



HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS FOR FREE ELECTIONS

Elections*2025. Analytical report on the results of monitoring the election campaigning

*The expert election*¹ 2025 observation mission was organized by the Belarusian Helsinki Committee and the Viasna Human Rights Center as part of the "Human Rights Defenders for Free Elections" campaign. The mission collects and analyzes information about the election campaign based on open sources and messages from voters from Belarus.*

CONCLUSIONS

- the 2025 elections*, fully controlled by the authorities, including the campaigning stage, are taking place in a repressive climate, in a purged political and information field (see previous reports of the "Human Rights Defenders for Free Elections" campaign);
- as part of the campaigning phase, there should have been a political race between the presidential candidates, but in a situation of simulated competition (most candidates did not position themselves as a real alternative to A. Lukashenka, but rather campaigned for him, which is well reflected in the statement of S. Syrankou: "Not against, but together"), the actions of all candidates, except for A. Lukashenka, who used the administrative resource, were almost invisible to a wide audience;
- the requirements of the electoral legislation to ensure the publication of election programs and the provision of airtime on state radio and television were fulfilled, but it is impossible to speak of equality of candidates in the use of the media; formally, televised debates were held (A. Lukashenka, as always, refused to participate in them). Some speeches of the candidates (A. Haidukevich, S. Syrankou) contained signs of inciting hatred, prohibited by Article 47 of the Electoral Code;
- the election campaigning took place in unequal conditions: the administrative and propaganda resources of the power vertical, pro-government public organizations, and state media were involved in support of A. Lukashenka. We can identify several mechanisms of such abuse: 1) using the administrative and information capabilities attached to

¹ The term "elections*" in relation to the 2025 election campaign is used with an asterisk by the "Human Rights Defenders for Free Elections" campaign to emphasize the perfunctory nature of this term, since any free and fair election campaign presupposes, first of all, conditions where rights and freedoms are fully realized, including freedom of speech, freedom of peaceful assembly and association, the right to participate in the governance of one's state, freedom from discrimination, which is currently practically absent in Belarus

- the office of the president as part of campaigning by A. Lukashenka; 2) actions within the framework of the Marathon of Unity and the promotion of the slogan "Time has chosen us!"; 3) *Needs to Be Done!* campaign (flash mob); 4) information about the elections in general, used for covert campaigning in favor of A. Lukashenka; 5) meetings of A. Lukashenka's proxies, many of whom are officials, with representatives of labor collectives of state-owned enterprises and institutions, including during working hours;
- the deliberately blurred line between fulfilling government duties and campaigning allowed A. Lukashenka to combine official visits, meetings, and trips with actual campaigning, using the privileges of extensive information services provided to a president at public expense; the decision to raise pensions by A. Lukashenka, in his official capacity as president, during elections can be considered as vote-buying and is a form of abuse of state resources;
 - the Marathon of Unity, a large-scale propaganda campaign that lasted for 4 months, was funded by the state (the estimated expenses are more than 3.5 million rubles [more than 1 million euros]) and was essentially the election campaign of A. Lukashenka. The slogan of the election campaign of A. Lukashenka: "Time has chosen us!" was promoted through the ABPA, the Marathon of Unity, the daily "historical" TV project *Time Has Chosen Us!* on the Belarus 1 TV channel;
 - imitation of political activity and broad support, as well as additional resources for campaigning, were received by A. Lukashenka thanks for the *Needs to Be Done!* flash mob, which was presented as a spontaneous campaign of support for A. Lukashenka, but had signs of an organized event, moreover, an event where people were forced to participate;
 - just as in the 2024 elections*, educational and awareness-raising events about the elections have replaced the genuine political process. But even in such "general" words about the importance of elections and the obligation of voters to participate in elections (with a continuing focus on early voting), there is room for indirect campaigning for A. Lukashenka (statements about the correctness of the "chosen course" and the need to support the "national leader");
 - in the absence of independent observers and sufficient transparency in the process of inflows and expenditures in the electoral funds of candidates, it is impossible to carry out full-fledged monitoring of the financial side of the elections. At the same time, the officially declared expenses of all candidates (including A. Lukashenka) are significantly below the established limit of 420,000 rubles [122,389 euros]. Even the amount spent from the fund of A. Lukashenka (92,032 rubles [26,818 euros]) is clearly not enough to launch a full-fledged campaign across the country.

I. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The legal regulation of the pre-election campaigning stage is carried out in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 10 of the Electoral Code (EC) of the Republic of Belarus, articles 45–47.

The election campaign begins 25 days before election day and ends at 24:00 of the day preceding election day. Campaigning is prohibited on election day. Thus, in the current elections*, the election campaign took place from January 1 to January 25, 2025, inclusive.

Citizens of the Republic of Belarus, political parties, other public associations, labor collectives, and proxies of candidates have the right to a free and comprehensive discussion of candidates' election programs, and their political, business, and personal qualities.

Campaigning events may be held:

1. at meetings and rallies;
2. in the media;
3. in the Internet;
4. during meetings with voters.

Foreign citizens and stateless persons, as specified in article 45, do not participate in campaigning.

Proxies

The status of proxies is defined in Article 76 of the EC. According to it, a presidential candidate has the right to appoint up to 30 proxies who play a key role in organizing election campaigning.

Proxies, in addition to assisting in conducting the candidate's election campaign and representing the candidate's interests in relations with government agencies, public associations, voters, and election commissions, are also authorized to campaign for the election of candidates.

Presidential candidates and members of election commissions cannot be proxies. Also, Article 46 of the Criminal Code establishes restrictions on the activities of magazines and media management, if they are proxies: they are "prohibited from hosting television and radio programs and participating in election coverage through the media."

Requirements for candidates during election campaigning

Under Article 47 of the Electoral Code, the following is prohibited during election campaigning:

- **Propaganda of war**, calls for violent change of the constitutional order and violation of the territorial integrity of the country.

- **Insults and slander** against officials, presidential candidates, or deputies.
- Calls for **disruption, cancellation, or postponement of elections** or a referendum scheduled following the procedure established by law.
- **Incitement of social, racial, national or religious hatred**, as well as propaganda of any kind of superiority.

Candidates, their proxies, and other participants in the election campaign are prohibited from:

- Distributing cash, gifts, or other tangible assets.
- Selling discounted goods.
- Providing services and goods free of charge, except for specially manufactured campaign materials that comply with the requirements of the Electoral Code.

It is also prohibited to influence citizens by promising to transfer money or material assets to them in exchange for supporting a candidate.

The Electoral Commission allows several candidates to hold joint meetings with voters and events (Article 45), but it prohibits campaigning for a presidential candidate paid for from the electoral funds of other candidates (Article 47).

In case of violation of these requirements, the relevant commissions take measures to prevent violations, and the Central Commission, territorial commissions, and district election commission may also cancel the decision on registration of a candidate.

Meetings with voters

Local executive and administrative bodies, together with election commissions, determine the premises for meetings of candidates with voters. Applications for the provision of premises are submitted by candidates, candidates' proxies, or voters no later than two days before the expected date of the meeting.

