

# Belarus authorities intensify attacks on independent unions

Saturday 23 April 2022, by [IndustriAll Global Union](#) (Date first published: 21 April 2022).

**21 September, 2021. The pressure on IndustriALL affiliate Belarusian Independent Trade Union has dramatically increased in the last days. Union leaders and activists have been arrested, fined, and their homes have been searched.**

## Contents

- [BITU and IndustriALL are \(...\)](#)
- [In the joint letter on 17](#)

Today in Navapolatsk, the house of Volha Brytsikava, local BITU chairperson at Naftan, was searched and her computer was seized. She was detained, but has since been released.

Two more union members, Andrey Berezovsky and Roman Shkodin, were arrested for seven and 15 days respectively.

The local BITU office in Navapolatsk is currently being searched.

IndustriALL assistant general secretary Kemal Özkan says:

---

“These continued attacks on independent unions and fundamental rights in Belarus are unacceptable. We demand the immediate release of all union leaders and activists who are unlawfully detained over their union activities and struggle to protect fundamental rights.”

---

In the last week, several local BITU union leaders and members have been arrested; vice-chairperson at Grodno Azot, Valiantsin Tseranevich, union members Andrei Paheryla and Vladzimir Zhurauka remain in custody.

In Zhlobin, local BITU secretary-treasurer at the Belarusian Metallurgical Plant (BMZ), Aliaksandr Hashnikau, disappeared last Friday. His family only found out today that he has been arrested.

BITU president Maksim Pazniakou was detained on 17 September, but was subsequently released

following a fast and strong condemnation by global unions. However, on 20 September, Pazniakou was fined US\$350 for a social media post from last year, featuring a Belarusian music group, later labelled by authorities as extremist.

Pazniakou's detention coincided with his speech at [IndustriALL's 3<sup>rd</sup> Congress](#), where he spoke of the deteriorating situation of human, workers' and trade union rights, ongoing attacks on independent unions and mass repression in Belarus.

**BITU and IndustriALL are concerned that Ihar Povarau, sentenced to three years in prison for an attempted warning strike at BMZ in August 2020, has been kept in the solitary confinement for an unspecified period of time, which could severely harm his psychological and physical health.**

**In the joint letter on 17 September, IndustriALL and the ITUC called on the ILO for an urgent intervention with Belarusian authorities to demand the immediate release of Ihar Pavarou and Maxim Pazniakou.**

IndustriALL jointly with the ITUC have also [written to the Prime Minister of Belarus, Roman Golovchenko](#), and demanded to release all union leaders, activists and members who have been unlawfully detained related to their union activities and struggle to protect fundamental rights.

**IndustriALL**

---

---

**P.S.**

- IndustriALL. 21 September, 2021:  
<https://www.industrialall-union.org/belarus-authorities-intensify-attacks-on-independent-unions>