



# BELARUSIAN NATIONAL PLATFORM

EASTERN PARTNERSHIP  
CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM

## Belarusian civil society appeal to Bologna Follow-Up Group

*“Academic freedom and integrity, institutional autonomy, participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and public responsibility for and of higher education form the backbone of the EHEA.” PARIS COMMUNIQUÉ  
Paris, May 25th 2018*

The 2020 presidential campaign in Belarus was marked by numerous violations: political imprisonment of presidential candidates, arbitrary detentions of peaceful demonstrators, inappropriate violence against demonstrators, tortures, etc. . Youth and students are the most active participants in these processes.

With the beginning of the academic year, students predictably began to be systematically pressured because of their active public position. University administrations, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of the Internal Affairs subject students to repression in the form of arbitrary detentions, beatings and illegal court rulings on fines and administrative arrests, threatening with expulsions and deprivation of dormitories, other consequences, unequivocally spread through public channels of communication.

The described situation shows lack of university autonomy and flagrant academic freedoms violations.

While the issue of academic freedoms suppression was a concerning point for Belarusian civil society for a long time, the current situation is considered to be unprecedentedly dangerous and can have a devastating impact on higher education development in Belarus.

We call on clear confirmation of commitment to academic values and international solidarity actions to support academia in Belarus.

Thus we ask BFUG to explicitly announce their position on inadmissibility of academic values and human rights violations from HEIs administration and Ministry of Education.

Together with raising concerns, clear actions on reframing cooperation must be taken in form of recommendation to reframe the cooperation with HEIs and the Ministry of Education for EHEA HEIs and Ministries, as well as for international organisations and foundations with a special stress on cooperation continuation only when academic freedoms are ensured..

We also call for including the question of Belarusian neglect of academic freedoms on the next Ministerial Summit and an Advisory group on Belarus restoration with the aim of academic freedoms violation monitoring and cases investigation.

*EaP CSF Belarusian National Platform  
Belarusian Students' Association*