The premises are provided free of charge in the order of the receipt of applications. If it is impossible to provide the requested premises, the election commission has to propose alternatives. Territorial and district election commissions inform voters in the mass media or in any other way about meetings with presidential candidates, as well as about pre-election meetings organized by voters.

Presidential candidates have the right to use the financial resources of their election fund to rent buildings and premises for meetings with voters. Buildings and premises for these purposes are provided to candidates on equal terms.

Mass events for election campaigning

Candidates and their proxies can organize mass events such as meetings, rallies, and picketing. In addition to Articles 45-1 of the EC, their conduct is regulated by

the Law On Mass Events in the Republic of Belarus.

Places for mass events, the purpose of which is to conduct election campaigning, are determined by local executive and administrative bodies in coordination with the relevant election commissions.

The notification of the event is sent to the local executive body no later than two days before the event. The notification indicates the purpose, type of mass event, place, date, time of the start and end of the event, as well as the contact details of the applicant.

Ensuring public order and safety of citizens during a mass event is the responsibility of the local executive and administrative bodies and internal affairs bodies. Candidates and their proxies are required to help ensure public order.

Mass events can be held from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Ensuring public order is the responsibility of local authorities and internal affairs bodies.

Use of mass media

The mass media are obliged to provide equal opportunities for campaigning to all candidates. The candidates have the right to:

1. publish election programs free of charge in the state-owned print media (including those where the Republic of Belarus holds 50% or more of the shares (stakes in the statutory funds));
2. speak on radio and television.

The list of print media, as well as television and (or) radio broadcasting media, is determined by the CEC. The candidates' election programs are published in the order they are received. Broadcast time is allocated at a rate of 60 minutes on weekdays during the last 20 days before election day, i.e. starting on January 5, 2025.

Production and placement of campaign materials

Candidates can produce campaign materials at the expense of their own election funds. All printed materials must contain the following publishing data: (name and address of the organization or individual entrepreneur who produced the materials; the number of the manufacturer's state registration certificate and the date of its issue; the print run and order number; the name and initials of the client).

Prior to distribution, such materials or their copies (including small copies and layouts) are submitted by a presidential candidate to the CEC, territorial or district commission. The distribution of anonymous campaigning materials is prohibited.

Local executive and administrative bodies are required to allocate the places most visited by citizens on the territory of polling stations for the placement of campaign materials. At the same time:

- It is prohibited to place campaign materials in buildings where election commissions are located and in voting rooms.
- Placement in other places is allowed only with the permission of the head of the relevant organization. If one permit is granted, other candidates cannot be refused on the same terms.
- The executive and administrative bodies may prohibit the placement of materials in locations not designated for them.

It is not allowed to remove, cover, paint over, damage campaign materials if they are produced and placed in compliance with the requirements of the law.

Information boards describing candidates must be set up at all polling stations no later than 14 days before the election, that is, until January 11 inclusive. These information boards remain in the polling facilities on election day.

Election funds

The procedure for the creation and use of election funds is regulated by Article 48-1 of the Electoral Code. As part of the 2025 elections*, the Regulation approved by the CEC on the election fund of a person nominated as a candidate for president of the Republic of Belarus, a candidate for President of the Republic of Belarus, is also in force.²

The election funds of presidential candidates are formed from:

- the candidate's own funds,
- voluntary donations from citizens of the Republic of Belarus who have reached the age of 18 (the limit is 30 basic units per person [367 euros]).

At the same time, based on the meaning of Part 8 of Article 48-1 of the EC, donations can also be transferred by legal entities. The CEC calls³ donations from legal entities as the third source of the formation of the election fund and sets a limit of 60 basic units from one legal entity [734 euros].

There is also a list⁴ of entities that are prohibited from making donations (foreign states, foreign organizations, foreign citizens, international organizations, etc.).

Formally, there is no upper limit on the election fund. Instead, the maximum amount of expenses from the election fund is set at 10,000 basic units,⁵ i.e. 420 000 rubles [122,390 euros].

² CEC Resolution No. 82 dated 24.10.2024:

https://rec.gov.by/uploads/files/Pdf/2024/izb_fond_pologenie.pdf

³ CEC Resolution No. 82 dated 10/24/2024, paragraph 4, subparagraph 3

⁴ EC, part 3 of Article 48-1

⁵ EC, part 2 of Article 48-1

Anonymous donations from citizens are prohibited.⁶ The CEC clarifies that anonymous donations are defined as donations without specifying any of the required⁷ information about a citizen or a legal entity in the payment document.

To form an election fund, a candidate has the right to open one special election account in a division of the open joint-stock company Savings Bank Belarusbank.

The unspent funds of the election fund, including those exceeding the established limits, are returned to donors in proportion to the invested funds within three days from the election day or the refusal to register a candidate. After that, the bank transfers the remaining funds in the accounts to the state budget revenue.

The procedure for financial reporting of candidates on the size and all sources of the creation of the election fund, as well as on all expenses incurred, is established. However, there are no guarantees of transparency and public access to the financial side of the elections.

II. CAMPAIGNING CONDITIONS

1. Campaigning in the media

The presidential candidates had the right to publish their election program free of charge⁸ in the print media: the newspapers *Respublika* and *Zviazda*. On January 4, the programs were published. According to the EC, the programs are published in the order they are received.⁹ Despite the fact that H. Kanapatskaya was the first to post an election program on her Telegram channel, the *Zviazda* newspaper¹⁰ put¹¹ the programs in the following order: A. Lukashenka, A. Haidukevich, S. Syrankou, A. Khizhniak, H. Kanapatskaya.

Campaigning is an important stage of the electoral process when candidates get the opportunity to present their election programs and political views, as well as their business and personal qualities, in order to win the love and support of voters and, as a result, win elections. However, analyzing the election programs, it seems that some candidates do not have a goal to win the election, as stated. For example, A. Syrankou said that he is "*participating in the elections not against, but together with President Aliaksandr Ryhoravich Lukashenka.*"

⁶ EC, paragraph 11, part 3, Article 48-1

⁷ EC, paragraph 11, part 3, Article 48-1 (information to be specified when making donations)

⁸ The Regulation on the procedure for the use of mass media in the preparation and conduct of the presidential elections of the Republic of Belarus, approved by Resolution No. 107 of the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Belarus dated November 20, 2024, paragraph 1:

<https://www.rec.gov.by/uploads/files/Calendar/post107-2025-red.pdf>

⁹ EC, part 4, Article 46

¹⁰ Zviazda newspaper, 01/14/2025, № 7 (30395): <https://zviazda.by/be/pdf?page=1>

¹¹ Zviazda newspaper, 01/14/2025, № 7 (30395), Pp. 3–7: <https://zviazda.by/sites/default/files/14stu-3.pdf> , <https://zviazda.by/sites/default/files/14stu-4.pdf> , <https://zviazda.by/sites/default/files/14stu-5.pdf> , <https://zviazda.by/sites/default/files/14stu-6.pdf> , <https://zviazda.by/sites/default/files/14stu-7.pdf>

During campaigning, freedom of expression is restricted, meaning candidates are prohibited from promoting social, racial, national, religious or linguistic superiority, expressed in incitement to discrimination, hostility, or violence. At the same time, the programs of some pro-government candidates contain signs of hostility and discrimination. For example, candidate A. Syrankou suggests *"criminalizing LGBT propaganda and practice,"* as well as *"deepening the cleansing of the system, not only within the state but also throughout society, from double-dealers who occupy senior positions and destabilized the system in 2020 and are hiding, waiting for opportunities to resume their pernicious activity."* A. Haidukevich suggests *"at the legislative level to limit the participation in elections of incompetent politicians, traitors, and representatives of the fifth column."* In other words, he emphasizes that when he becomes president, he will introduce unreasonable and discriminatory requirements that restrict the voting rights of certain segments of the population of Belarus.

