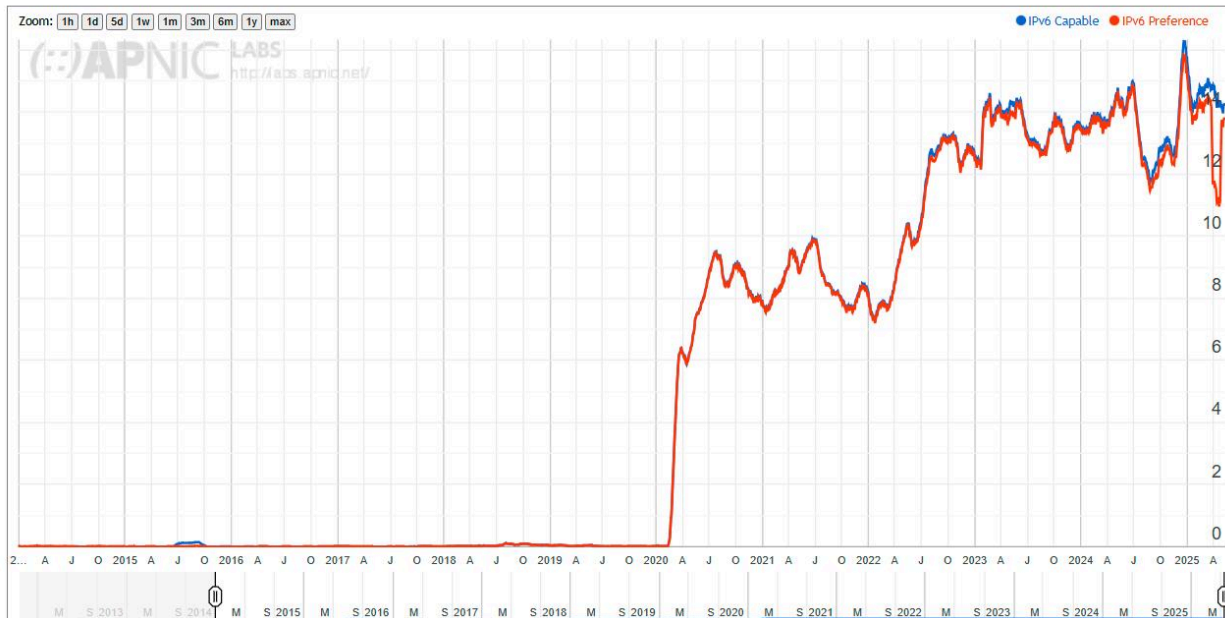
2.5. IPv6 Penetration

Belarus attempted to legally mandate all internet providers to support the IPv6 protocol from January 1, 2020, which would make it one of the first countries in the world with such a requirement formalized by presidential decree⁹⁴. The goal was to accelerate the transition to the new protocol from the then penetration level of about 15%⁹⁴.

However, judging by measurement data, the actual implementation of IPv6 remains at a low level. APNIC Labs statistics show a very low IPv6 usage coefficient for Belarus (BY), placing the country far from leading positions in the global ranking⁹⁶. Global Google statistics on IPv6 show an average penetration level of about 43% at the beginning of 2025⁹⁷, but specific data for Belarus require a separate request⁹⁸. RIPE NCC data confirm the allocation of IPv6 blocks to Belarusian organizations⁹², but this does not guarantee their active use. There is a noticeable gap between the legislative requirement of 2020 and the actual low level of IPv6 implementation. This may indicate the ineffectiveness of the mandate, technical or economic difficulties for providers, or a shift in state priorities toward strengthening network control mechanisms at the expense of its modernization. The low level of IPv6 implementation limits access to IPv6-only resources and hinders network development in the future.

Graph 6: Dynamics of IPv6 Penetration in Belarus (2015–2025)

Use of IPv6 for Belarus (BY)



Source: stats.labs.apnic.net

2.6. Connectivity Index

To assess the level of integration of the internet segment, two key indicators are used, based on the analysis of pairwise connections (peerings) between Autonomous Systems (ASN).

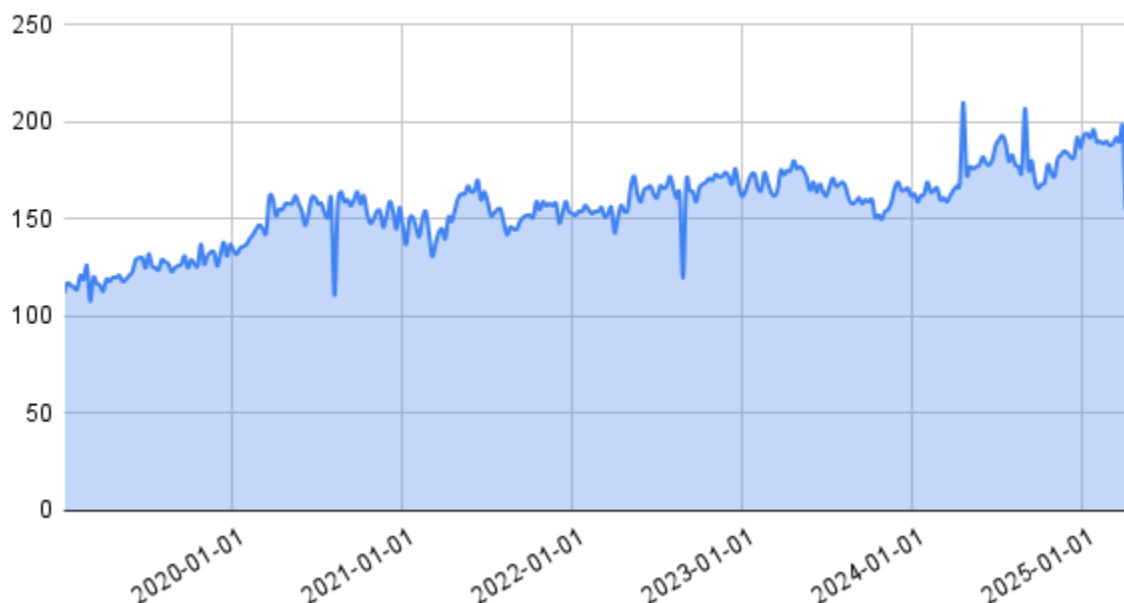
Global Connectivity Index: This index represents the total number of unique connections between each Belarusian ASN and each external (foreign) ASN. In essence, it measures how broadly and diversely the Belarusian internet segment is connected to the rest of the world. The higher this indicator, the more "windows" the country has to the global network.

Local Connectivity Index: This index is calculated as the total number of unique connections between different Belarusian ASNs. It reflects the intensity and complexity of the internal internet market, in particular, activity at internet exchange points (IXP). A high indicator indicates a developed internal ecosystem that allows efficient traffic exchange within the country, minimizing delays and dependence on external channels for local data.

Analysis of the ratio of these two indices allows understanding the strategic orientation of the national network: whether it is predominantly self-sufficient or deeply integrated into the global infrastructure.

Graph 7: Dynamics of Global Connectivity of Autonomous Systems in Belarus (2019–2025)

Global connectivity statistics

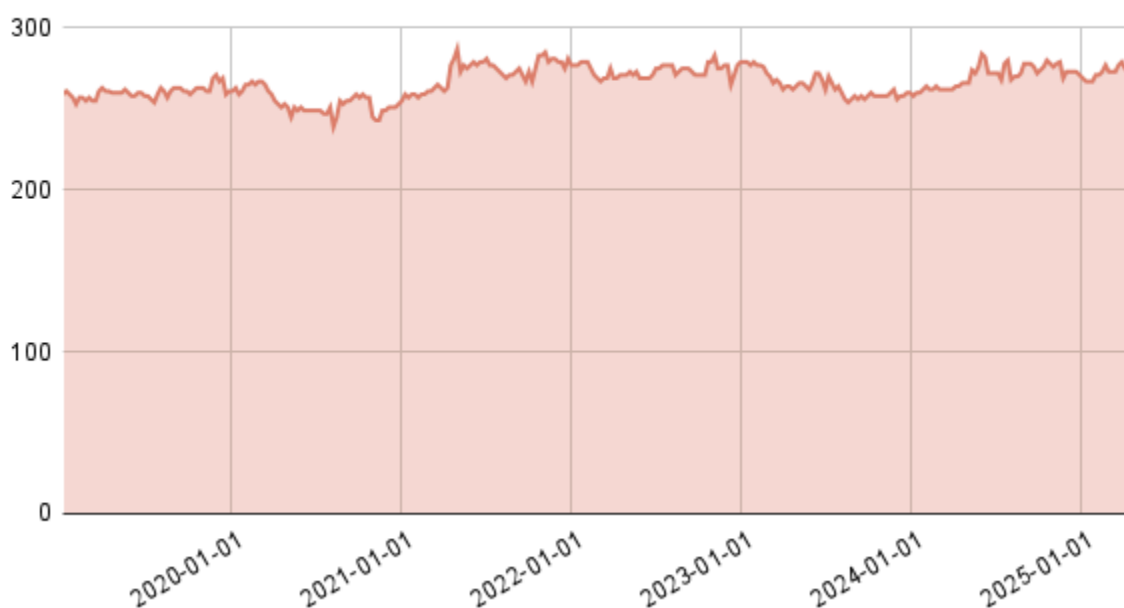


Critically low number of external connections – this is not a market coincidence, but a direct consequence of the legislative monopoly on the cross-border internet gateway. The state deliberately limits the number of entry and exit points for traffic, concentrating them in the hands of controlled operators such as NCOT and "Beltelecom". The small growth in the index reflects only extensive addition of channels by the monopolists themselves, not the emergence of new independent exits to the world.

Such architecture is a key element of the internet management system. By creating an artificial "bottleneck", the authorities gain full technical capability for traffic filtering, blocking undesirable resources, and implementing the SORM system. Low connectivity is a deliberate policy ensuring simplicity and effectiveness of state censorship.

