



**The Analysis of work of the Committee for  
Defence of the Repressed "Salidarnasc" in  
2006-2008**

Committee for Defence of the Repressed 'Salidarnasc'

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***The analysis of the Committee's for Defence of the Repressed "Salidarnasc" activities 2006-2008***

This is the analytical research held by the Committee "Salidarnasc" for the period April 2006 March 2009. It helps to understand the forms of repressions of the regime against politically active citizens, membership of the repressed in political parties or NGOs, to define their age, level of education, gender, and to analyze the aid rendered to them by the Committee.

The Committee was created on the 5<sup>th</sup> of April 2006. The creation was the reaction of political leaders and civic activists to the repressions by the regime against citizens who claimed their political views during the presidential elections 2006. The main aim of the Committee "Salidarnasc" is to destroy the fear in Belarusian society.

The main fields of the Committee's activities are:

- Protection of the right for free education
- Protection of the right for work
- Rendering medical aid to the repressed and their families
- Rendering financial aid to the repressed and their families
- Holding informational campaigns and the campaigns of solidarity in Belarus and abroad
- Rendering legal aid to activists of democratic movement
- Preparation and sending the letters of reaction-pressure to the repressive bodies
- Preparation of "Black list"
- Preparation of reports on the facts of repressions and on the rendered aid to the repressed.

The Committee consists of two groups – **Rada of the Committee** and **working office**.

**Rada of the Committee** is the strategic-controlling body which approves the directions of the Committee's activities and defines current tasks. During the sittings of Rada the decisions about rendering aid and the form of the aid are made. Working office is making the reports about its activities to Rada. Rada consists of the leaders and the members of well-known Belarusian organizations:

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- Liudmila Griaznova “HR defence alliance”
- Nasta Shamrey “Belarusian Students' Association”
- Andrei Vitushka “Belarusian Medics Association”
- Ela Garetskaya civic initiative “The Committee of parents’ solidarity”
- Alena Tankacheva “Fund for legal technologies development”
- Aleg Vouchak “Legal aid to citizens”
- Gary Paganaiaila “BHC”
- Uladzimier Arlou – Belarusian writer
- Iaugenia Astreika, civic activist
- Ina Kulei “Committee for Defence of the Repressed “Salidarnasc”

**The working office** is responsible for current activities:

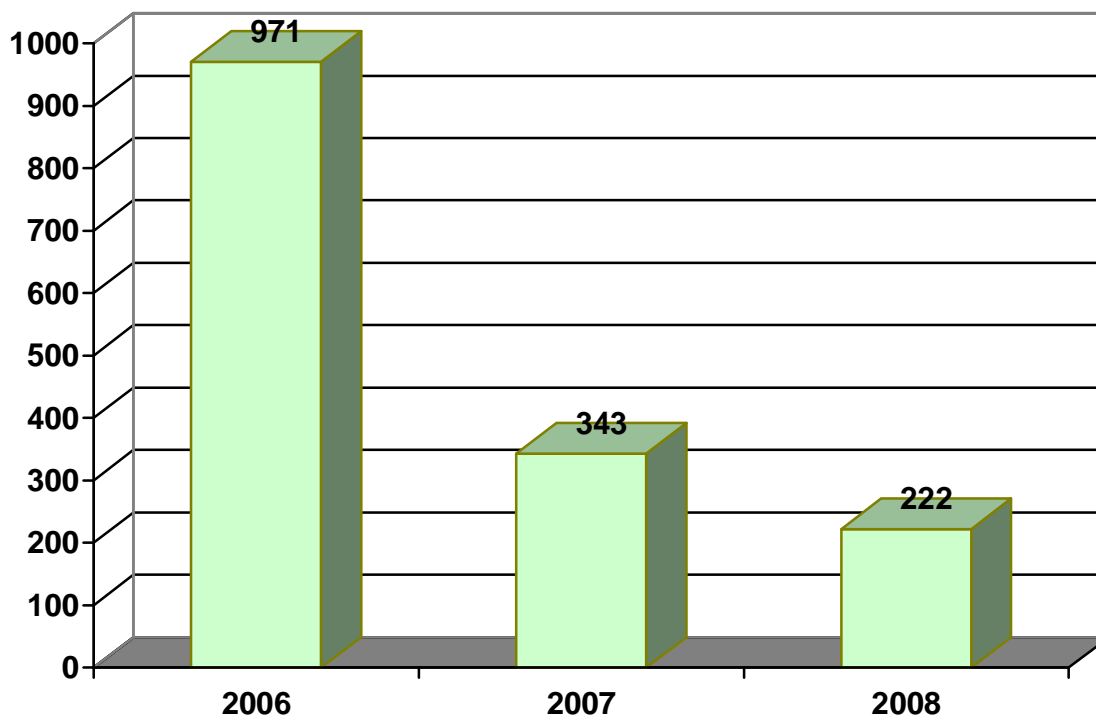
- Preparing documents about every repressed
- Preparing database
- Holding contacts with the repressed who asked for aid from the Committee
- Rendering aid to the repressed
- Preparing statistical and analytical data
- Keeping contacts with the ambassadors of countries accredited in the Republic of Belarus and neighboring countries in order to define the forms of the support to the repressed by the countries they represent
- Keeping contacts with the donors, who render aid to the repressed in Belarus (universities, political parties, civic organizations, religious confessions, initiative groups) in Belarus and abroad
- Preparing meetings with the repressed, their families in order to support them morally and to work out the plans of future actions
- Making monitoring of the facts of repressions, preparing and sending letters of reaction-pressure to the repressive bodies and preparing of the so-called “black list”
- Holding informational contact with Belarusian and foreign mass-media
- Preparing informational campaigns of “Solidarity” in the country and abroad (publishing monthly newspaper “Don’t be afraid!” and web-site [www.salidarnasc.org](http://www.salidarnasc.org))

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After three years of work our database has 1536 repressed in it. The majority of them 971 applied for aid in 2006. It is explained by the fact of mass repression during and after the presidential elections 2006. In 2007 there were 343 appeals from the repressed and 222 in 2008 (drawing 1).