On January 9 and 16, the speeches¹² of the presidential candidates were shown on the state TV channel Belarus 1. From January 8 to January 17, their speeches were broadcast on the First National Channel of the Belarusian Radio.

The election campaigning took place in unequal conditions: the administrative and propaganda resources of the vertical of power, pro-government public organizations and state media was used in support of A. Lukashenka (see section 6 below).

In general, the coverage of this stage in the pro-government media demonstrates a continuing trend of minimal information being provided about the essence of individual election* stages with an emphasis on organizational formalities in the absence of substantive information about the candidates' campaign and discussion of their programs.¹³ "The media reminded of the upcoming vote and spoke about the election campaign, essentially saying nothing about it."¹⁴

2. Mass campaigning events and meetings with voters

Local executive committees have identified venues for mass events, facilities for holding meetings of candidates and voters, and locations for pre-election meetings

¹² The CEC, Telegram @cikbelarus, *The pre-election speeches of the candidates for President of Belarus on TV and radio begin today*, 01/08/2025: <https://t.me/cikbelarus/3081>

¹³ There is a clear, systematic division of the roles of national and regional media: large national media with a large audience mainly focus on the high level of organization of elections* and the work of commissions, as well as attempts to legitimize the process through national and international "observers", while regional media cover some campaigning events of candidates in a uniform style (in particular in particular, without focusing on who is holding a meeting with proxies — and which candidate is campaigning (see below)).

<https://mediaiq.info/bezymyannye-predstaviteli-tajnego-kandidata-o-chjom-govorit-taktika-anonimnogo-osveshheniya-vstrech-s-doverennymi-licami-kandidatov>,

<https://mediaiq.info/nachalas-otgruzka-bjulletenej-dlya-chego-gostv-sozdajot-informacionnyj-shum-na-temu-vyborov>

¹⁴ MediaIQ, *"The distribution of ballots has begun" The reason why the state TV creates information noise about elections*, 01/21/2025:

<https://mediaiq.info/nachalas-otgruzka-bjulletenej-dlya-chego-gostv-sozdajot-informacionnyj-shum-na-temu-vyborov>

organized by voters.

As in the previous elections* in 2024, there were no mass events. Mostly there were pickets¹⁵. On January 16, H. Kanapatskaya posted photos¹⁶ from pickets in the city of Minsk, which, by their small number, reflect the disinterest of voters in the election campaign. On January 23, H. Kanapatskaya told subscribers of the Telegram channel about the upcoming picket, which took place on January 24 near the Galleria Minsk shopping and entertainment center.

Meetings with voters in the premises were the most typical form of campaigning. For example, A. Lukashenka's proxies spoke in medical institutions¹⁷, which was not publicly announced and neither were the place and time of the event. A. Khizhniak posted news about the meetings on his Telegram channel after they had been held¹⁸. Event announcements were not covered. H. Kanapatskaya notified subscribers about upcoming meetings¹⁹, with the exception of meetings with factory workers²⁰.

3. Production and distribution of campaigning printed materials

Despite the fact that local executive bodies have allocated places for the public placement of campaign materials in accordance with the established procedure, the actual situation with their distribution continues the general trend of a "quiet" election campaign: there is practically no significant information about the programs and political positions of candidates in the public space of cities and other localities. Most of the visual materials in the public field remind of the voting date and encourage citizens to come to the polling stations — or contain general information about each of the candidates²¹. A situation of visual "silence" has been created in the public eye, excluding the emphasis on the presence of various candidates and proposals of at least some alternative to A. Lukashenka.

There is no information about obstacles in the production and distribution of campaigning materials, as well as information about the placement of such materials in places not designated for this purpose.

¹⁵ H. Kanapatskaya informed subscribers of her Telegram channel about the upcoming picketing <https://t.me/annakanopatskaya/187>, *Campaigning pickets were held in Mahilioŭ region for Aleh HAIDUKEVICH*, candidate for President of the Republic of Belarus, on 01/06/2025: <https://t.me/gajdukevichh/8367>

¹⁶ Hanna Kanapatskaya, Telegram @annakanopatskaya, *The best campaigning pickets in Minsk are when the top officials of the campaigns participate*, 01/16/2025: <https://t.me/annakanopatskaya/168>
¹⁷ <https://elections2025.spring96.org/ru/news/117172>

¹⁸ RPTS Aliaksandr Khizhniak / Republican Party of Labor and Justice, Telegram @Rpts_by, *Friends, good afternoon! A short digest of the pre-election meetings*, 01/18/2025: https://t.me/rpts_by/24, https://t.me/rpts_by/28

¹⁹ Hanna Kanapatskaya, Telegram @annakanopatskaya, announcement of a meeting with voters in the Palace of Culture for the Railway Workers, Secondary School No. 1, 01/16/2025: <https://t.me/annakanopatskaya/170>

²⁰ Hanna Kanapatskaya, Telegram @annakanopatskaya, Meeting with employees of MTW OJSC, 01/20/2025: <https://t.me/annakanopatskaya/181>

²¹ *Zerkalo*, "I think that people will line up themselves" The civil servant spoke about the mood on the eve of the elections, 01/20/2025, <https://news.zerkalo.io/life/88949.html>

4. Proxies

The CEC website provides information on the registered proxies of A. Haidukevich — 30 people,²² A. Lukashenka — 15 people,²³ and H. Kanapatskaya — 25 people.²⁴ In relation to the proxies of S. Syrankou and A. Khizhniak there are hyperlinks, but the data is not displayed at the time of preparation of this report (01/25/2025).²⁵

A. Lukashenka has a relatively small number of proxies, including numerous civil servants; it can indicate that his campaign does not require traditional means, such as meetings with voters or campaigning on the ground. This confirms the hypothesis of maximizing the abuse of state resources and minimizing the costs of traditional campaigns.

There have been violations of the restrictions imposed on proxies: among the proxies of A. Lukashenka there are Ivan Eismant, chairman of the Belteleradiocompany and host of the *Editors' Club* TV program²⁶, and Dzmitry Zhuk, director and editor-in-chief of the *Belarus Segodnya* publishing house²⁷, who continued to host TV programs and participate in election coverage. After the complaint was submitted,²⁸ Ivan Eismant was reportedly removed from the program, and both proxies no longer appeared on television. At the same time, the CEC did not disclose the fact of the violation²⁹ and the complaint received, nor the consequences for the candidate (up to the withdrawal of registration). On the contrary, on January 10, the CEC press service reported that "the CEC did not receive reports on the violation of legislation by candidates and their proxies."