Graph 8: Dynamics of Local Connectivity of Autonomous Systems in Belarus (2019–2025)

Local connectivity statistics

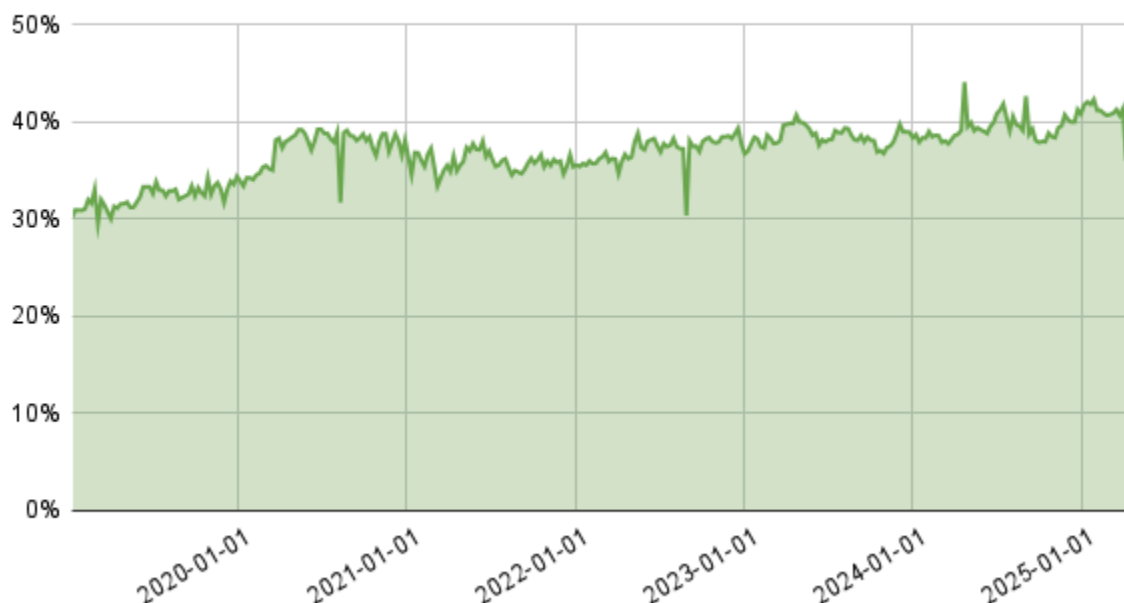


Anomalously low and stagnating level of internal connectivity is also a direct consequence of the state monopoly. In conditions where all operators are required to buy external traffic from state structures, economic incentives for developing direct traffic exchange (peering) within the country are practically absent. The network topology is forcibly built according to the "star" model, where all traffic one way or another passes through state-controlled central nodes.

Such a primitive structure, although technologically inefficient, is extremely convenient for surveillance. Instead of monitoring a complex mesh structure with thousands of connections, controlling bodies need only to observe traffic at several central points. Suppression of local connectivity is a conscious step that sacrifices the development of the internal internet for the sake of simplifying total control over it.

Graph 9: Dynamics of the Ratio of Global and Local Connectivity of Autonomous Systems in Belarus (2015–2025)

Total connectivity share



The growth in the share of global connections in this paradigm is not an indicator of healthy integration, but a symptom of deepening structural skew created by the authorities. When the development of internal peering is artificially frozen, any addition of external channels by the state monopolist automatically increases the share of global connections. The graph only visualizes how control policy deforms the technical structure of the national segment.

In the end, we see not a development strategy, but a control strategy. Instead of building a resilient, fast, and competitive national network, the authorities create a system that is easy to manage and transparent for security services. This system is connected to the world through narrow, carefully guarded channels, and such architecture is the technological foundation for censorship and management of the information field in the country.

3. Internet Legislation

3.1. Principles of Internet Governance

Officially declared principles of activity in the field of telecommunications in Belarus include service accessibility, priority of user rights, and equality of rights to receive services¹⁰¹. The legislation also emphasizes the importance of protecting personal data and respecting the rights of data subjects¹⁰².

However, in practice, internet governance is characterized by dominance of state control and priority of national security interests over user rights⁷. Although there is a platform for discussing internet governance issues (Belarus IGF)¹⁰³, its activity is carried out within frameworks set by the state. There is a significant gap between formally enshrined user rights and the reality of strict state regulation, which includes broad powers to restrict access to information and surveillance in the name of security.

3.1.1. Regulation

Internet regulation in Belarus is centralized and under state control. The basis of the normative-legal base is the Law "On Telecommunications"¹⁰¹, the Law "On Mass Media"⁷, the Law "On Information, Informatization, and Information Protection"¹⁰⁹, the Law "On Countering Extremism"¹¹⁰, as well as presidential decrees (No. 60 "On Measures to Improve the Use of the National Segment of the Internet Network"⁵⁷, No. 40 "On Cybersecurity"¹¹³) and joint resolutions of regulators (e.g., OAC, Mincom, and Ministry of Information No. 8/10/6 on the procedure for blocking websites¹¹⁶).

The legislation covers a wide range of issues: licensing of providers, management of backbone channels and national domains, content blocking (based on "extremism", "discreditation", "fakes", insults), mandatory user identification for certain services, requirements for data storage on the territory of the country, and providing access to them for law enforcement agencies⁷.

3.1.2. Regulatory Bodies and Responsible Persons

Several state bodies play a key role in internet regulation:

- **Ministry of Communications and Informatization (Mincom):** Provides overall leadership of the communications industry, oversees RUP "Beltelecom", participates in the development of standards and normative acts⁷.
 - Minister: **Zalesky Kirill Borisovich**¹¹⁹.
 - First Deputy Minister: **Tkach Pavel Nikolaevich**¹¹⁹.
 - Deputy Ministers: **Ryabova Anna Nikolaevna, Ruskevich Tatyana Vladimirovna**¹¹⁹.
 - Official website: <https://www.mpt.gov.by/ru/management>¹¹⁹.
- **Operational-Analytical Center under the President of the Republic of Belarus (OAC):** Possesses broad powers in the field of information and cybersecurity, control over internet providers, administration of national domains, online surveillance, and response to cyber incidents. Can initiate blockings and shutdowns⁷.
 - Chief: **Pavlyuchenko Andrey Yurievich**¹²⁵.
 - Deputy Chief: **Zhernosek Sergey Vasilyevich**¹²⁵.
 - Official website: <https://www.oac.gov.by/>¹²².
- **Ministry of Information (Mininform):** Responsible for regulating media, including online resources. Authorized to issue warnings and make decisions on restricting access to websites⁷.
- **Committee of State Security (KGB):** Participates in ensuring national security, including control over the internet space and operational-search activities⁷.
- **General Prosecutor's Office:** Has the right to issue resolutions on restricting access to internet resources⁷.
- **State Inspection for Telecommunications (RUP "BelGIE"):** Technical body under Mincom, maintains the official restricted access list (blocked sites) and distributes it to providers¹¹⁶. Website: <https://belgie.by/>¹³⁴.

The presence of several powerful state structures with overlapping powers in control and security (OAC, KGB, Mininform, Prosecutor's Office) and the absence of an independent regulator enhance state control and can lead to opacity in decision-making in internet governance.

3.2. Market Monopolization

Belarusian legislation formally prohibits monopolistic activity and unfair competition¹³⁶. However, in the telecommunications sector, there is de facto monopolization of key segments by state or state-affiliated structures.

RUP "Beltelecom" holds a dominant position in the fixed BB market (about 78% of subscribers)⁷ and together with **RUP "National Traffic Exchange Center" (NCOT/NTEC)** controls the external internet gateway, possessing exclusive rights to interaction with foreign providers⁷. This creates a duopoly on access to international traffic, controlled by state structures (NCOT is associated with OAC, Beltelecom – with Mincom)¹³⁹. In addition, **SOOO "Belarusian Cloud Technologies" (beCloud)**, also associated with the state⁷, is the monopolistic owner of 4G/LTE infrastructure, used by all three mobile operators (MTS, A1, life:))⁷.

Such structural monopolization of critical internet infrastructure segments (international gateways, 4G network) is a key instrument of state control. It allows authorities to effectively implement censorship, surveillance, and internet shutdowns by directing corresponding instructions through a limited number of state-controlled nodes, despite the formal presence of antimonopoly legislation.

3.3. Internet Shutdowns by Order of Authorities

The legislation of the Republic of Belarus directly provides for the possibility of shutting down or restricting telecommunications networks by decision of the authorities.

The key act is the **Law "On Telecommunications"**, amended in May 2021. These amendments granted the government the right to "suspend or restrict the functioning of telecommunications networks and facilities" in cases of "threats to national security", including those related to internet use⁷. This change created a formal legal basis for shutdowns, which previously lacked clear legislative justification⁸⁷.

Additional powers are provided by **Presidential Decree No. 40 "On Cybersecurity"** (February 2023), which allows OAC to issue binding instructions to telecommunications operators on restricting or suspending services to state bodies and other organizations upon detection of

cyber incidents¹⁴. Although the decree's main focus is the cybersecurity of organizations, it creates another mechanism for potential intervention in network operations.

The shutdown process is likely initiated by a decision from a high-level state body (e.g., OAC, Security Council, Mincom) based on a broad and vaguely defined notion of "threat to national security"⁷. The order is then passed for execution to state operators controlling key infrastructure: RUP "Beltelecom" and RUP "NCOT" (for external channels and backbone network) and SOOO "beCloud" (for 4G network)⁷. The use of vague formulations ("threat to national security", "cyber incident") gives authorities broad discretionary powers for internet shutdowns with minimal possibilities for legal challenge, turning network access into an instrument of state control.

3.4. Legislation on "Words on the Internet"

Belarus has an extensive system of legislative norms providing for administrative and criminal liability for various statements on the internet. There is no separate law on "fakes", but existing articles of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Belarus (CC RB)¹⁴⁰ and the Code of Administrative Offenses (CAO RB) are actively used for prosecution for spreading information that authorities consider false, harmful, or "extremist".

The key tool is **anti-extremist legislation** (Law "On Countering Extremism"¹¹⁰ and related CC articles). Authorities maintain lists of "extremist materials" (websites, social media channels, logos) and "extremist formations" (often independent media, opposition groups, human rights organizations)⁷. Spreading (including reposts, likes), storage, subscription to "extremist" resources or participation in "extremist formations" entails administrative (Art. 19.11 CAO) or criminal liability (e.g., Art. 361-1 CC – creation or participation in an extremist formation, Art. 361-4 CC – assisting extremist activity)⁷. Financing such groups (even through donations) can be qualified as "financing extremism/terrorism"⁷. The concept of "extremism" is interpreted extremely broadly and used to suppress any dissent⁷.

Other CC articles often applied to online statements:

- **Art. 369-1 CC "Discreditation of the Republic of Belarus"**: Punishment up to 4 years imprisonment for spreading "knowingly false information" about the state of affairs in the country, discrediting Belarus and aimed at harming state interests¹⁴³.
- **Art. 368 CC "Insult to the President of the Republic of Belarus"**: Punishment up to 4-5 years imprisonment⁸.

- **Art. 367 CC "Slander in Relation to the President of the Republic of Belarus":** Punishment up to 5 years imprisonment⁸.
- **Art. 369 CC "Insult to a Representative of Authority":** Punishment up to 3 years restriction/imprisonment⁸. Public insult can also be an administrative offense (Art. 10.2, 24.4 CAO)¹⁵⁶.
- **Art. 130 CC "Inciting Racial, National, Religious or Other Social Enmity or Discord":** Broadly interpreted, can be applied to criticism of social groups, including "law enforcement officers"⁸.
- **Art. 361 CC "Calls for Restrictive Measures (Sanctions)...":** Punishment up to 12 years imprisonment for calls to actions aimed at harming national security¹⁴³.

The concept of "spreading fakes" as such is not highlighted in the laws, but is effectively covered by articles on "discreditation" (Art. 369-1 CC), slander (Art. 367 CC), and norms of the Law on Media on "unreliable information"¹⁰⁷. Determining what information is "false" or "unreliable" remains the prerogative of the authorities and is often used for prosecution for information contradicting the official position. Overall, the legislation creates an extremely risky environment for any online statements criticizing the authorities or spreading alternative information, leading to self-censorship and serious restriction of freedom of speech.

