



2.3. Access to identity documentation

The 2023 amendment to the Belarusian citizenship law permits the revocation of citizenship of Belarusians living abroad if they have been charged with extremism.^{[280](#)} Moreover, passport renewal procedures are not available at Belarusian embassies or consulates abroad, requiring individuals to return to Belarus to renew their identity documents.^{[281](#)}

For those who left Belarus for political reasons, the expiration of their passports effectively results in the denial of renewal of identity documents, restrictions on international travel, and significant obstacles in legalising their status in their countries of residence,^{[282](#)} which in the long-term may lead to ‘the loss of evidence of citizenship’ and ‘potentially to statelessness.’^{[283](#)} According to a human rights specialist, individuals who stayed abroad for a long time reportedly fear returning to Belarus to renew their passports,^{[284](#)} as doing so may expose them to border checks, device searches, and possible prosecution.^{[285](#)}

The authorities have invalidated the passports of individuals who were detained on political grounds and ‘forcibly expelled’ from Belarus after being pardoned and released from prison in 2025 and 2026. As a result, ‘these individuals face significant legal and practical consequences’, as they cannot return to Belarus and are separated from their families and face barriers ‘to accessing legal status, employment, healthcare, and essential services’ in the countries of their stay, as well as increased risks of statelessness and long-term legal uncertainty.^{[286](#)}

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Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2026 Country Report – Belarus, 2026, [url](#), p. 7

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AP, Prisoners freed by Belarus say their passports are taken away in a final ‘dirty trick’ by officials, 20 December 2025, [url](#); Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2026 Country Report – Belarus, 2026, [url](#), pp. 7-8; Human rights specialist, Online interview with EUAA, 20 March 2026

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Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2026 Country Report – Belarus, 2026, [url](#), pp. 7-8

- ^{[283](#)}

UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in Belarus, Report of the Group of Independent Experts on the Situation of Human Rights in Belarus, 6 February 2026, [url](#), para. 86

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Human Constanta, Online interview with EUAA, 25 February 2026

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Human rights specialist, Online interview with EUAA, 20 March 2026

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UN OHCHR, Belarus: UN experts condemn Government move to invalidate passports of exiled opponents, 20 April 2026, [url](#)