In many cases, media coverage of the activities of proxies is carried out anonymously: often without mentioning both the candidate's and the proxy's last names.³⁰ At the same time, *MediaIQ* notes that in cases of coverage of the activity

²² CEC Resolution No. 135 dated December 23, 2024:

<https://rec.gov.by/uploads/files/Calendar/post135-2025.pdf>

²³ CEC Resolution No. 137 dated December 23, 2024:

<https://rec.gov.by/uploads/files/Calendar/post137-2025.pdf>

²⁴ CEC Resolution No. 139 dated December 23, 2024:

<https://rec.gov.by/uploads/files/Calendar/post135-2025.pdf>

²⁵ Link to information about trusted persons of S. Syrankou:

<https://rec.gov.by/uploads/files/Calendar/post131-2025.pdf>,

and A. Khizhniak: <https://rec.gov.by/uploads/files/Calendar/post133-2025.pdf>

²⁶ <https://news.by/company/rukovodstvo/eysmont-ivan-mikhaylovich>

²⁷ <https://org.sb.by/ru/contacts/>

²⁸ *Euroradio*, the head of BT Eismant was removed from the broadcasts after a complaint from blogger Malisheuski, 01/22/2025,

<https://euro.radio.fm/kiraunika-bt-eysmanta-znyali-z-teleefirau-paslya-skargi-blogera-malisheuskaga>

²⁹ The CEC, Telegram @cikbelarus, *The campaign period began on January 1, and will end on January 25, 01/10/2025*: <https://t.me/cikbelarus/3095>

³⁰ *Gomelskiye Vedomosti*, *Proxies of presidential candidates of the Republic of Belarus: active meetings with voters in Homiel*, 01/23/2025, https://newsgomel.by/news/vybory-2025/doverennye-litsa-kandidatov-v-prezidenty-respubliki-belarus-aktivnye-vstreechi-s-izbiratelyami-v-gome_184575.html

"Meetings with representatives of the presidential candidates of the Republic of Belarus are continuing in Homiel as part of the election campaign. This important political event attracts the attention of the residents of the

of proxies by keywords and broadcast narratives, it is obvious that they were reporting about campaigning for A. Lukashenka.³¹ This strategy allows the pro-government media to actually campaign for the "current president" without naming A. Lukashenka, and thus formally comply with the ban on campaigning³² and create the illusion of neutral election* coverage.

5. Creation and use of election funds by candidates

According to official information,³³ all five presidential candidates have opened special election accounts for the formation of the election fund in the period from November 1 to November 11, 2024. Traditionally,³⁴ Alialsander Lukashenka's election account was opened first. All candidates have opened election accounts in bank branches in Minsk.

In the absence of independent observers and sufficient transparency in the process of receipt and expenditure of election funds, it is impossible to carry out full-fledged monitoring of the financial side of the elections.

Based on the short CEC data, we recorded published data updates as of December 2, 2025 (the date of the update specified by the CEC is November 27, 2024), December 23, 2024 (the date of the update specified by the CEC is December 11, 2024), and January 23, 2025 (the date of the update specified by the CEC is January 16, 2025) of the following nature:

city, because the presidential election is one of the key events in the life of the country. At the meeting, Homiel residents were able to get acquainted with the main provisions of the program of one of the candidates."

Mogilevskie Vedomosti, the proxy of the candidate for President of the Republic of Belarus held a number of meetings in Mahilioŭ on January 10. Photo, 11.01.2025, <https://mogilevnews.by/news/11-01-2025-09-12/107062>

"On January 10, the proxy of the candidate for President of the Republic of Belarus held several meetings with the labor collectives of the city of Mahilioŭ. He met with representatives of the Mahilioŭ Regional Consumer Union, the regional clinical hospital, and the Mahilioŭ Electric Networks branch of RUE Mogilevenergo. During the open dialogue meeting, they talked about security and peace, the Constitution, the preservation of historical memory, and the importance of participating in the election campaign."

Prypiatskaya Prauda, Presidential candidate's proxy held a meeting with Naroŭla residents, 01/23/2025, <https://narovlya.by/novosti/obschestvo/doverennoe-litso-kandidata-v-prezidenty-provel-vstrechu-s-narovlyanami/>

"During the meeting, the residents of the district center could ask their questions. The event was positive. Several questions came from the audience: about improving country's image in the international arena and the candidate's priorities for the country in the near future. The proxy responded in detail, explaining each thesis.

In conclusion, the proxy called on residents to unite around a common goal — building a strong and prosperous country.

Naroŭla residents expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to communicate and receive detailed answers to their questions."

³¹ MediaIQ, *Unnamed representatives of a secret candidate — what does the tactic of anonymous coverage of meetings with the candidate's proxies suggest?*, 01/14/2025, <https://mediaiq.info/bezmyannye-predstaviteli-tajnogo-kandidata-o-chjom-govorit-taktika-anonimnogo-osveshheniya-vstrech-s-doverennymi-licami-kandidatov>

³² EC, Part 1 of Article 46 (state-owned media are required to provide equal opportunities for candidates' election speeches and campaigning)

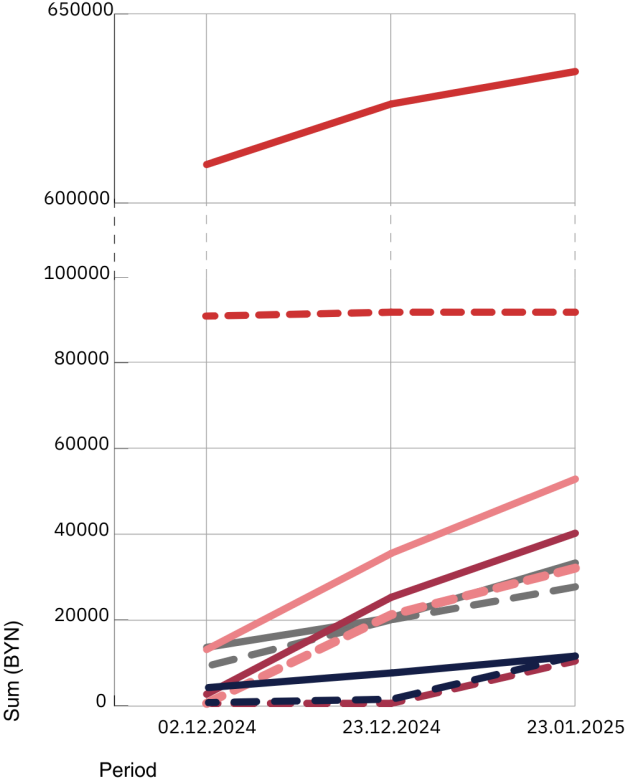
³³ Belarusbank data: <https://belarusbank.by/ru/33139/41509/41530>

³⁴ The pattern can be traced in the order of registration of the initiative group, registration of presidential candidates, and other formal lists of candidates.