3.5. Legislation on Internet Blockings

Belarus has and actively applies legislative and technical bases for blocking internet resources. Blockings are massive and directed against independent media, human rights organizations' sites, political opposition sites, and periodically affect social networks and blocking bypass tools (VPN, Tor)⁷. For blockings, various technical methods are used, including DNS manipulation, transparent proxies with HTTPS certificate substitution, and deep packet inspection systems (DPI)¹⁶².

3.5.1. Legislation

Yes, there is special legislation regulating the blocking of internet resources:

- **Law "On Mass Media":** Article 51-1 provides the Ministry of Information with the right to restrict access to internet resources on various grounds (spreading prohibited information, extremism, etc.)¹⁰⁸. Article 13 allows blocking sites in case of "threat to national security"⁷. 2021 amendments expanded the grounds for blockings⁸.

- **Law "On Countering Extremism"**: Serves as the basis for blocking resources recognized as "extremist"¹¹⁰.
- **Joint Resolution of OAC, Mincom, and Ministry of Information No. 8/10/6 of October 3, 2018** (as amended in 2022): Details the restriction procedure, including maintaining the blocking list by RUP "BelGIE"¹¹⁶.
- **Presidential Decree No. 60 (2010)**: Indirectly supports the blocking infrastructure through hosting and identification requirements⁵⁷.
- **OAC Directive (April 2024)**: Allows OAC to disconnect "extremist" sites from the national domain system (.by)⁸.

3.5.2. Blocking Procedures

The blocking procedure is formalized in Resolution No. 8/10/6¹¹⁶:

1. **Initiation**: The blocking decision is made by Mininform (on its own initiative, based on a court decision or notifications from other state bodies), or the General Prosecutor (or prosecutors of regions/Minsk), or OAC/KGB (within operational-search activity), or RUP "BelGIE" (regarding anonymization means)¹¹⁶.
2. **Entry into the list**: RUP "BelGIE" enters the resource identifier (domain, IP, URL) into the official restricted access list¹¹⁶.
3. **Notification of providers**: Within an hour, BelGIE notifies all internet providers by email of the list update¹¹⁶.
4. **Execution**: Providers are required to block access to the specified resource within four hours from the list update moment, using their own technical means¹¹⁶.

Blocking can be carried out extrajudicially by decision of Mininform or the prosecutor's office¹³². Notification of the resource owner is provided, but in practice often occurs post factum¹³⁵.

3.5.3. Registries of Blocked Internet Resources

There is an official registry (list) of blocked internet resources, maintained by RUP "BelGIE" in electronic form¹¹⁶.

Access to the full list is **restricted** and provided only to authorized state bodies and internet providers¹¹⁷.

For the public, BelGIE provides an online tool to check if a specific identifier (domain name, IP address) is in the restricted access list¹¹⁷. This tool does not allow viewing the entire registry.

- **Official verification tool (BelGIE):** Available on the BelGIE website, presumably in the "Reference Information" or "Registration" section (<https://belgie.by/ru/other/info/> or similar path)¹³⁴. Allows checking the status of a specific site but not seeing the entire list.
- **Unofficial lists and monitoring:**
 - **Human Constanta:** Human rights organization tracking blockings and publishing analytics. Estimated the number of blocked sites at more than 10,000 as of the end of 2022 and about 2,000 added in 2023⁷. Likely maintains unofficial lists. Website: <https://humanconstanta.org/> (may be blocked in RB).
 - **OONI Explorer:** Platform collecting data on network connectivity and censorship measurements from volunteers worldwide. Allows analyzing site and application availability in Belarus¹⁶². Data require careful interpretation. Site:¹⁶³.
 - **Other projects:** Resources such as Censored Planet¹⁶⁷, IODA¹⁶⁸, Google Transparency Report¹⁶⁸, Cloudflare Radar¹⁶³ provide data on network anomalies but not specialized blocking lists for Belarus.

The closed nature of the official blocking registry hinders public control and challenging decisions. Citizens and resource owners are forced to rely on the limited official verification tool or data from non-governmental monitoring projects.

3.5.4. Development of Blockings

The dynamics of blockings in Belarus, especially after 2020, shows a sharp intensification of internet censorship.

- **Before 2020:** Blockings existed but did not have such a mass character. Blockings of individual resources and bypass tools were noted, for example, the Tor network¹⁶³.
- **August 2020:** Amid presidential elections and subsequent protests, massive internet outages occurred⁸⁷. Immediately after that, a wave of website blockings began¹⁶². OONI recorded the blocking of at least 86 sites by September 2020, including independent media, opposition resources, human rights sites, and censorship bypass tools¹⁶⁸.
- **2021–2022:** Blockings continued and intensified. Resources were massively recognized as "extremist" and blocked⁷. By the end of 2022, according to Human Constanta estimates, the number of blocked sites exceeded 10,000⁷. The Human Rights Watch site was blocked⁸.
- **2023:** The scale of blockings continued to grow, estimated at another 2,000 sites blocked⁷. At the end of the year, YouTube was briefly partially blocked⁷. The total number of blocked opposition sites and channels from 2020 to 2023 exceeded 4,000⁷.

- **2024:** The practice of blockings persisted. A mechanism for disconnecting "extremist" sites from the domain zone.by was introduced⁸. Efforts to block VPN services intensified, especially during politically significant events⁵⁷. The Minister of Information stated the blocking of more than 3,150 "destructive" resources per year¹³³.

Conclusion: OONI data and human rights organizations' reports testify to a sharp and significant growth in internet censorship in Belarus since 2020. Blockings have become the main tool for suppressing independent information and criticism of the authorities in the online space. The scale of blockings is enormous, affecting thousands of websites and channels in social networks. In recent years, authorities have also intensified efforts to block censorship bypass tools such as VPN.

4. Human Rights Violations on the Internet

In the Republic of Belarus, human rights in the internet are systematically violated, including the right to access information, freedom of expression, and the right to privacy. Authorities use legislative and technical means to control the online space, suppress dissent, and persecute regime critics.

This manifests in the form of mass blockings of independent information resources, censorship, internet shutdowns during periods of political tension, as well as criminal and administrative prosecution of citizens for their online activity, including comments, likes, reposts, and even subscriptions to resources deemed "extremist" by the authorities. Online surveillance and user data collection are widely applied.

4.1. Internet Shutdowns by Order of Authorities

Yes, Belarus has recorded cases of large-scale internet shutdowns (shutdowns) and targeted slowing down (throttling) of network access by order of authorities, especially during periods of political instability.

- **August 2020 (Presidential elections and protests):** The most significant shutdown occurred on August 9–12, 2020, during and immediately after the presidential elections. Internet access was practically completely paralyzed across the entire territory of the country for about 61 hours⁷. In the following months (August–November 2020), authorities regularly shut down or slowed down mobile internet, especially on Sundays, during days of mass protests⁷. Estimates indicate the total time without mobile internet

during this period exceeded 100 hours⁶³. The shutdowns affected both fixed and mobile internet, as well as the operation of messengers and VPN services¹⁶².

- **June 2020 (Pre-election period):** Reports of jamming internet connections during pre-election rallies and protests⁷.
- **2019:** Cases of jamming internet in May and November 2019 were noted⁷.
- **August 2023:** Reports of local disruptions with mobile internet in the area of the Wagner PMC camp after the death of Yevgeny Prigozhin⁷.
- **December 2023:** Brief partial blocking of YouTube during the New Year's address by opposition leader Svetlana Tikhanovskaya⁷.
- **January 2025 (Presidential elections):** Authorities announced in advance the restriction of access to sites hosted on national hosting for users from abroad during the election period. Simultaneously, mass failures in VPN services operation within the country were observed⁵⁷.

These shutdowns are a gross violation of the right to access information and freedom of expression, used by authorities as a tool for control and suppression of protest activity. The legalization of shutdowns through amendments to the Law "On Telecommunications" in 2021⁷ only formalized this repressive practice.

4.2. Criminalization of Statements on the Internet

Yes, Belarus has widespread cases of criminal and administrative prosecution of citizens for statements on the internet. Authorities actively use criminal and administrative articles to punish criticism of the regime, dissemination of information from independent sources, and even likes, reposts, or comments in social networks.

- **Grounds for prosecution:** As indicated in section 3.4, prosecution uses CC RB articles on "extremism" (Art. 361-1, 361-4, etc.), "inciting enmity" (Art. 130), "discreditation of the Republic of Belarus" (Art. 369-1), insult or slander in relation to the president (Art. 367, 368) and representatives of authority (Art. 369), as well as administrative article 19.11 CAO ("distribution/storage of extremist materials")⁷.
- **Scale of prosecutions:** Thousands of people have been held accountable for online activity after 2020. According to the General Prosecutor's Office as of November 2023, more than 16,000 crimes of "extremist orientation" were registered since 2020³⁷. The Human Rights Center "Viasna" maintains a list of political prisoners, which as of the end of 2024 numbered about 1,500 people¹⁴⁵, many of whom were convicted precisely for statements on the internet. In 2023 alone, according to "Viasna", more than 400

sentences were passed in politically motivated criminal cases, and more than 3,300 people were subjected to administrative prosecutions¹⁷⁰. Prosecutions affect not only activists but also ordinary users for subscriptions, likes, comments, reposts, or donations⁷.

- **Examples of cases (most mentioned):**

- **Igor Losik:** Blogger and consultant for "Radio Liberty", arrested in June 2020. Convicted in December 2021 to 15 years imprisonment on charges of "organization of mass riots" and "inciting enmity"¹⁷³. In protest, announced prolonged hunger strikes and self-harm¹⁷⁴. His wife Darya Losik was also convicted to 2 years for an interview with independent media¹⁷⁰. UN recognized his detention as arbitrary and related solely to journalistic activity¹⁷³.
- **Roman Protasevich:** Journalist and co-founder of Telegram channel NEXTA, arrested in May 2021 after forced landing of a Ryanair plane in Minsk¹⁷⁵. After arrest, cooperated with authorities, criticizing the opposition¹⁷⁵. Was convicted to 8 years but soon pardoned¹⁷⁵. His case caused international resonance and led to sanctions against Belarus¹⁷⁶.
- **TUT.BY case:** The largest independent news portal, destroyed in May 2021. Leadership and employees arrested on charges of tax evasion, site blocked, recognized as "extremist"⁸.
- **Prosecutions for donations:** In 2024, authorities massively prosecuted people for donations to funds helping political prisoners and other initiatives recognized as "extremist" or "terrorist", often forcing payment of large sums to avoid criminal prosecution⁷.
- **Prosecution of returned emigrants:** In 2023–2024, cases of detention of Belarusians returning from abroad increased, based on checking their phones for subscriptions to "extremist" channels, photos from 2020 protests, or donations⁷.

These cases demonstrate the systemic nature of prosecution for any manifestation of dissent on the internet, turning the online space into a high-risk zone for citizens.

4.3. Persecution of Media and NGOs

Yes, mass media (media) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Belarus are subjected to systematic persecution for their activities, especially for disseminating information on the internet that diverges from the official position of the authorities.

