



3.1.2. Border control upon return

Security agencies conduct systematic and routine checks of mobile phones at border crossings [314](#) and check and detain individuals returning from abroad. [315](#) Upon crossing the border from Lithuania or Poland, individuals are reportedly subjected to brief interrogations. [316](#) The checks on border crossings target links to organisations designated as extremists – including through donations to funds classified as extremist [317](#) – as well as signs of support for anti-government activities, [318](#) including following independent media outlets, [319](#) participation in demonstrations abroad, and expressing support of Ukraine. [320](#)

Border guards routinely check individuals who have been abroad for more than six months, as well as those holding foreign residence permits or having travelled to Ukraine [321](#) and Ukrainian nationals entering Belarus. [322](#) The checks can take place at any border point, including airports. However, in practice, most returns occur through land borders due to the lack of direct air connections with most of the European countries. [323](#) In January 2026, Viasna reported on the increase in checks at the border. [324](#)

At border crossings, authorities reportedly employ specialised software to extract and analyse data from travellers' devices as well as 'interconnected Telegram bots' to extract detailed personal information. Furthermore, individuals documented in the *Besporiadki* database, which logs individuals convicted in criminal or administrative proceedings related to protest activity, are subjected to mandatory, intensified screenings, such as 'deep-level searchers' and 'exhaustive interrogations' every time they cross the border. [325](#)

According to a human rights specialist, individuals linked to anti-government activities of opposition face a 'real risk of arrest and imprisonment'. The source described the assessment by the authorities as largely arbitrary. [326](#) Where content considered as extremist is identified, individuals may be detained immediately after interrogation [327](#) and placed in temporary detention facilities in border towns and subjected to fines or administrative arrest, with criminal proceedings initiated in some cases. [328](#) Individuals might be also obliged to appear at a police station at a place of their registration in the country, where they may be detained and placed on the list of persons who are prohibited from leaving Belarus. This list is not public, but a person can check this information about themselves [329](#) in the database of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. [330](#)

As reported by Viasna, at least 55 individuals were detained upon return to Belarus in the period between January and September 2024: while some of them faced administrative penalties, 17 of those detained were charged with criminal offenses. [331](#) In one case described by the Human Rights Watch in May 2025, a businessman with past links to an opposition candidate in the 2020

elections, who left Belarus due to threats from the authorities, was repeatedly questioned, had his phone scanned, and was threatened with arrest by border guards and KGB officers during his short visits to the country.^{[332](#)} In December 2025, independent outlet BG. Media reported on large-scale checks, mobile phone inspections, and interrogations at the Polish-Belarusian border which affected students, individuals holding foreign residence permits, and people who had not visited Belarus for an extended period of time.^{[333](#)}

Some travellers choose to travel to Russia first and to cross Belarus from Russia, since border checks on Russia-Belarus border were previously less strict. However, by early 2026, this route has become less safe, as Belarusian border guards started conducting checks on this border as well, subjecting persons to interrogations, including about their voting history, participation in past protests, and attitude toward the war in Ukraine.^{[334](#)} Consequently, arrests have also been reported at the Belarusian-Russian border.^{[335](#)}

- [314](#)

HRW, Belarus – Events of 2024, 16 January 2025, [url](#); Human rights specialist, Online interview with EUAA, 20 March 2026

- [315](#)

HRW, Belarus – Events of 2025, 4 February 2026, [url](#); Viasna, Human rights situation in Belarus. February 2026, 3 March 2026, [url](#)

- [316](#)

Human Constanta, Email correspondence with EUAA, 13 March 2026

- [317](#)

HRW, Belarus – Events of 2024, 16 January 2025, [url](#)

- [318](#)

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

- [319](#)

HRW, Belarus – Events of 2024, 16 January 2025, [url](#)

- [320](#)

Viasna Human Rights Center, Online interview with EUAA, 12 March 2026

- [321](#)

Human Constanta, Email correspondence with EUAA, 13 March 2026

- [322](#)

Current Time, "Благодарю Бога, что меня не арестовали за лайки". Украинцы рассказывают о жесткой "фильтрации" при въезде в Беларусь ["I thank God I wasn't arrested for likes." Ukrainians report strict "filtration" upon entering Belarus], 30 March 2025, [url](#); BG. Media, «3 человека давно не были в РБ — допросы». Как проходят «беседы» на границе Беларуси с Евросоюзом в декабре ["Three people haven't been in Belarus for a long time – interrogations." How "conversations" are going on at the Belarus-EU border in December], [url](#)

- [323](#)

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

- [324](#)

Viasna, Human rights situation in Belarus, January 2026, 4 February 2026, [url](#)

- [325](#)

Human Constanta, Email correspondence with EUAA, 13 March 2026

- [326](#)

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

- [327](#)

Human Constanta, Email correspondence with EUAA, 13 March 2026

- [328](#)

Viasna Human Rights Center, Online interview with EUAA, 12 March 2026

- [329](#)

Human Constanta, Email correspondence with EUAA, 13 March 2026

- [330](#)

Spex Advisers, When Travel Abroad can be Prohibited, n.d., [url](#)

- [331](#)

Viasna, Human rights situation in Belarus. September 2024, 8 October 2024, [url](#)

- [332](#)

Human Rights Watch, Belarus: Political Retaliation against Businesses, 9 May 2025, [url](#)

- [333](#)

BG. Media, «Студентов, всех с видом на жительство, всех, кто давно не был». На границе массово допрашивают беларусов из-за БНЧ? ["Students, everyone with a

residence permit, everyone who hasn't been here in a while." Are Belarusians being questioned *en masse* at the border because of the All-Union People's Congress?], 18 December 2025, [url](#)

- [334](#)

Human Constanta, Online interview with EUAA, 25 February 2026

- [335](#)

Viasna Human Rights Center, Online interview with EUAA, 12 March 2026