| | 02.12.2024 | | | 23.12.2024 | | | 23.01.2025 | |
|-----------------------|------------|----------|-----|------------|----------|-----|------------|----------|
| | Received | Spent | | Received | Spent | | Received | Spent |
| Lukashenka A. R. | 610120 | 91333.74 | 15% | 626060 | 92032.37 | 15% | 634610 | 92032.37 |
| Haidukevich A. S. | 3035 | 140.88 | 5% | 6470 | 140.88 | 2% | 10424.88 | 10424.88 |
| Syrankou S. A. | 11955 | 0 | 0% | 34370 | 20060.94 | 58% | 51771.51 | 30965.86 |
| Khizhniak A. M. | 2150 | 0 | 0% | 24760 | 0 | 0% | 39760 | 10080 |
| Kanapatskaya H. A. | 12300 | 8000 | 65% | 19210 | 18895 | 98% | 31980 | 26637.6 |

General schedule of candidates' income and expenses

- A.Lukashenka — Received
- - - A.Lukashenka — Spent
- A.Haidukevich — Received
- - - A.Haidukevich — Spent
- S.Syrankou — Received
- - - S.Syrankou — Spent
- A.Khizhniak — Received
- - - A.Khizhniak — Spent
- H.Kanapatskaya — Received
- - - H.Kanapatskaya — Spent



At the time of preparation of the report (January 24, 2025), the largest election fund was formed by A. Lukashenka, at the same time, 92,032.37 rubles [26,818 euros] were spent out of 634,610.00 rubles [184,927 euros], which is approximately 14.5% of the total amount. Thus, in comparison with other candidates (the average size of the fund is 33484.10 rubles [9,757 euros]) the election fund of A. Lukashenka is 19 times bigger, and spending remains at about the same level.

At the same time, the expenses of all candidates are significantly lower than the established limit of 420,000 rubles [122,389 euros]. Even the amount spent from the fund of A. Lukashenka is clearly not enough to launch a full-fledged campaign across the country.

Probably, the main reason for such a small expenditure is the active use of an administrative resource that allows campaigning without significant official expenses (see paragraph 6 below).

The extremely low amounts of election funds and the even lower amounts spent by other candidates demonstrate the absence of a real electoral race. At the same time, A. Haidukevich (100%) and H. Kanapatskaya (83.3%) used the election funds most actively — these candidates have experience of election campaigns, a large public background and appear more actively in public during the current election campaign.

6. The use of an administrative resource for campaigning in favor of A. Lukashenka

Monitoring of the entire election campaign, and not just the campaigning period, which is artificially narrowed by the candidate registration period in the EC, and, accordingly, which does not include, for example, the period of nominating candidates and collecting signatures, when active campaigning is actually underway, allows us to state the extensive use of resources of the entire state apparatus, many state organizations and enterprises, as well as loyalist organizations recognized by the Ministry of Justice as having special relations with the state, public associations and trade unions to ensure an active information campaign and demonstrate mass support for the candidacy of Lukashenka.

We can identify several mechanisms of such abuse:

- using the administrative and information capabilities attached to the office of the president as part of the campaign;
- events of the Marathon of Unity and the slogan "Time has chosen us!";
- Needs To Be Done! campaign (flash mob);
- information about elections in general, used for covert campaigning;
- meeting of the proxies of candidate A. Lukashenka, many of whom are high-level officials, with the labor collectives of state-owned enterprises and institutions.

6.1 Using the administrative and information capabilities attached to the office of the president as part of the election campaign

Following Article 77 of the Electoral Code, registered presidential candidates are relieved of their work duties (official duties) from the date of registration until election day with the provision of social leave. On the one hand, it is a guarantee of the candidate's ability to campaign, but it is also a guarantee against abusing one's position for campaigning purposes. The EC makes an exception to this requirement for a president running for a new term. Taking advantage of this exemption, A. Lukashenka actively uses the advantages of his status as the current president for campaigning.

A. Lukashenka directly stated at the meeting to his proxies that at the campaigning stage of the elections "... *you will be the main actors. Frankly, I just won't have time for this,*" explaining that his work schedule in January will be full of traditional events.³⁵

During the campaigning period, there was ***no clearly defined boundary between the exercise of presidential functions and pre-election events***: Lukashenka continued his usual trips, meetings, and public appearances, which became the focus of media news releases. The meeting mentioned above illustrates the whole campaign well: Lukashenka meets with his proxies, some of them are his subordinates, the meeting is covered in the media³⁶, and in the material he is called "head of state", "President", and never a "presidential candidate". A. Lukashenka demonstratively mixes up tasks arising from the government function and the tasks for the election campaign. Moreover, at the same "meeting with trusted persons," the presidential candidate gives orders to the CEC: "*According to the President, it is also necessary to decide on the invitation of Western observers to the elections. "We need to meet with the Central Commission again and decide whether we will invite these foreigners (Western observers — a note by BELTA) to the elections.*"³⁷

What could be called meetings with voters (as a form of campaigning), such as visits to factories, are intertwined with reports from officials (obviously performing government functions). Information about such events is published not only by the presidential press service (in the Telegram channel *Pul Pervogo*, on the

³⁵ The official Internet portal of the President of the Republic of Belarus, *Meeting with proxies*, 01/03/2025, <https://president.gov.by/ru/events/vstreca-s-doverennymi-licami>

³⁶ BelTA, *What is the scariest thing for the President and why are the elections in Belarus not a show? What Lukashenka talked about with his confidantes* on 01/03/2025: <https://belta.by/president/view/chto-samoe-strashnoe-dlja-prezidenta-i-pochemu-vybory-v-belarusi-ne-shou-o-chem-govoril-lukashenko-s-686709-2025/>

BelTA, *"The main thing is not campaigning, but feedback from the people." Lukashenka held a meeting with trusted representatives*, 01/03/2025: <https://belta.by/president/view/glavnoe-ne-agitatsija-a-obratnaja-svjaz-ot-naroda-lukashenko-provel-vstrechu-s-doverennymi-litsami-686669-2025/>

³⁷ BelTA, *What is the scariest thing for the President and why are the elections in Belarus not a show? What Lukashenka talked about with his confidantes*, 01/03/2025: <https://belta.by/president/view/chto-samoe-strashnoe-dlja-prezidenta-i-pochemu-vybory-v-belarusi-ne-shou-o-chem-govoril-lukashenko-s-686709-2025/>

official website),³⁸ but also by state media³⁹, as well as reprinted in the news feeds of government agencies⁴⁰. At the same time, at almost all plants, A. Lukashenka was presented with gifts: a motorcycle⁴¹ at the Motorcycle Factory, an axe and a bus at the Minsk Automobile Plant (MAZ)⁴². These meetings are in stark contrast to the situation after the 2020 presidential election, when, during a speech by A. Lukashenka at the Minsk Wheeled Tractor Plant (MZKT), some of those present expressed disagreement with his position and called for his resignation⁴³.

On January 7, A. Lukashenka went to celebrate Christmas at the church of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, where he actually held a campaign event⁴⁴, presenting excerpts from his election program to parishioners and clergy.

On January 10, 2025, the procedure of launching artesian water in the city of Minsk (implementation of government functions) was turned into a show with special effects⁴⁵ (in the spirit of bright pre-election visuals) with active coverage in all media; A. Lukashenka was presented with a capsule with artesian water⁴⁶.

