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BELARUS ELECTION ALERT #6

Mass falsification of election results and appeal to end excessive violence against peaceful demonstrators

Following the presidential election on August 9 and the declaration of Lukashenka's victory, protests broke out across Belarus. They were dispersed violently by law enforcement agencies, resulting in numerous injuries, at least one casualty, and thousands of arrests. In this post-election edition of our Election Alert, we share the preliminary report and post E-Day press statement of the Human Rights Defenders for Free Elections; a statistical analysis of early voting turnout indicating mass vote falsification; statements by other election monitors on the conduct of the election and ongoing repressions.



Photo: www.newsabc.net

Human rights activists in Belarus have called this election campaign "[the worst election ever](#)" and stated that the institution of election observation was a main target of repressions by authorities. Of the 798 observers nominated by the "Human Rights Defenders for Free Elections" (HRD) observation campaign, only 93 observers were able to observe various stages of the election campaign for limited periods of time. More than 30 observers were stripped of their accreditation. In total, about 150 observers (including from other observation campaigns) were detained.

HRD states in their [preliminary report](#) on the election that the electoral process at all of its stages did not comply with a number of basic international standards for democratic and fair elections and was accompanied by numerous violations of these principles and requirements of national legislation.

HRD reported that there was [gross falsification](#) of the vote and the official turnout during early voting, which was confirmed in a [statistical analysis](#) done by renowned election experts and statisticians. According to this analysis, based on data collected by election observers and on official protocols, one has to conclude that official early voting results were inflated twofold, at the very least. Experts involved in this analysis estimate the early voting turnout to be closer to 24% than to the officially reported 41.7%, totalling 1.2 million votes that were artificially recorded.

Election monitors MEMO 98, the EAST Research Center, and Linking Media have also released a [statement](#) saying that "Belarus failed to live up to its constitutional and international commitments, unduly restricting political rights and fundamental freedoms during the election period". In their research, they have found that despite restrictions, the opposition was able to mobilise an unprecedented number of supporters and activists through an organic social media movement whilst Lukashenka focused more on state controlled mass media in his campaign.

Human rights activists are now worried that the [repressions will continue](#) in the post-election period. Therefore, they [appeal to the authorities to stop the escalation of the conflict](#). OSCE ODIHR has joined this appeal and has expressed [grave concern over the situation in Belarus](#).

More reports on the election campaign in Belarus can be found on the website of the "Human Rights Defenders for Free Elections" [here](#).

More news on Belarus also available at www.epde.org

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