- **Methods of persecution:** Authorities use a wide arsenal of methods:

- **Blocking sites and social networks:** Mass blocking of websites of independent media and NGOs⁷.
- **Recognition as "extremist materials/formations":** Dozens of independent media (TUT.BY, "Nasha Niva", "Radio Svaboda", Belsat, Euroradio) and human rights organizations (including PC "Viasna", Human Constanta, BAJ) were included in "extremist" lists, which criminalizes any connection with them, including distribution of their materials⁷.
- **Criminal prosecution:** Journalists, editors, leaders, and employees of NGOs are subjected to criminal prosecution on fabricated charges (taxes, organization of riots, inciting enmity, extremism, etc.)⁸. As of the end of 2024, 45 media workers were in custody¹⁴⁵.
- **Liquidation of organizations:** Since 2021, a campaign for mass forced liquidation of NGOs has been ongoing, including all independent human rights organizations and the Belarusian Association of Journalists (BAJ)¹³³.
- **Administrative arrests and fines:** Journalists and activists are regularly subjected to detentions, arrests, and fines for their professional activity or online activity⁸.
- **Searches and seizure of equipment:** Searches in editorial offices and homes of employees have become common practice⁸.
- **Pressure on relatives:** Authorities exert pressure on relatives of journalists and activists abroad¹²⁴.
- **Deprivation of accreditation and media status:** Independent media had licenses and accreditations revoked⁸.
- **Disconnection from domain zone:** Since 2024, OAC has the right to disconnect "extremist" sites from the national domain zone.by⁸.
- **Most known cases of media/NGO persecution:**
 - **TUT.BY (now Zerkalo.io):** The largest independent portal, destroyed in May 2021, leadership and employees arrested, site blocked, recognized as "extremist"⁸.
 - **"Nasha Niva":** One of the oldest independent publications, site blocked, editorial office subjected to persecutions, recognized as "extremist formation"¹³³.
 - **"Radio Svaboda" (Belarusian service of RFE/RL):** Site and social networks blocked, recognized as "extremist", journalists subjected to persecutions (Igor Losik, Andrey Kuznechik)¹³³.
 - **Belsat TV:** Poland-based TV channel broadcasting to Belarus, recognized as "extremist formation", its journalists and collaborators subjected to persecutions¹³³.

- **Human Rights Center "Viasna":** Leading human rights organization, liquidated, leadership (including Nobel laureate Ales Bialiatski) and employees convicted to long terms, site and social networks recognized as "extremist"⁸.
- **Belarusian Association of Journalists (BAJ):** Liquidated, recognized as "extremist formation", site deleted¹³³.
- **Human Constanta:** Human rights organization dealing with digital rights, site blocked⁷.

These actions have led to almost complete destruction of the independent media field and NGO sector within the country. Most independent media and organizations were forced to cease operations or relocate their activities abroad¹³³.

5. Civil Society in Internet Governance

Civil society in Belarus dealing with digital rights and internet governance is under strong pressure from the authorities. After 2020, most independent organizations working in this field were either forcibly liquidated or forced to cease activities or relocate them abroad¹⁸⁰.

Despite the repressions, some organizations and initiatives continue their work, mainly from abroad, focusing on monitoring violations, legal aid, education in digital security, and development of tools for bypassing censorship. However, their possibilities for influencing internet governance policy within the country are extremely limited due to the lack of dialogue with authorities and constant risks of persecution for those remaining in Belarus. Existing ICT associations within the country, such as "Infopark" or "Digital Business Confederation", closely collaborate with the state and do not engage in active protection of citizens' digital rights⁷.

5.1. Organizations

In conditions of harsh repressions, the activity of independent organizations protecting digital rights in Belarus is extremely difficult. Many were liquidated or forced to work from emigration.

- **Human Constanta:** Human rights organization that actively engaged in monitoring digital rights, analyzing legislation, education in digital security, and documenting blockings and persecutions on the internet⁷. The organization's site is blocked in Belarus⁸. Likely continues activity from abroad. Website: <https://humanconstanta.org/>

- **Belarusian Association of Journalists (BAJ):** Protected rights of journalists, including those working online. Liquidated by authorities and recognized as "extremist formation"¹³³. Continues activity in exile. Website: <https://baj.media/>
- **Human Rights Center "Viasna":** Leading human rights organization documenting human rights violations, including persecutions for online activity and maintaining a list of political prisoners¹⁴⁵. Liquidated, leadership convicted, recognized as "extremist formation"⁸. Continues work from abroad. Website: <https://spring96.org/>¹⁸³.
- **Lawtrend (Legal Transformation Center):** Organization dealing with analysis of legislation and legal aid to NGOs, including in the digital sphere. Liquidated in 2021¹⁸⁰. Website (archival/in exile): <https://www.lawtrend.org/>
- **Digital Solidarity / CyberBeaver:** Initiatives that emerged after 2020, focusing on digital security, help in bypassing blockings, providing information on safe internet use¹⁸⁵. Often operate through Telegram channels and other platforms.

International organizations such as **Freedom House**⁷, **Amnesty International**¹⁴⁵, **Human Rights Watch (HRW)**⁸, **ARTICLE 19**³⁷, **Access Now (#KeepItOn)**⁸⁷, **Reporters Without Borders (RSF)**¹³³, and **OONI**⁷ also actively monitor the situation with digital rights in Belarus and publish reports.

5.2. VPN and Means of Bypassing Blockings

In conditions of mass internet resource blockings and censorship, VPN services and other blocking bypass tools (such as Tor, Psiphon, Lantern) have become a necessary means for many Belarusians to access independent information, blocked sites, and to protect their online privacy⁵⁷.

Authorities recognize the role of these tools and take steps to restrict their use. This includes both legislative bans and technical measures to block the VPN services and protocols themselves, especially during periods of heightened political activity⁵⁷.

5.2.1. Status of VPN Services

Formally, the use of technologies allowing bypassing blockings and ensuring anonymity in the network in Belarus is **restricted or prohibited** since 2015–2016¹⁶⁹.

- **Council of Ministers Resolution No. 645 of September 26, 2022 "On Providing Telecommunications Services"** (likely replacing or supplementing previous acts) and related normative documents regulate the rules for providing communication services¹⁹⁴.
- **OAC and Mincom Resolution No. 6/8 of February 19, 2015** (as amended by Resolution No. 8/10/6 of October 3, 2018¹¹⁷) directly indicates that "means of ensuring anonymity (proxy servers, anonymous networks like Tor and others) allowing internet users to access internet resources whose identifiers are included in the restricted access list" are subject to blocking¹³⁵. The decision to block such means is made by RUP "BelGIE"¹³⁵.
- **Law "On Telecommunications"** (as amended in 2016, Decree No. 98) prohibits users from using software and technical means to convert data exchange protocol and transmit messages bypassing the established traffic passing order (which may be interpreted as a ban on IP telephony through unauthorized gateways, but potentially also on VPN)¹⁰⁵.

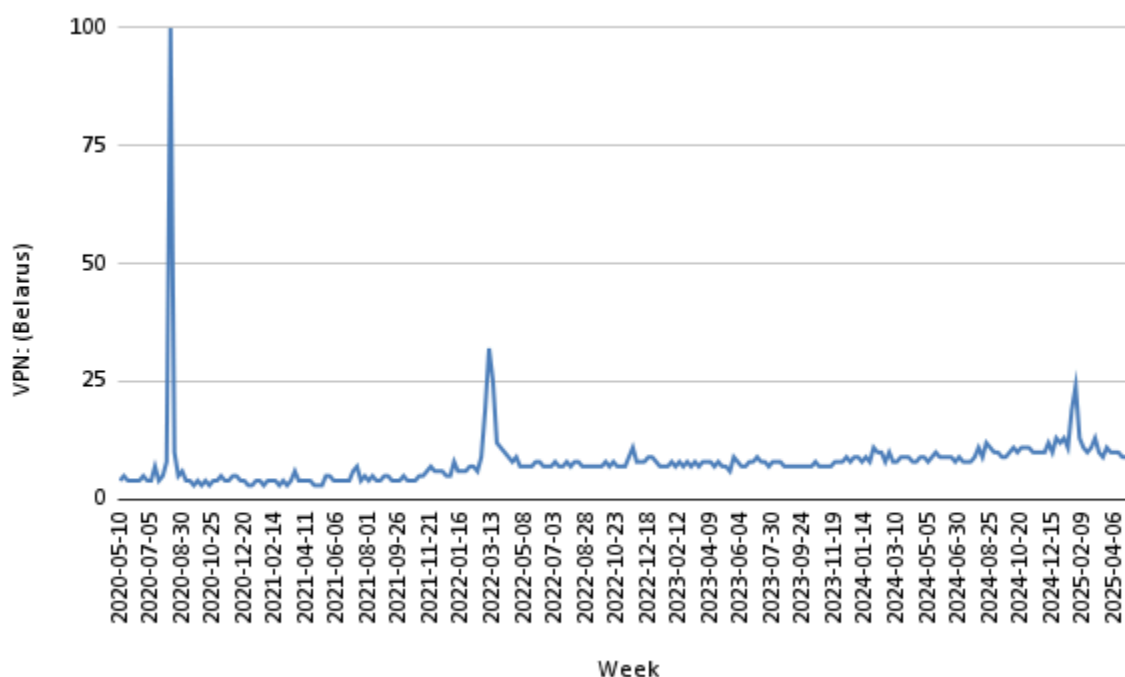
Despite the formal ban on means of bypassing blockings, until recently, authorities did not engage in their active mass blocking¹⁶⁹. However, since 2024, targeted attempts to block popular VPN services have been observed⁵⁷. The legislation does not contain direct norms prohibiting the advertising or sale of VPN, but general restrictions on "extremist" materials and the ban on means of bypassing blockings create legal uncertainty.

5.2.2. Number of VPN Users

Exact data on the number of VPN users in Belarus are absent. Estimation is difficult due to the nature of the technology itself, aimed at anonymity. However, indirect data indicate high VPN popularity:

- In 2019, according to Top10VPN, Belarus had 0.49 million VPN app downloads, with a 38% growth compared to the previous period¹⁹⁶.
- During the shutdown in August 2020, the number of Psiphon users (bypassing tool) from Belarus exceeded 1.7 million¹⁸⁵.
- Ahead of the 2025 elections, Proton VPN recorded a 170% growth in registrations from Belarus above the baseline, despite the service already being popular in the country⁵⁷.

Global statistics show that about 31% of internet users worldwide use VPN¹⁹⁷. Given the high level of censorship in Belarus, it can be assumed that the share of VPN users in the country is at least not lower than the global average, and likely higher.

Graph 10: Dynamics of Search Queries about VPN in Belarus (2020–2025)

Source: *trends.google.com*

The graph clearly demonstrates that mass interest in VPN in Belarus is not everyday, but exclusively event-driven and political. Spikes in VPN popularity are not associated with the

desire to access entertainment content or general privacy concerns. They directly correlate with periods of acute political crises and repressions when authorities restrict access to information. VPN for Belarusians is, first and foremost, a tool for bypassing state censorship and blockings.