³⁸ For example: The official Internet portal of the President of the Republic of Belarus, *Visit to the Minsk Automobile Plant*, 01/21/2025: <https://president.gov.by/ru/media/details/posesenie-minskogo-avtozavoda>

³⁹ *Zviazda* newspaper, 01/22/2025, № 13 (30401), p. 1:
<https://zviazda.by/sites/default/files/22stu-1-szhatvy.pdf>

⁴⁰ Hlybokaje District Executive Committee, *Lukashenka visits new MAZ bus production*, 01/22/2025:
https://glubokoe.vitebsk-region.gov.by/ru/news_republic_ru/view/lukashenko-posetil-novoe-avtobusnoe-proizvodstvo-maza-26714/

⁴¹ *Pul Pervogo*, Telegram @pul_1, *The First One [Lukashenka] got the first motorcycle produced on new upgraded lines as a gift*, 01/16/2025: https://t.me/pul_1/15251

⁴² *Pul Pervogo*, Telegram @pul_1, *The axe, which was produced and handed over to the First One by young guys from the Minsk Automobile Mechanics College*, 01/22/2025: https://t.me/pul_1/15331
The First One was gifted a bus. Lukashenka thanked for the gift and immediately gave instructions to transfer it to the state educational institution Social and Pedagogical Center with a Shelter in the Zavadskoj district of Minsk, 01/21/2025: https://t.me/pul_1/15314

⁴³ *Meduza*, *Lukashenka made his most disastrous speech at the tractor factory in Minsk. We talked to the workers of this enterprise about what was happening there*, 08/17/2020
<https://meduza.io/feature/2020/08/17/lukashenko-na-zavode-tyagachey-v-minske-vystupil-pozhaluy-so-svoey-samo-y-provalnoy-rechyu-my-pogovorili-s-rabochimi-etogo-predpriyatiya-o-tom-chto-tam-proishodilo>

⁴⁴ *Pul Pervogo*, Telegram @pul_1, *On this festive morning, the First One goes to Lahojsk*, 01/07/2025: https://t.me/pul_1/15113
Everything will be done to preserve peace in Belarus. We may live poorly, but with dignity, 01/07/2025: https://t.me/pul_1/15117
30 years ago, I swore that I would serve my people. And I do it, 01/07/2025
https://t.me/pul_1/15118

⁴⁵ The official Internet portal of the President of the Republic of Belarus, *Participation in the ceremonial launch of artesian water from underground sources to provide water supply to Minsk | The official Internet portal of the President of the Republic of Belarus*, 01/10/2025:
<https://president.gov.by/ru/media/details/ucastie-v-torzestvennom-puske-artezijskoj-vody-iz-podzemnyh-istocnikov-dla-obespechenia-vodosnabzhenia-minska>

⁴⁶ *Pul Pervogo*, Telegram @pul_1, *Water is the only drink of a wise man*, 01/10/2025:
https://t.me/pul_1/15164

"The President was thanked for his support and presented with a symbolic gift — a capsule with water from an artesian well."

During the campaigning period, A. Lukashenka announced the traditional⁴⁷ decision⁴⁸ to recalculate labor pensions from February 1, 2025, by adjusting the actual earnings of pensioners based on the average salary of workers in the republic, applied during the previous recalculation of pensions, with an increase of 10 percent. Such incentive measures taken during the election campaign can be considered as the use of administrative resources and, possibly, the bribery of voters.

It should be noted separately that the resources of the presidential press service (and especially the Telegram channel *Pul Pervogo* and the official website of the president) are being used for widespread dissemination of information, including information about the activities of A. Lukashenka as a candidate (for example, a meeting with proxies⁴⁹).

On January 20, the press service of A. Lukashenka presented the book *Our President*, which is a biography with photographs of family members, "Lukashenko's student's record book and his characteristics, and even the President's handwritten materials prepared for important events."⁵⁰ The sales began at 3 p.m., announced at 3 p.m. on January 20⁵¹, that is, at the time of the book's launch. At 19:05, the press service announced⁵² that the initial print run of the book was sold out, pointing out that this was another example of inexhaustible interest in "the First One" and everything related to him. The size of the print run was not reported.

Also, under the guise of a neutral call to vote in the elections* 2025 for the first time aimed at young voters of the BRSM, as well as secondary specialized educational institutions and universities, a campaign was launched with the slogans "My vote is the first one!"⁵³ and "Your vote is the first one!"⁵⁴, playing on the nickname that A. Lukashenka has in the rhetoric of the state media and the

⁴⁷ During the 2020 election campaign, pensions increased by 6% as a result of A. Lukashenka signing Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus No. 232 dated June 20, 2020 On Increasing Pensions, Human Rights Defenders for Free Elections, Final analytical report on the results of observation of the presidential elections in the Republic of Belarus in 2020, p. 26: https://spring96.org/files/misc/2020_election_final_report_dec_09_en.pdf

⁴⁸ *Pul Pervogo*, Telegram @pul_1, *The President of Belarus signed a decree On Increasing Pensions on January 20*, 01/20/2025: https://t.me/pul_1/15293

⁴⁹ *Pul Pervogo*, Telegram @pul_1, *The First One said what would be the main thing in the work of trusted persons*, 01/03/2025: https://t.me/pul_1/15065

⁵⁰ *Pul Pervogo*, Telegram @pul_1, *In what other book can you not only read about the First One, but also get copies from the presidential archives?!*, 01/20/2025: https://t.me/pul_1/15290

⁵¹ *Pul Pervogo*, Telegram @pul_1, *You can buy the book today! In the Svetoch store and the Pervy stores. The sale starts at 15:00*, 01/20/2025: https://t.me/pul_1/15289

⁵² *Pul Pervogo*, Telegram @pul_1, 01/20/2025: https://t.me/pul_1/15297

⁵³ Brest State College of Communications, *My vote is the first one!*, 01/21/2025: <https://bgks.by/moj-golos-pervyj/>

Minsk State Linguistic University, *My vote is the first one!*, 01/21/2024: <https://www.mslu.by/news/moy-golos-pervyy/>

⁵⁴ *Luniniec news*, *Your vote is the first one! Young people vote in the presidential elections of the Republic of Belarus*, 01/22/2025: <https://lnc.by/news/mikashevichy/tvoy-golos-pervyy-na-vyborakh-prezidenta-respubliki-belarus-golosuet-molodyeh/>

presidential press service, the First One. Videos on social media broadcasting these slogans also repeat the standard narratives of A. Lukashenka's agenda, for example, "For the prosperity of our country", "For Belarus", etc.⁵⁵

6.2. Events of the Marathon of Unity and the slogan "Time has chosen us!"

Since September 17, 2024, exhibitions, events, and concerts have been held throughout the country as part of the Marathon of Unity campaign (as indicated, initiated by A. Lukashenka⁵⁶). The working group for marathon preparation is headed by Hanna Lukashenka, his daughter-in-law; while the Muzykalnaya Mediakompaniya media holding company, which is associated with Aliaksandr Lukashenka's family, is involved in its work.⁵⁷ Concerts organized within this marathon called Time Has Chosen Us! have been held in the regions of Belarus since September 2024.⁵⁸ The Marathon of Unity ended on January 24, 2025, with the Time Has Chosen Us! gala concert in the Minsk Arena and gathered more than 10 thousand spectators in the presence of A. Lukashenka⁵⁹. The live broadcast was conducted by the state TV channel Belarus 1. According to independent sources (based on public procurement data), the total cost of this marathon exceeds 3.5 million rubles⁶⁰ [more than 1 million euros].

