

## **BELARUS ELECTIONS- A NEED FOR DEMOCRACY**

*European School Students stand with Belarus people and call for democratic action.*

The Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions- OBESSU, the platform for cooperation for school student unions from all over Europe, is concerned to observe the actions taken by the Belarusian government surrounding the recent presidential election. On Sunday, August 9th, Alexander Lukashenko was shown to have won the Belarus Presidential elections, with over 80% of the total votes, as reported by the Central Election Commission of Belarus (CEC). The electoral process, according to the international community, failed to meet the necessary standards to be considered fair and transparent. The CEC had put limits on the number of polling observers present as the votes were being calculated and we recognise that some domestic observers from CSOs are reported to the police, expelled from polling stations, and in some cases deregistered and arrested.

We acknowledge the detainment of approximately 6000 people, as confirmed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in just 3 days of protesting. Many of those who have been brutally detained are young people, including students. We stand in solidarity with these peaceful protesters and call for their immediate release. Despite the attempts by the authorities to revoke the rights of the Belarusian people to protest, there has been a multitude of people continuing to protest on the streets. These people are being met with violence and arrests from the authorities. The Belarus Police have resulted to using tear gas, rubber bullets, their vehicles, stun grenades and water cannons, to break up peaceful protests and provoke aggressive reactions. There have already been reports of deaths among protesters as a result of these violent measures used by the authorities.

OBESSU fully supports and endorses RADA, the representatives of young people from Belarus, in their actions in light of this situation. We continue to call for the protection of the rights of Belarusian students by demanding their democratic rights be guarded as well as their physical safety protected while protesting peacefully.

OBESSU also is in support of [RADA](#)'s demands of:

1. Police to immediately stop using violence against participants in peaceful assemblies.
2. State bodies to immediately release all detained in peaceful protests for political reasons.
3. All government officials and employees to remember their duty to serve the Belarusian people and respect the law.
4. State courts to restore the principles of the rule of law and equality of all before the law.
5. State officials to ensure the implementation of all rights on the territory of the country in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966.
6. The Central Election Commission to provide access to all observers without additional conditions or restrictions to polling stations, including the stage of counting votes.
7. Journalists and politicians to be honest and open when disseminating information and provide an opportunity to express their position to all parties involved when covering events.
8. Official representatives of democratic states and international institutions to remind authorities of the Republic of Belarus that human rights are not an internal matter and about responsibility for violations of human rights in accordance with international criminal law and universal jurisdiction.
9. All political forces in the country to stop manipulating with and bargaining of independence of Belarus

OBESSU stands with the Belarusian people during this time and calls for the correct and transparent election of the president of Belarus. We are opposed to the shrinking of the civic space and support the Belarusian people in having the safety to peacefully protest this issue.