Key peaks occurred:

- **August 2020 (Protests):** Absolute peak (100 points) coincides with presidential elections and subsequent mass protests. During this period, authorities resorted to unprecedented measures: from complete mobile internet shutdown to blocking news sites, social networks, and messengers. The explosive demand for VPN was the population's reaction to the direct shutdown and became a mass tool for accessing independent information and coordinating actions.
- **March 2022 (Start of war in Ukraine):** The second significant peak is associated with the start of full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, in which Belarus served as a bridgehead. This surge in interest was caused by a new wave of blockings of independent media (both Belarusian and Russian) and citizens' desire to access objective information about the war from world sources, bypassing state propaganda.
- **Beginning of 2025 (Presidential elections):** The third, preventive peak shows a change in citizen behavior. Based on the experience of 2020, Belarusians began searching for and installing VPN in advance, anticipating inevitable blockings and internet shutdowns during another electoral campaign. This is no longer a reaction to an accomplished fact, but a conscious and timely action, demonstrating a lack of trust in the state and its information policy.

The VPN popularity graph is an accurate barometer of the level of fear and censorship in Belarusian society. It illustrates a direct dependence: the more actively authorities try to isolate citizens from information, the higher the demand for blocking bypass means. User behavior has evolved from a panic reaction in 2020 to conscious preparation in 2025, indicating that VPN use has become an established practice of digital resistance for the active part of society.

Table 6: Dynamics of VPN Usage in Belarus (Estimate)

Year	Estimate of Number/Share of Users	Source/Comment
2019	0.49 mln downloads	196 (Top10VPN, downloads for the year)

2020	>1.7 mln Psiphon users	185 (Peak during shutdown)
2021	No data	-
2022	No data	-
2023	No data	-
2024	No data	-
2025	Significant growth (Proton VPN)	57 (Growth in registrations before elections)

Note: The table reflects fragmented data and estimates. Systematic statistics by year are absent.

Blocking of VPN services: Belarus authorities apply technical means to block VPN. Methods include¹⁶⁴:

1. **Blocking IP addresses and domain names of VPN servers:** This is the simplest method but requires constant updating of blocking lists, as services can change addresses. Effective against large, publicly known services¹⁹¹.
2. **Blocking VPN protocols:** Using DPI to identify and block traffic transmitted over standard VPN protocols (e.g., OpenVPN, WireGuard, IPsec)⁵⁷. This method is more effective but may affect legitimate traffic (e.g., corporate VPN), causing problems¹⁹¹.
3. **Blocking by behavioral signs of traffic:** Analysis of traffic characteristics (packet size, timings) to detect and block VPN connections regardless of protocol¹⁹¹.

VPN blockings intensify during election periods⁵⁷. Often, the most popular services (Proton VPN, NordVPN, TunnelBear, etc.) are blocked⁵⁷.

5.2.3. Cases of Persecution for Using VPN

Direct reports of mass prosecutions of ordinary users solely for using VPN in the provided materials are absent. However, legislation creates risks:

- Article 23.3 CAO RB provides for a fine for "unauthorized use of telecommunications networks"¹⁹⁹, which theoretically can be applied.
- Using VPN to access resources recognized as "extremist" may entail liability under Art. 19.11 CAO (distribution/storage of extremist materials)⁸. When checking phones at the

border or during detention, detection of VPN and subscriptions to "extremist" channels may become grounds for prosecution⁷.

- Using VPN for committing other offenses (fraud, dissemination of prohibited information, etc.) entails liability for the main offense²⁰⁰.

Although there is no direct punishment for the fact of installing VPN, its use for accessing blocked content carries significant risks of administrative and even criminal prosecution in current Belarus conditions. Reports of imposing fines for using VPN to bypass blockings²⁰¹ require additional verification but correspond to the general logic of legislation. Persecutions of **organizations providing VPN services** are not recorded, as most popular services are based outside Belarus.

5.2.4. Monitoring of Blockings

Monitoring of blockings in Belarus is carried out by several resources and organizations:

- **OONI (Open Observatory of Network Interference):** International project collecting data on network censorship and interventions using the OONI Probe app. Publishes reports and provides access to measurement data¹⁶².
 - **OONI message digest (2019–2024):** OONI fixed Tor blocking in 2016¹⁶³. In 2020, OONI detailed the shutdown during elections and subsequent blocking of more than 86 sites (media, opposition, human rights)⁸⁷. In subsequent years, OONI data likely reflected ongoing blockings, but specific reports for 2021–2024 are not detailed in the provided materials⁷.
- **Human Constanta:** Belarusian human rights organization actively tracking site blockings and prosecutions for online activity, publishes analytical materials and statistics⁷.
 - **Human Constanta message digest (2019–2024):** The organization reported more than 10,000 blocked sites as of the end of 2022⁷, adding about 2,000 sites in 2023⁷, prosecutions for comments and likes²⁰², analyzed legislation on blockings and "extremism"¹³², noted the use of Psiphon and Lantern for bypassing blockings¹⁸⁵.

- **BelGIE (State Inspection for Telecommunications):** Provides an official tool to check the presence of a specific resource in the restricted access list¹³⁴.
- **International human rights organizations (Freedom House, HRW, Amnesty International, ARTICLE 19, Access Now):** In their annual reports and special publications, they cover the situation with blockings and censorship in Belarus, often referring to OONI data and local human rights defenders⁷.
- **Shutdown monitoring projects (IODA, Google Transparency Report, Cloudflare Radar):** Provide data on global network failures that may indicate deliberate shutdowns¹⁶³.

Monitoring shows a steady trend toward strengthening blockings and censorship in Belarus over the last five years, with sharp escalation after 2020.

6. Conclusion

The analysis of the state of the internet and digital rights in the Republic of Belarus for the period from 2019 to 2025 reveals a deep contradiction. On one hand, the country demonstrates a high level of internet penetration, developed fixed and mobile communication infrastructure, and legislative initiatives aimed at digital development⁷. On the other hand, this technological development occurs against the backdrop of systematic and intensifying suppression of digital rights and freedoms.

Human rights in the area of access to information and freedom of expression on the internet are grossly violated. The state has established comprehensive control over internet infrastructure through monopolization of key segments (international gateways, 4G network) by state companies⁷. An extensive legislative base has been created, allowing authorities to arbitrarily block internet resources, shut down network access, and prosecute citizens for online activity⁷.

Mass blockings of independent media, human rights and opposition sites (more than 10,000 resources as of the end of 2023)⁷, recognizing them as "extremist"³⁷, as well as the practice of

internet shutdowns during periods of political tension⁵⁷, seriously limit citizens' access to alternative sources of information. Criminal and administrative prosecution for comments, likes, reposts, and even subscriptions to "prohibited" resources⁷ have created an atmosphere of fear and self-censorship. The activity of independent civil society organizations in the field of digital rights within the country is practically impossible¹⁸⁰. The use of VPN and other means of bypassing blockings, although widespread, is associated with risks and technical difficulties due to authorities' attempts to block them⁵⁷.

Event development forecast:

- **Neutral scenario:** Maintenance of the current status quo. Authorities will continue to use existing legislative and technical mechanisms to control the internet, blocking undesirable resources and targeted persecution of activists and critics. The level of repression may remain high but without qualitative tightening. Implementation of new control technologies will occur gradually. VPN use will remain widespread but associated with risks and periodic technical problems.
- **Positive scenario (liberalization):** This scenario appears **unlikely** in the current political situation and without radical changes in the political system. It would involve the repeal of repressive laws on "extremism" and "discreditation", cessation of mass blocking practices and prosecutions for online statements, demonopolization of internet infrastructure, and creation of an independent regulator. Such a scenario is possible only in the case of deep political transformation.
- **Negative scenario (intensification of censorship):** Further tightening of control over the internet. This may include:
 - Adoption of new, even more repressive laws, for example, modeled on Russian legislation on "fakes" or "foreign agents".
 - Implementation of more advanced DPI systems for traffic filtering and blocking VPN protocols at the national level.
 - Intensification of responsibility for using means of bypassing blockings.
 - Expansion of the practice of disconnecting sites from the national domain zone.
 - Strengthening online surveillance and user data collection.
 - Further integration with Russian internet control systems.

Given current trends, strengthening dependence on Russia, and the overall political trajectory, **the negative scenario appears the most likely** in the medium-term perspective. The state will continue to view the internet as a threat and will build up tools for its control and suppression of dissent in the online space.

Sources

1. Key Facts about Belarus | Official Internet Portal of the President of ..., accessed May 8, 2025, <https://president.gov.by/en/belarus/numbers/facts>
2. president.gov.by, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://president.gov.by/en/belarus/numbers/facts#:~:text=Belarus%20is%20located%20in%20the%20East%20European%20Platform.,hills%20%E2%80%93%20for%20about%2030%25.>
3. Belarus - Wikipedia, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%91%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D1%8C>
4. Population as of January 1 by regions and Minsk¹, accessed May 8, 2025, https://www.belstat.gov.by/ofitsialnaya-statistika/ssrd-mvf_2/natsionalnaya-stranitsa-svodnyh-dannyh/naselenie_6/dinamika-chislennosti-naseleniya/
5. Population of Belarus - Wikipedia, accessed May 8, 2025, https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%9D%D0%B0%D1%81%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%B5_%D0%91%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%BE%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D0%B8

6. Belarus: An Overview | Congress.gov | Library of Congress, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/IF10814>
7. Belarus: Freedom on the Net 2024 Country Report, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://freedomhouse.org/country/belarus/freedom-net/2024>
8. Submission to the Universal Periodic Review of Belarus | Human Rights Watch, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/04/07/submission-universal-periodic-review-belarus>
9. Minsk, Mogilev, Bobruisk... Belstat told how many people lived in the country at the beginning of 2025 | bobruisk.ru, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://bobruisk.ru/news/2025/03/30/minsk-mogilev-bobrujsk-v-belstate-rasskazali-skolko-che-lovek-prozhivalo-v-strane-na-nachalo-2025-goda>
10. Belarus - IMF DataMapper, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/profile/BLR>
11. Belarus - WHO Data, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://data.who.int/countries/112>
12. GDP of Belarus - TAdviser, accessed May 8, 2025, https://www.tadviser.ru/index.php/%D0%A1%D1%82%D0%B0%D1%82%D1%8C%D1%8F:%D0%92%D0%92%D0%9F_%D0%91%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D1%81%D0%B8%D0%B8
13. Gross Domestic Product | Belarus GDP in 2014–2025 - Myfin.by, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://myfin.by/wiki/term/valovoj-vnutrennij-produkt>
14. Belarus GDP - Worldometer, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.worldometers.info/gdp/belarus-gdp/>
15. thedocs.worldbank.org, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/d5f32ef28464d01f195827b7e020a3e8-0500022021/related/mpo-blr.pdf>
16. Republic of Belarus and the IMF, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.imf.org/en/Countries/BLR>
17. 2019, accessed May 8, 2025, https://www.belstat.gov.by/ofitsialnaya-statistika/ssrd-mvf_2/natsionalnaya-stranitsa-svodnyh-dannyh/vvp-rasschitanniyi-metodom-ispolzovaniya-dohodov/2019-god/
18. Exchange Rate (market+estimated) for Belarus (XRNCUSBYA618NRUG) | FRED, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/XRNCUSBYA618NRUG>
19. Official exchange rate (LCU per US\$, period average) - Belarus | Data, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/PA.NUS.FCRF?locations=BY>