The slogan "Time has chosen us!" was actively replicated by pro-government media in the spring of 2024, as it was chosen as the motto of the VII All-Belarusian National Assembly (April 24–25, 2024)⁶¹.

⁵⁵ The Belarusian Republican Youth Union (BRSM) of the Faculty of Primary Education of Belarusian State Pedagogical University, Instagram @brsm.fno_, 22.01.2025:
https://www.instagram.com/brsm.fno_/reel/DFIuuy2IJhr/

Viciebsk State Technical University, TikTok @vstu_vitebsk, 01/21/2025:
https://www.tiktok.com/@vstu_vitebsk/video/7462387285678476550

⁵⁶ STV, Belarus 1 TV channel will show a live broadcast of the Time Has Chosen Us gala concert, 01/24/2025:
<https://ctv.by/news/obshestvo/pryamuyu-translyaciyu-gala-koncerta-vremya-vybralo-nas-pokazhet-telekanal-belarus-1>

⁵⁷ Zerkalo, Bureau: how Hanna Lukashenka is campaigning early for her father-in-law for taxpayers' money, how bloggers are involved and what the CEC (does not) say about it, 01/16/2025,
<https://news.zerkalo.io/economics/88640.html#c>

⁵⁸ STV, Belarus 1 TV channel will show a live broadcast of the Time Has Chosen Us gala concert, 01/24/2025:
<https://ctv.by/news/obshestvo/pryamuyu-translyaciyu-gala-koncerta-vremya-vybralo-nas-pokazhet-telekanal-belarus-1>

⁵⁹ STV, 10,000 spectators in Minsk Arena — a large-scale gala concert became the final point of the Marathon of Unity, 01/24/2025:
<https://ctv.by/news/obshestvo/10-tysyach-zritelej-v-minsk-arene-masshtabnyj-gala-koncert-stal-finalnoj-tochkoy-ma-rafona-edinstva>

⁶⁰ Zerkalo, Belarusians are increasingly difficult to surprise, but this figure clearly can — we found out how much money from the state budget were spent on events for praising Lukashenka, 01/24/2025,
<https://news.zerkalo.io/economics/89410.html#c>

⁶¹ BelTA, The time has chosen us! The All-Belarusian National Assembly will be held on April 24–25 at the Palace of the Republic, 01/24/2025,
<https://belta.by/society/view/vremja-vybralo-nas-vsebelorusskoe-narodnoe-sobranie-projdet-24-25-aprelja-vo-dvorts-e-respubliki-629923-2024/>

From November 19, 2024, to January 23, 2025, on the state TV channel Belarus 1, one-and-a-half-hour episodes of a "historical" project *Time Has Chosen Us!*⁶², dedicated to the modern history of independent Belarus, are broadcast every day (!) in prime time (21:30), the entire narrative of which boils down to the utmost importance of A. Lukashenka everywhere.

On January 3, 2025, the election program of A. Lukashenka is published, which is called *Time Has Chosen Us!*⁶³.

Thus, the state media repeated the slogan "Time has chosen us!" throughout 2024. During the pre-election period of November 19–January 23, every day, Channel One basically showed a 1.5-hour video about A. Lukashenka in different historical periods of his "presidency" and on January 24th broadcast a big gala concert under the same slogan.

6.3 Needs To Be Done! campaign (flash mob)

Another slogan associated with the election campaign of A. Lukashenka is "Needs to be done!". According to the official version,⁶⁴ it is a reaction to the words of A. Lukashenka during an interview with a VGTRK journalist O. Skabeyeva on October 23, 2024, (answering a question about his intention to participate in the upcoming elections): *"If Eismant and my supporters say that it needs to be done."*

At the end of October 2024, the Needs To Be Done! flash mob began, the essence of which is to publish in various forms (including collective videos) calls for A. Lukashenka to participate in the presidential elections*2025. Among the flash mob participants were⁶⁵ civil servants, employees of state organizations and enterprises, public associations, and trade unions⁶⁶. There is a lot of evidence of pressure and coercion to participate in filming⁶⁷. A. Lukashenka hypocritically emphasizes the spontaneous, grassroots nature of this initiative: *"I'm glad about it. If it's such universal approval. But God forbid it's something organized."*⁶⁸

⁶² News.By, *Time has chosen us:*

<https://news.by/videogallery/khronikalno-dokumentalnye/vremya-vybralo-nas?page=1> ,

<https://news.by/videogallery/khronikalno-dokumentalnye/vremya-vybralo-nas?page=4>

⁶³ *Zviazda* newspaper, 01/14/2025, № 7 (30395), p. 3: <https://zviazda.by/sites/default/files/14stu-3.pdf>

⁶⁴ *Belarus Today*, *What is at the heart of the most consolidating flash mob in Belarus. Needs to be done*, 11/02/2024: <https://www.sb.by/articles/nado.html>

⁶⁵ *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, *"If my supporters say that it needs to be done..." Belarusians record a video with the words "Needs to be done!" in response to Lukashenka's words about participating in the presidential elections in 2025*, 10/28/2024: <https://www.belarus.kp.ru/daily/27652/5003775/>

⁶⁶ *Belarusian Professional Union of Workers of Culture, Information, Sports, and Tourism*, *Trade unions say: "Needs to be done!"*, 10/29/2024, <https://kult.1prof.by/news/no-category/profsoyuzy-govoryat-nado/>

⁶⁷ *Zerkalo*, *The authorities have launched a flash mob: employees of government organizations and the military are forced to ask Lukashenka to run for the 7th term*, 10/28/2024, <https://news.zerkalo.io/cellar/81933.html>

⁶⁸ *BelTA*, *Lukashenka spoke about his reaction to the flash mob "Needs to be done!"*, 11/03/2024: <https://belta.by/president/view/lukashenko-rasskazal-o-svoej-reaktsii-na-fleshmob-nado-673001-2024/>

Then the slogan "Needs to be done!" was used in the visual design of pickets to collect signatures for A. Lukashenka.⁶⁹ After registration, the dual positioning of this slogan continued: a grassroots flash mob and its use in the visual identity of the A. Lukashenka campaign allows uncontrolled use of the resources of many organizations. Thus, the BRSM has launched sticker packs⁷⁰ for those who vote for A. Lukashenka: "Only together! Only forward! Only with Batka!", "One doesn't give away one's beloved!", "Needs to be done!". And then this news is published, for example, by a local newspaper *Biarezinskaja Panarama*⁷¹.

6.4 Information about elections in general, used for covert campaigning

On January 16, 2025, a Single Information Day was dedicated to the theme "Participation in elections is the right and civic duty of everyone," which was not only focused on education about voting rights but also provided an opportunity for covert and direct campaigning. On the websites of local executive committees, news about past events related to presidential elections, which were mainly conducted by government officials, were posted. A frequent narrative of the speeches is the correctness of the course chosen 30 years ago⁷².

