# Gays face renewed crackdown in Belarus



In a recent series of police actions in Belarus, at least 20 individuals identifying as LGBTQ+ have reportedly been detained and subjected to questioning, with allegations of physical mistreatment emerging in some cases. This operation is part of an ongoing pattern of repression against sexual minorities in the country, which has been described by human rights activists as harshly repressive.

The recent crackdown took place amidst an already challenging environment for the LGBTQ+ community in Belarus, under the presidency of Alexander Lukashenko [pictured]. Although homosexuality was officially decriminalised in the country in 1994, societal animosity and discrimination against sexual minorities remain pervasive. This is further compounded by recent legislative changes, including a law enacted earlier this year categorising any depiction of homosexual lives as pornography. The law stipulates severe penalties, including possible imprisonment for up to four years, thereby intensifying the risks faced by the LGBTQ+ community in Belarus.

According to reports from TG House Belarus, a transgender rights advocacy group, two of the individuals detained have been formally charged with distributing pornography. In addition, another eight individuals are facing charges related to hooliganism. The specifics of the charges remain unclear, but these legal actions underline the precarious situation of LGBTQ+ persons in Belarus.

Belarus has had a fraught relationship with human rights, facing consistent criticism from international bodies and activists for its treatment of various minority groups. The actions against LGBTQ+ individuals underscore ongoing concerns about human rights violations and the suppression of dissent within the country.

This development adds to the broader narrative of civil rights challenges in Belarus, where the government has often been accused of using legal mechanisms to target and suppress minority and opposition groups. The treatment and legal actions against the LGBTQ+ community are seen as part of this wider pattern.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/04/12/belarus-calls-lgbt-lives-pornography> - Corroborates the recent legislative changes in Belarus that categorize depictions of homosexual lives as pornography, with severe penalties including up to four years in prison.
* <https://action.allout.org/en/m/7e534af6/> - Supports the information about the impending law criminalizing 'promotion of non-traditional relationships' and the current classification of LGBT expressions as pornography.
* <https://apnews.com/article/lgbtq-lukashenko-protests-russia-27e450907d43536b8de315f1e8f4dd89> - Confirms the recent crackdown on the LGBTQ+ community, including arrests and charges related to pornography and hooliganism, and the ongoing repression against sexual minorities.
* <https://www.rferl.org/a/belarus-lgbt-arrests-transgender/33136652.html> - Details the arrests of at least eight transgender people and other LGBTQ+ individuals, and the charges they face, highlighting the crackdown's connection to the preparation of an LGBT propaganda law.
* <https://www.jurist.org/news/2024/09/belarus-transgender-rights-organization-says-authorities-detained-over-15-lgbtq-individuals/> - Provides information on the detention of over 15 LGBTQ+ individuals in several Belarusian cities and the allegations of physical mistreatment.
* <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/04/12/belarus-calls-lgbt-lives-pornography> - Explains the broader context of repression against civil society in Belarus, including the shutdown of human rights organizations and the targeting of LGBT people.
* <https://action.allout.org/en/m/7e534af6/> - Highlights the severe consequences of the proposed law, including increased violence, suicides, and forced exile of LGBTQ+ individuals.
* <https://apnews.com/article/lgbtq-lukashenko-protests-russia-27e450907d43536b8de315f1e8f4dd89> - Mentions the historical context that homosexuality was decriminalized in Belarus in 1994 but societal animosity and discrimination persist.
* <https://www.rferl.org/a/belarus-lgbt-arrests-transgender/33136652.html> - Details the international context, including Belarus's close ties with Russia and the impact of Russia's anti-LGBTQ+ policies on Belarus.
* <https://www.jurist.org/news/2024/09/belarus-transgender-rights-organization-says-authorities-detained-over-15-lgbtq-individuals/> - Corroborates the reports from TG House Belarus about the arrests and the precarious situation of LGBTQ+ persons in Belarus.