20. 2020, accessed May 8, 2025,
https://www.belstat.gov.by/ofitsialnaya-statistika/ssrd-mvf_2/natsionalnaya-stranitsa-svodnyh-dannyh/vvp-rasschitannyyi-metodom-ispolzovaniya-dohodov/2020/
21. Belarus Economy: GDP, Inflation, CPI & Interest Rates - FocusEconomics, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.focus-economics.com/countries/belarus/>
22. Belarus Exchange Rate (BYN per USD, eop) - FocusEconomics, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.focus-economics.com/country-indicator/belarus/exchange-rate/>
23. 2021, accessed May 8, 2025,
https://www.belstat.gov.by/ofitsialnaya-statistika/ssrd-mvf_2/natsionalnaya-stranitsa-svodnyh-dannyh/vvp-rasschitannyyi-metodom-ispolzovaniya-dohodov/2021-god/
24. 2022, accessed May 8, 2025,
https://www.belstat.gov.by/ofitsialnaya-statistika/ssrd-mvf_2/natsionalnaya-stranitsa-svodnyh-dannyh/vvp-rasschitannyyi-metodom-ispolzovaniya-dohodov/2022-god/
25. Official exchange rate (LCU per US\$, period average) - World Bank Data, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/PA.NUS.FCRF>
26. 2023, accessed May 8, 2025,
https://www.belstat.gov.by/ofitsialnaya-statistika/ssrd-mvf_2/natsionalnaya-stranitsa-svodnyh-dannyh/vvp-rasschitannyyi-metodom-ispolzovaniya-dohodov/2023-god/
27. The economic context of Belarus - International Trade Portal, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://www.lloydsbanktrade.com/en/market-potential/belarus/economical-context>
28. Economy of Belarus - Wikipedia, accessed May 8, 2025,
https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%AD%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%BC%D0%B8%D0%BA%D0%B0_%D0%91%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%BE%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D1%81%D0%B8%D0%B8
29. Economy of Belarus - Wikipedia, accessed May 8, 2025,
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy_of_Belarus
30. Problems of the Belarusian economy and ways to solve them, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://economics.basnet.by/files/Problem.pdf>
31. TOP-5 threats to the Belarusian economy - Economic Gazette, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://neg.by/novosti/otkrytj/top-5-ugroz-dlja-belorusskoj-jekonomiki/>
32. Belarus | Digital Watch Observatory, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://dig.watch/countries/belarus>
33. Development of digital law in Belarus discussed at the meeting of the Council on Legal and Judicial Activities under the President, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://pravo.by/novosti/novosti-pravo-by/2024/maj/77696/>

34. www.google.com, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://www.google.com/search?q=%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B8%D1%87%D0%B5%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B0%D1%8F+%D1%81%D0%B8%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%BC%D0%B0+%D0%91%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D0%B8>
35. Politics of Belarus - Wikipedia, accessed May 8, 2025,
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics_of_Belarus
36. Belarus: Freedom in the World 2024 Country Report, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://freedomhouse.org/country/belarus/freedom-world/2024>
37. UN: Hold Belarus authorities accountable for rights violations - ARTICLE 19, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://www.article19.org/resources/un-hold-belarus-authorities-accountable-for-rights-violations/>
38. Ministry of Justice – on re-registration of existing political parties, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://pravo.by/novosti/obshchestvenno-politicheskie-i-v-oblasti-prava/2023/february/73351/>
39. Situation with freedom of associations and civil society organizations of the Republic of Belarus: review for September 2023 | Lawtrend — Research Education Actions, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://www.lawtrend.org/freedom-of-association/situatsiya-so-svobodoj-assotsiatsij-i-organizatsiyami-grazhdanskogo-obshchestva-respubliki-belarus-obzor-za-sentyabr-2023-g>
40. Political parties of Belarus | Official Internet Portal of the President of the Republic of Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://president.gov.by/ru/belarus/society/politicheskie-partii>
41. List of political parties - Central Election Commission of the Republic of Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://rec.gov.by/ru/partii-vms-28s-ru/>
42. accessed January 1, 1970, https://minjust.gov.by/directions/activity_other/politpart/
43. Public associations/funds, arbitration courts - Main Department of Justice of the Minsk Regional Executive Committee, accessed May 8, 2025,
<http://minobljust.gov.by/obshchestvennye-ob-edineniya-i-fondy>
44. Administrative division of Belarus regions - Wikipedia, accessed May 8, 2025,
https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%90%D0%B4%D0%BC%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%81%D1%82%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%B2%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B5_%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%B5_%D0%BE%D0%B1%D0%BB%D0%B0%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%B9_%D0%91%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D0%B8

45. Administrative division of Belarus — Wikipedia, accessed May 8, 2025, https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%90%D0%B4%D0%BC%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%B2%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B5_%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%B5_%D0%91%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D0%B8
46. Regions of Belarus: districts, cities | Official Internet Portal of the President of the Republic of Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://president.gov.by/en/belarus/regions>
47. Belarus Administrative Divisions - World Statesmen.org, accessed May 8, 2025, https://www.worldstatesmen.org/Belarus_admin.html
48. Domain BY • How to buy and register domain name BY (Bai) - Hosting in Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://tophost.by/domen-by>
49. History of the .БЕЛ domain | Registration of .BY and .БЕЛ domains, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://cctld.by/history/bel/>
50. Celebrating the jubilee: the .БЕЛ domain is 10 years old!, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://cctld.by/news/2025/chestvuem-yubilyara-domenu-bel-10-let/>
51. .by - Wikipedia, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/.by>
52. .by — Wikipedia, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/.by>
53. Rent hosting. Buy website hosting in Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://hoster.by/>
54. Whose domain whois check domain, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://whois.hoster.by/>
55. Domain names - Operational-Analytical Center under the President of the Republic of Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.oac.gov.by/secure-internet/domain-names>
56. INSTRUCTION ON REGISTRATION OF DOMAIN NAMES IN ..., accessed May 8, 2025, <https://cctld.by/documents/>
57. Belarus: Weekend of unfree elections marked by internet and VPN blocking - CSO Meter, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://csometer.info/updates/belarus-weekend-unfree-elections-marked-internet-and-vpn-blocking>
58. Internet in Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025, https://www.mfa.gov.by/upload/internet_eng.pdf
59. COMMENTARY ON THE DECREE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS - Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe | OSCE, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/9/b/67911.pdf>
60. Digital 2025: Belarus — DataReportal – Global Digital Insights, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-belarus>

61. datareportal.com, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-belarus#:~:text=Internet%20use%20in%20Belarus%20in,the%20start%20of%20the%20year.>
62. Internet users for Belarus (ITNETUSERP2BLR) | FRED | St. Louis Fed, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/ITNETUSERP2BLR>
63. Belarus: Freedom on the Net 2022 Country Report, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://freedomhouse.org/country/belarus/freedom-net/2022>
64. Individuals using the Internet, by location of use - ITU DataHub, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://datahub.itu.int/data/?i=100003&e=BLR&v=chart>
65. Belarus: Freedom on the Net 2023 Country Report, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://freedomhouse.org/country/belarus/freedom-net/2023>
66. Indicators of internet usage in Belarus continue to grow, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://neg.by/novosti/otkryti/pokazateli-ispolzovaniya-interneta-v-belarusi-prodolzhayut-rasti/>
67. Telecommunications in Belarus - Wikipedia, accessed May 8, 2025, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telecommunications_in_Belarus
68. Beltelecom's Upgrade Path to Fiber Broadband - ZTE, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.zte.com.cn/global/about/magazine/zte-technologies/2018/6-en/success-story/2.html>
69. Beltelecom: For home, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.beltelecom.by/>
70. Olga Vitkovskaya: "We now have 70% of the broadband market in Belarus", accessed May 8, 2025, https://tech.onliner.by/2008/09/26/vitkovskaja_interview
71. Republican Unitary Enterprise of Telecommunications - Ministry of Communications and Informatization of the Republic of Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025, https://www.mpt.gov.by/sites/default/files/beltelecom_um_gorod_sm_.pdf
72. All internet providers in MINSK - find provider by address, accessed May 8, 2025, <http://minsk.provy.by/>
73. All internet providers in Minsk, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.interminsk.com/providers/>
74. Cellular communications (Belarus market) - TAdviser, accessed May 8, 2025, [https://www.tadviser.ru/index.php/%D0%A1%D1%82%D0%B0%D1%82%D1%8C%D1%8F:%D0%A1%D0%BE%D1%82%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B0%D1%8F_%D1%81%D0%B2%D1%8F%D0%B7%D1%8C_\(%D1%80%D1%8B%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%BA_%D0%91%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%BE%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D1%81%D0%B8%D0%B8\)](https://www.tadviser.ru/index.php/%D0%A1%D1%82%D0%B0%D1%82%D1%8C%D1%8F:%D0%A1%D0%BE%D1%82%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B0%D1%8F_%D1%81%D0%B2%D1%8F%D0%B7%D1%8C_(%D1%80%D1%8B%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%BA_%D0%91%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%BE%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D1%81%D0%B8%D0%B8))
75. Cellular mobile telecommunications 99.3% 98.4% 76.7% 99.9% 97.4% - National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025,

https://www.belstat.gov.by/upload-belstat/upload-belstat-pdf/oficial_statistika/2022/infografics_telecommunication-2022.pdf

76. Mobile telephone networks in Belarus - Wikipedia, accessed May 8, 2025, [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%A1%D0%B5%D1%82%D0%B8_%D0%BC%D0%BE%D0%B1%D0%B8%D0%BB%D1%8C%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B9_%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B5%D1%84%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B9_%D1%81%D0%B2%D1%8F%D0%B7%D0%B8_%D0%B2_%D0%91%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D0%B8%D1%8C%D0%A2%D0%A1_\(%D0%91%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D1%8C\)](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%A1%D0%B5%D1%82%D0%B8_%D0%BC%D0%BE%D0%B1%D0%B8%D0%BB%D1%8C%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B9_%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B5%D1%84%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B9_%D1%81%D0%B2%D1%8F%D0%B7%D0%B8_%D0%B2_%D0%91%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D0%B8%D1%8C%D0%A2%D0%A1_(%D0%91%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D1%8C))
77. MTS (Belarus) - Wikipedia, accessed May 8, 2025, [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%9C%D0%A2%D0%A1_\(%D0%91%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D1%8C\)](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%9C%D0%A2%D0%A1_(%D0%91%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D1%8C))
78. About the company - MTS, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.mts.by/company/comp/>
79. A1 (provider) - Wikipedia, accessed May 8, 2025, [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%901_\(%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%B9%D0%B4%D0%B5%D1%80\)](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%901_(%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%B9%D0%B4%D0%B5%D1%80))
80. About the company - A1.by, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.a1.by/ru/company/>
81. About us — life:), accessed May 8, 2025, <https://life.com.by/company/about>
82. life:) — Wikipedia, accessed May 8, 2025, [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Life:\)](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Life:))
83. Belarus of the future without corruption and monopoly. What the internet could be like, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://tech.onliner.by/2020/12/23/belarus-budushhego-bez-korruptcii-i-monopolii>
84. Belarus's Mobile and Broadband Internet Speeds - Speedtest Global ..., accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.speedtest.net/global-index/belarus>
85. Digital and SMM trends in the Republic of Belarus. The next Digital Data Report 2024 has been released - Rating Baynet, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://ratingbynet.by/digital-i-smm-trendy-v-respublike-belarus-vyshel-ocherednoy-otchet-digital-data-report-2024/>
86. Digital Quality of Life Index - Surfshark, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://surfshark.com/research/dql>
87. Belarus: Freedom on the Net 2021 Country Report, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://freedomhouse.org/country/belarus/freedom-net/2021>
88. List of countries by Internet connection speeds - Wikipedia, accessed May 8, 2025, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_Internet_connection_speeds
89. Belarus in Akamai Technologies quarterly report on internet speed, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://giprosvjaz.by/en/pv/news/srednyaya-skorost-dostupa-1192>
90. RIPEstat - RIPE NCC, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.ripe.net/publications/ipv6-info-centre/statistics-and-tools/ripestat/>