There are also situations of covert campaigning for A. Lukashenka. For example, Siarhei Liaukovich, Assistant to the President, Inspector for the Viciebsk region⁷³, said: *"I often visit various enterprises, organizations, and communicate with team members. I am pleased that people support the current course of Belarus, rallying around the national leader, and appreciate that we live in a peaceful country."* Siarhei Novikau, Head of the Sports and Tourism Department of the Mahilioŭ Regional Executive⁷⁴ Committee, concluded that *"current sociological research clearly indicates the overwhelming majority of support for the current course. The*

⁶⁹ The United Industrial Trade Union Organization of Workers of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus has begun collecting signatures for the nomination of candidates for President of the Republic of Belarus: <https://profnan.by/nachalsya-sbor-podpisej-dlya-vydvizheniya-kandidatov-v-prezidenty-respubliki-belarus/>

⁷⁰ BRSM, "Youth are voting!" A special sticker pack was launched on Telegram, 01/21/2025: <https://www.brsm.by/ru/patriotic-news-ru/view/molodezh-golosuet-tematiceskij-stikerpak-zapuschen-v-telegram-26109-2025/>

⁷¹ *Biarezinskaja Panarama*, "Youth is voting!" A special sticker pack was launched on Telegram, 01/22/2025: <https://berezino.by/ru/novosti/aktualnye-novosti/item/35845-molodezh-golosuet-tematiceskij-stikerpak-zapushchen-v-telegram>

⁷² Babrujsk City Executive Committee, *Everyone's choice. A single information day with the participation of Ihar Kisel was held in the trolleybus park*, 01/17/2025:

<https://bobruisk.gov.by/news/gorodskie-novosti/vybor-kazhdogo-edinyj-den-informirovaniya-s-uchastiem-igorja-ki-selya-proshel>

⁷³ *Pastauski Krai*, Siarhei Liaukovich, Inspector for the Viciebsk region, visited Pastavy on January 16, 01/16/2025:

<https://www.postawy.by/2025/01/16-janvarja-postavy-posetil-inspektor-po-vitebskoj-oblasti-sergej-levkovich/>

⁷⁴ Babrujsk City Executive Committee, *Siarhei Novikau: "The will of the Belarusian people is the only legitimate force that can and should choose the fate of the state,"* 01/17/2025:

<https://bobruisk.gov.by/news/gorodskie-novosti/sergej-novikov-volva-belorusskogo-naroda-edinstvennaya-legitimnaya-sila>

results of the opinion polls confirm full trust in the Head of State and government agencies and reflect the results of five years of government work."

Others conducted direct campaigning. For example, the report from the Academy of Management directly quotes the words of the rector, who actually calls for voting for A. Lukashenka.⁷⁵ Aliaksandr Viarsotski, Chairman of the Lida District Executive Committee, speaking to doctors at the Lida Central District Hospital⁷⁶, stated the importance of the vote of every Belarusian and said what needs to be done to "preserve our sovereign and independent state built over the past 30 years for the people," named the factors of a strong state, one of which is a strong government that is associated with with "President Aliaksandr Lukashenka". However, he stressed that he was not campaigning to vote for one candidate or another, as all the people gathered were smart and could make their own choice. His only request is that the choice be thoughtful, analytical, and done with full responsibility for the future.

III. THE MEDIA SUPERVISORY BOARD

As in previous campaigns, by Resolution No. 104 of November 20, 2024, the CEC has established a Supervisory Board to monitor compliance with the procedure and rules for conducting election campaigning in the media (the Board). The regulation of the composition of the Board, the procedures for its formation, and the termination of powers of its members remain unchanged and, as we noted earlier⁷⁷, cannot guarantee the independence of this body. The Supervisory Board is called upon to monitor compliance by the editorial offices of the media with the Electoral Code, the Law On Mass Media, and other legislative acts; to ensure equal opportunities for election campaigning, including the establishment by media editorial offices and Internet resources owners of uniform rates and conditions of payment for campaigning platforms for all candidates, as well as to consider disputes about violations of the procedure and rules of conduct of pre-election campaigning during the preparation and conduct of elections based on appeals from candidates for president and their proxies.⁷⁸ The resolution provides for the possibility to attend the meetings of the Supervisory Board for members of the CEC, its staff, and "other persons invited to the meeting."⁷⁹

⁷⁵ The Academy of Management under the President of the Republic of Belarus, *Participation in elections is the right and civic duty of everyone. A Single Information Day was held at the Presidential Academy*, 01/16/2025: <https://www.pac.by/press-center/news/uchastie-v-viborah-pravo-i-grazhdanskii-dolg-kazhdogo/>

⁷⁶ Lida District Executive Committee, *Aliaksandr Viarsotski met with the staff of the Lida Central District Hospital | District News*, 01/24/2025: <https://lida.gov.by/ru/lida-news-ru/view/aleksandr-versotskij-vstretilsja-s-kollektivom-lidskoj-tsrb-25554-2025/>

⁷⁷ *Elections*2024. Analytical report on the results of monitoring the election campaigning*, p. 15: <https://elections2024.spring96.org/en/news/114587>

⁷⁸ CEC Resolution No. 104, paragraph 4, dated 11/20/2024: <https://rec.gov.by/uploads/files/Calendar/post104-2025.pdf>.

⁷⁹ CEC Resolution No. 104, paragraph 2, dated 11/20/2024: <https://rec.gov.by/uploads/files/Calendar/post104-2025.pdf>.

Even though the text of the resolution contains a link to an appendix specifying the council members, the published series of documents does not contain information about the members⁸⁰. There is also no information on the composition of the Board or updated information on its activities or disputes submitted to it in other open sources. The CEC Telegram channel published 3 information notes concerning the Supervisory Board (on the agenda of the CEC meeting⁸¹, on the formation of the board — without naming the members⁸², on one meeting of the board⁸³).

According to the CEC, on January 23, the Supervisory Board held a meeting with a representative of the CEC⁸⁴, since the newspapers *Minskaya Pravda* and *7 Days*, on January 22 and 23, published public opinion polls related to the elections, in violation of the requirements of Article 46 of the Electoral Code⁸⁵. Warnings have been issued to the print media.

⁸⁰ CEC Resolution No. 104, dated 11/20/2024: <https://rec.gov.by/uploads/files/Calendar/post104-2025.pdf>.

⁸¹ CEC, Telegram @Cikbelarus, 11/16/2024: <https://t.me/cikbelarus/2872>

⁸² CEC, Telegram @cikbelarus, 11/20/2024: <https://t.me/cikbelarus/2884>

⁸³ CEC, Telegram @cikbelarus, 01/25/2025: <https://t.me/cikbelarus/3259>

⁸⁴ CEC, Telegram @cikbelarus, 01/25/2025: <https://t.me/cikbelarus/3259>

⁸⁵ EC, part 12, Article 46 (during the last five days before elections, referendums, it is not allowed to publish or post on the global computer network Internet the results of public opinion polls related to elections, referendums, or the forecast of their results)