91. Belarus - IPv4 statistics by number - RIPE NCC, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://www-public.telecom-sudparis.eu/~maigron/rir-stats/ripe-allocations/ipv4/by-number/by-ipv4-by-number.html>
92. Belarus - IPv6 statistics by number - RIPE NCC, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://www-public.telecom-sudparis.eu/~maigron/rir-stats/ripe-allocations/ipv6/by-number/by-ipv6-by-number.html>
93. accessed January 1, 1970,
https://stat.ripe.net/ui/routing-stats/COUNTRY_ASNS-BY#tabId=routing
94. Belarus becomes first country to make IPv6 mandatory for ISPs - EU4Digital, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://eufordigital.eu/belarus-becomes-first-country-to-make-ipv6-mandatory-for-isps/>
95. Belarus becomes first country to make IPv6 mandatory for ISPs - ZDNET, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://www.zdnet.com/home-and-office/networking/belarus-becomes-first-country-to-make-ipv6-mandatory-for-isps/>
96. IPv6 Users by Country - APNIC Labs, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://labs.apnic.net/dists/v6dcc.html>
97. The State of IPv6 Adoption in 2025: Progress, Pitfalls, and Pathways Forward, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://dnsmadeeasy.com/resources/the-state-of-ipv6-adoption-in-2025-progress-pitfalls-and-pathways-forward>
98. accessed January 1, 1970, <https://www.google.com/intl/en/ipv6/statistics.html>
99. Belarus - IP allocations - RIPE NCC, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://www-public.telecom-sudparis.eu/~maigron/rir-stats/ripe-allocations/allocations/by-ip-allocations.html>
100. Use of IPv6 for Belarus (BY) - IPv6 Capability Metrics, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://stats.labs.apnic.net/ipv6/BY>
101. "On Telecommunications" – thematic collections of normative legal acts on Pravo.by, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=3871&pO=H10500045>
102. Protection of personal data on the internet - beSeller, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://beseller.by/blog/zashchita-personalnykh-dannykh-belarus/>
103. Belarus IGF-2024 concludes successfully! - Coordination Center for Domains, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://cctld.ru/en/media/news/industry/37221/>
104. Belarus: Freedom in the World 2025 Country Report, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://freedomhouse.org/country/belarus/freedom-world/2025>

105. On improving the procedure for transmitting telecommunications messages, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.oac.gov.by/public/content/files/files/law/decrees-rb/2016-98.pdf>
106. accessed January 1, 1970, <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=3871&p0=H10500128>
107. Law of the Republic of Belarus No. 427-Z (Law of the Republic of Belarus of July 17, 2008 No. 427-Z "On Mass Media.") - Etalon, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://etalonline.by/?type=text®num=h10800427>
108. accessed January 1, 1970, <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=2012&p0=H10800427>
109. Law of the Republic of Belarus No. 455-Z (Law of the Republic of Belarus of November 10, 2008 No. 455-Z "On Information, Informatization and Information Protection.") - Etalon, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://etalonline.by/document/?regnum=h10800455>
110. "On Countering Extremism" – thematic collections of normative legal acts on Pravo.by, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=3871&p0=H10700203>
111. accessed January 1, 1970, <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=2012&p0=H10700203>
112. accessed January 1, 1970, <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=2012&p0=P31000060>
113. Decree No. 40 of February 14, 2023 On Cybersecurity, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://president.gov.by/ru/documents/ukaz-no-40-ot-14-fevralya-2023-g>
114. www.oac.gov.by, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.oac.gov.by/public/content/files/files/law/decrees-rb/2023-40.pdf>
115. accessed January 1, 1970, <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=2012&p0=P32300040>
116. On the procedure for restricting (resuming) access to an internet resource post - Operational-Analytical Center under the President of the Republic of Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.oac.gov.by/public/content/files/files/law/resolutions-oac/2022-6-24-25.pdf>
117. www.oac.gov.by, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.oac.gov.by/public/content/files/files/law/resolutions-oac/2018-8-10-6.pdf>
118. Belarus: New decree severely limits right to anonymity online - ARTICLE 19, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.article19.org/resources/belarus-new-decree-severely-limits-right-to-anonymity-online/>
119. Leadership - Ministry of Communications and Informatization of the Republic of Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.mpt.gov.by/ru/management>
120. Contact information - BelGIE, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://belgie.by/ru/contacts/mpt/>
121. Independent regulator - Operational-Analytical Center under the President of the Republic of Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.oac.gov.by/ict-development-and-services/activity/independent-regulator>
122. Operations and Analysis Center under the President of the Republic of Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://president.gov.by/en/statebodies/the-operational-and-analysis-center-under-the-president>

123. Who, for what, and how will block sites in Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://virtualbrest.ru/pda/news.php?pdaid=30946>

124. World Report 2025: Belarus | Human Rights Watch, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2025/country-chapters/belarus>

125. Andrey Pavlyuchenko | Chief of the Operational-Analytical Center under the President of the Republic of Belarus - Roscongress Foundation, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://roscongress.org/speakers/pavlyuchenko-andrey/>

126. Pavlyuchenko - Wikipedia, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%9F%D0%B0%D0%B2%D0%BB%D1%8E%D1%87%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%BA%D0%BE>

127. Andrey Pavlyuchenko | Chief of the operational-analytical center under the President - Roscongress Foundation, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://roscongress.org/speakers/pavlyuchenko-andrey/>

128. Operational-Analytical Center under the President of the Republic of Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.oac.gov.by/>

129. Operational-Analytical Center under the President of the Republic of Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://president.gov.by/ru/statebodies/operativno-analiticheskiy-centr-pri-prezidente-respubliki-belarus>

130. Website – is it media or not media? - I am a legal consultant of the organization, accessed May 8, 2025,

https://www.jurk.by/izdaniya/ya-spok/internet-sait-eto-smi-ili-ne-smi-ovseiko_0000000

131. Liability for registration on internet resources recognized as extremist, distribution of extremist materials in the global, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://smorgon.gov.by/uploads/files/ideologiya/Otvetstvennost-za-registratsiju-na-internet-resursax-prizvannyx-ekstremistskimi-rasprostranenie-ekstremistskix-materialov-v-globalnoj-seti-internet.docx>

1. Figuring out "extremist" lists: which sites and on what grounds are blocked in Belarus - Human Constanta, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://humanconstant.org/razbiraem-sya-s-ekstremistskimi-spiskami-kakie-sajty-i-po-kakim-osnovaniyam-blokiruyut-v-belarusi/>

132. Censorship in Belarus is the main tool for maintaining power and fighting against "extremism", accessed May 8, 2025, <https://spring96.org/en/news/117596>

133. Reference information - BelGIE, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://belgie.by/ru/other/info/>

134. Human Constanta: Figuring out "extremist" lists: which sites and on what grounds are blocked in Belarus - Belarusian House of Human Rights named after Boris Zvozskov, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://belhumanrights.house/news/human-constant-a-razbiraem-sya-s-ekstremistskimi-spiska-mi-kakie-sajty-i-po-kakim-osnovaniyam-blokiruyut-v-belarusi>
135. Law of the Republic of Belarus of December 12, 2013 No. 94-Z "On Countering Monop - AWS, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://wipolex-resources-eu-central-1-358922420655.s3.amazonaws.com/edocs/lexdocs/laws/ru/by/by092ru.pdf>
136. LAW OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS December 10, 1992 No. 2034-XII On countering m - UAIPIT, accessed May 8, 2025, https://www.uaipit.com/uploads/legislation/files/1363855791_9._Law_of_the_Republic_of_Belaru_s_No._2034-XII_of_December_10,_1992_on_Counteraction_to_Monopolistic_Activities_and_Promotion_of_Competition_RU.pdf
137. REVIEW OF ANTITRUST LEGISLATION OF BELARUS, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.mart.gov.by/files/live/sites/mart/files/documents/%D0%B0%D0%BD%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%BC%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%BB%D1%8C%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B5%20%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%B3%D1%83%D0%BB%D0%B8%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%B5/Legal%20Assessment%20Russian%20Version.pdf>
138. "Belinfocom": we do not lose hope for liberalization of the telecommunications market, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://tvnews.by/analitics/11761-belinfokom-my-ne-teryuem-nadezhdy-na-liberalizaciyu-rynka--telekommunikacii.html>
139. Information about the document "Criminal Code of the Republic of Belarus" – Pravo.by, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=3961&p0=hk9900275>
140. CRIMINAL CODE OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS, accessed May 8, 2025, https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/IssueLibrary/BELARUS_Criminal%20Code.pdf
141. Criminal Code of the Republic of Belarus No. 275-Z of 09.07.1999 (as amended by the Law ... - WIPO, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/ru/legislation/details/10048>
142. accessed January 1, 1970, <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=199912&p0=Hk9900275>
143. ON MEASURES TO COUNTER EXTREMISM AND TERRORISM, REHABILITATION OF NAZISM. LIABILITY FOR REGISTRATION ON INTERNET RESOURCES RECOGNIZED AS EXTREMIST, DISTRIBUTION OF EXTREMIST MATERIALS IN THE GLOBAL NETWORK INTERNET_july | 2024 - Lida District Executive Committee, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://lida.gov.by/ru/edi24-ru/view/o-merax-protivodejstvija-ekstremizmu-i-terrorizmu-reabilitatsii-natsizma-otvetstvennost-za-registratsiju-na-25017/>

144. Human rights in Belarus - Amnesty International, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/europe-and-central-asia/eastern-europe-and-central-asia/belarus/report-belarus/>

145. Chronicle of repressions against Belarusian journalism - Press Club Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://press-club.pro/underpressure/hronika>

146. ATTACKS ON MEDIA WORKERS IN BELARUS IN 2023-2024 - Justice for Journalists, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://jfj.fund/attacks-on-media-workers-in-belarus-in-2023-2024/>

147. Belarus: Authorities designate Telegram channel NEXTA as “extremist” in further crackdown on independent media - ARTICLE 19, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://www.article19.org/resources/belarus-nexta-crackdown/>

148. CRIMINAL LIABILITY FOR COMMITTING CRIMES UNDER PART 1, PART 3 ART.369 CC RB, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://bkatk.by/pravovoy-ugolok-uchashhegosya/stati-17-10-17-11-koap-rb-stati-130-342-361-uk-rb/>

149. Criminal liability for committing crimes under part 1, part 2 art. 369 CC RB, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://mspu.by/index.php/home/11302-ugolovnaya-otvetstvennost-za-sovershenie-prestuplenij-po-ch-1-ch-2-st-369-uk-rb>

150. What punishments are provided for posting fakes on the internet? Told in the Vitebsk region prosecutor's office, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://www.vitebsk.vitebsk-region.gov.by/en/node/181606>

151. Liability provided by legislation for insult to the President of the Republic of Belarus and a representative of authority - Baranovich State College of Light Industry, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://bgkbp.by/otvetstvennost-predusmotrennaya-zakonodatelstvom-za-oskorblenie-prezidenta-respubliki-belarus-i-predstavatelya-vlasti/>

152. Liability for insult and slander in relation to the President of the Republic of Belarus - Administration of Leninsky District of Mogilev, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://lenadm-mogilev.gov.by/pravo/pravonews/35039-otvetstvennost-za-oskorblenie-i-klevetu-v-otnoshenii-prezidenta-respubliki-belarus>

153. Liability for insult to the President of the Republic of Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://www.lenadm-mogilev.gov.by/pravo/pravonews/33682-otvetstvennost-za-oskorblenie-prezidenta-respubliki-belarus>

154. Liability for unlawful actions against employees of internal affairs bodies of the Republic of Belarus | News - Administration of Oktyabrsky District of Grodno, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://aor.gov.by/printv/ru/news-ru/view/otvetstvennost-za-protivopravnye-dejstviya-v-otnoshe-nii-sotrudnikov-organov-vnutrennix-del-respubliki-40032-2023/>
155. What threatens for insulting a representative of authority, told in the Ministry of Internal Affairs - Tochka.by, accessed May 8, 2025, https://tochka.by/articles/life/hto_grozit_za_oskorblenie_predstavitelya_vlasti_rasskazali_v_mvd/
156. Art. 130 CC RB, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://bkatk.by/pravovoy-ugolok-uchashhegosya/stati-17-10-17-11-koap-rb-stati-130-342-361-uk-rb/>
157. Information on changes in CC, CAO, labor legislation, informatization sphere in 2021, accessed May 8, 2025, https://www.bsuir.by/m/12_100229_1_161612.pdf
158. Article 361. Calls for restrictive measures (sanctions), other actions aimed at causing harm to national security of the Republic of Belarus - Kindergarten No. 28 of Orsha, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://ds28.goroo-orsha.by/%D0%B1%D0%B5%D0%B7%D0%BE%D0%BF%D0%B0%D1%81%D0%BD%D0%BE%D1%81%D1%82%D1%8C/%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BA%D1%81-%D1%80%D0%B1-%D0%BE%D0%B1-%D0%B0%D0%B4%D0%BC%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%81%D1%82%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%B2%D0%BD%D1%8B%D1%85-%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B2%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%83%D1%88%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%8F%D1%85/%D1%83%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BD%D1%8B%D0%B9-%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BA%D1%81-%D1%80%D0%B1%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B0%D1%82%D1%8C%D1%8F-361-%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B8%D0%B7%D1%8B%D0%B2%D1%8B-%D0%BA-%D0%BC%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%BC-%D0%BE%D0%B3%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%87%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%BB%D1%8C%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B3%D0%BE-%D0%B5%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%BA%D1%82%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%B0-%D1%81%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%BA%D1%86%D0%B8%D1%8F%D0%BC-%D0%B8%D0%BD%D1%8B%D0%BC-%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%B9%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B2%D0%B8%D1%8F%D0%BC-%D0%BD%D0%B0%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B2%D0%BB%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%BD%D1%8B%D0%BC-%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B8%D1%87%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%B5-%D0%B2%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%B4%D0%B0-%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%86%D0%B8%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%B0%D0%BB%D1%8C%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B9>
159. Criminal liability for violation of legislation when participating in socio-political life of society - Belarusian Republican Bar Association, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://brka.by/articles/ugolovnaya-otvetstvennost-za-narushenie-zakonodatelstva-pri-uchasti-i-v-obshchestvenno-politicheskoy-/>

160. Law of the Republic of Belarus No. 427-Z "On Mass Media" | Refworld, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.refworld.org/ru/legal/legislation/natlegbod/2008/ru/102222>

161. Protests in Belarus: from internet shutdown to pervasive site censorship, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://roskomsvoboda.org/post/protestyi-v-belarusi-ot-otklyucheniya-int/>

162. Internet Censorship in Belarus - OONI Explorer, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://explorer.ooni.org/country/BY>

163. HOW DO PROVIDERS IMPLEMENT INTERNET BLOCKING IN BELARUS? - Security Affairs, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://securityaffairs.com/108655/hacking/belarus-internet-blocking.html>

164. Resolutions of the Operational-Analytical Center under the President of the Republic of Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.oac.gov.by/resolutions-of-the-oac>

165. How to check site registration in BELGIE? - HostFly, accessed May 8, 2025, https://www.hostfly.by/about/faq/kak_proverit_registratsiyu_sayta_v_belgie/

166. Modeling and Detecting Internet Censorship Events, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.ndss-symposium.org/wp-content/uploads/2024-409-paper.pdf>

167. Belarus protests: From internet outages to pervasive website censorship | OONI, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://ooni.org/post/2020-belarus-internet-outages-website-censorship/>

168. Belarus began shutting down VPN, what to do? Guide to the most popular questions after blocking services - ZERKALO.IO: News, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://news.zerkalo.io/life/69198.html>

169. World Report 2024: Belarus | Human Rights Watch, accessed May 8, 2025,

<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/belarus>

170. Political prisoners in Belarus, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://prisoners.spring96.org/ru>

171. List of political prisoners and convicted in criminal cases, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://prisoners.spring96.org/ru/list>

172. Belarus Parades Jailed RFE/RL Journalist Ihar Losik On State TV - Radio Free Europe, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.rferl.org/a/ihar-losik-rferl-belarus-/33277082.html>

173. Political prisoner Ihar Losik attempted suicide in colony, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://spring96.org/en/news/111124>

174. The turncoat. How Belarusian opposition journalist Raman Pratasevich began whitewashing the regime's crimes — Novaya Gazeta Europe, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://novayagazeta.eu/articles/2025/01/15/the-turncoat-en>

175. Journalist grabbed in Belarus flight diversion goes on trial - AP News, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://apnews.com/article/politics-belarus-government-greece-united-states-alexander-lukas-henko-ce57239a514b74071918d274d3bd1d30>
176. TUT.BY case - Wikipedia, accessed May 8, 2025,
https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%94%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%BE_TUT.BY
177. "The authorities do whatever they want with journalists". What destroys TUT.BY – the largest media in Belarus - Current Time, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://www.currenttime.tv/a/belarus-tutby-detention/31261863.html>
178. Joint Statement on the Political Prisoners in Belarus - U.S. Mission to the OSCE, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://osce.usmission.gov/joint-statement-on-the-political-prisoners-in-belarus/>
179. NGO liquidation in Belarus 2021-2023 - Lawtrend, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://www.lawtrend.org/freedom-of-association/ezhegodnyj-monitoring/likvitatsiya-nko-v-belarusi-2021-2023>
180. non-profit organizations in Belarus - Lawtrend, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://www.lawtrend.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Likvidatsiya-s-tablitsami-red.pdf>
181. Digital Rights Developments in Belarus: Digital Authoritarianism and Digital Resistance | Contents - Human Constanta, accessed May 8, 2025,
https://humanconstantia.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Digital_Rights_Developments_in_Belarus_Digital_Authoritarianism-1.pdf
182. Human Rights Center Viasna, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://www.fidh.org/organisation/human-rights-center-viasna?lang=en>
183. Human Rights Center Viasna - European Platform for Democratic Elections, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://epde.org/organizations/human-rights-center-viasna/>
184. Which apps to download in case Belarus shuts down the internet? Experts shared recommendations - BGmedia, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://bgmedia.site/society/kakie-prilozheniya-skachat-esli-v-belarusi-otklyuchat-internet/>
185. Belarus: Country Profile | Freedom House, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://freedomhouse.org/country/belarus>
186. Human rights in Belarus - Amnesty International, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/europe-and-central-asia/eastern-europe-and-central-asia/belarus/>
187. COMMUNITIES - Access Now, accessed May 8, 2025,
<https://www.accessnow.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/KeptOn-2024-Internet-Shutdowns-Annual-Report.pdf>

188. IAB Workshop on Barriers to Internet Access of Services (BIAS) (biasws) - IETF Datatracker, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://datatracker.ietf.org/group/biasws/materials/>
189. accessed January 1, 1970, <https://ooni.org/post/2020-belarus-report/>
190. How do they block VPN services? - BlancVPN, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://blancvpn.com/ru/blog/v-rossii-zablokirovali-ocherednoi-vpn-a-kak-voobshhe-blokiruyut-vpny>
191. Belarus banned anonymizers, proxies, and TOR — PRAVO.UA, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://pravo.ua/articles/v-belarusi-zapretili-anonimizery-proksi-i-tor/>
192. Are VPNs legal? Overview by countries for 2025 - NordVPN, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://nordvpn.com/ru/blog/zakonny-li-vpn/>
193. On March 30, the Council of Ministers resolution No. 645 "On Providing Telecommunications Services" came into force, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://mpt.gov.by/en/node/8078/printable/print>
194. Global report on VPN on mobile devices in 2019 - Habr, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://habr.com/ru/articles/478582/>
195. 25 VPN Statistics 2025: Usage, Market & Trends - Demand Sage, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://www.demandsage.com/vpn-statistics/>
196. 30+ VPN Statistics, Trends & Facts (2024-2027) - Exploding Topics, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://explodingtopics.com/blog/vpn-stats>
197. Administrative offenses in the field of telecommunications, as well as other offenses within the competence of "BelGIE" in accordance with the CODE OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS ON ADMINISTRATIVE OFFENSES of January 6, 2021 No. 91-Z, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://belgie.by/ru/other/npa/offenses/>
198. What threatens for using VPN and proxies: laws and liability | Blog LTESocks, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://ltesocks.io/ru/blog-ru/mobilnye-proksi-opredelenie-preimushhestva-vozmozhnosti-primenenie/zakonno-li-ispolzovat-proksi-i-vpn-obzor-po-stranam/>
199. Is it legal to use proxy servers and VPN? - Proxy Solutions, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://proxy-solutions.net/blog/zakonno-li-ispolzovanie-proksi-serverov-i-vpn>
200. Results of the fight against "extremism" in Belarus for 2024 - Human Constanta, accessed May 8, 2025, <https://humanconstantia.org/itogi-borby-s-ekstremizmom-v-belarusi-za-2024-god/>