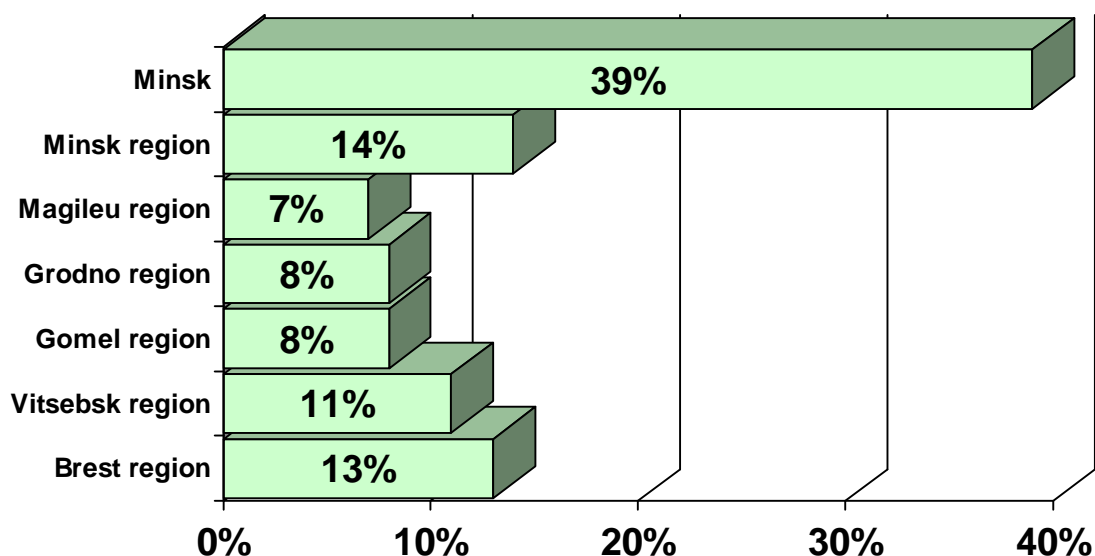
*Drawing 1. The amount of appeals to the Committee*

During three years of our activities we managed to work out the system of quick reaction to the facts of repressions as in Minsk so in all the regions of the country. Starting from 2008 regional coordinators have been working in all the regions of Belarus. They keep contact with the repressed and their families, help them to define their needs, gather information and documents for rendering legal and medical aid. Thanks to their work the geography of rendering aid had significantly widened (drawing 2.)

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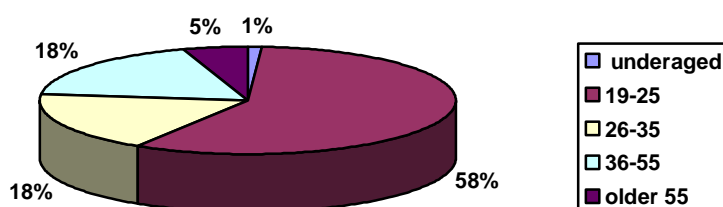
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*Drawing 2. Ratio in regions*

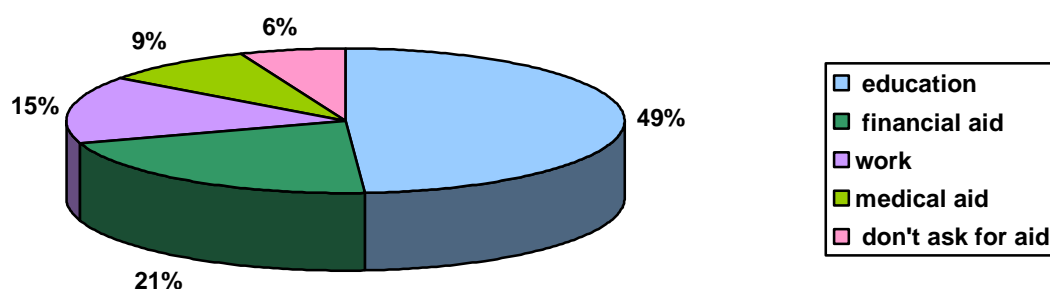
Most active among the repressed are young people aged younger 35. The majority are 19-25 (drawing 3). Students and working youth take part in actions of protest against the limitation of civic freedoms, freedom of speech, religion, actions of solidarity with the political prisoners and the repressed. And it is obvious that the repressions are mainly forwarded at young people.



*Drawing 3. Age structure of the repressed*

Different forms of repressions are used against free-thinkers: criminal cases, administrative arrests, searches, beatings during peaceful actions, expulsions from educational establishments, firings from work, fines, talks with KGB agents, persecution of the members of the families of activists.

According with the age of the repressed and form of repression the needs of repressed who ask for aid from the Committee are formed (drawing 4).



*Drawing 4. Needs of the repressed*

During the three years of Committee's work financial aid have been rendered to more than **500 people**.

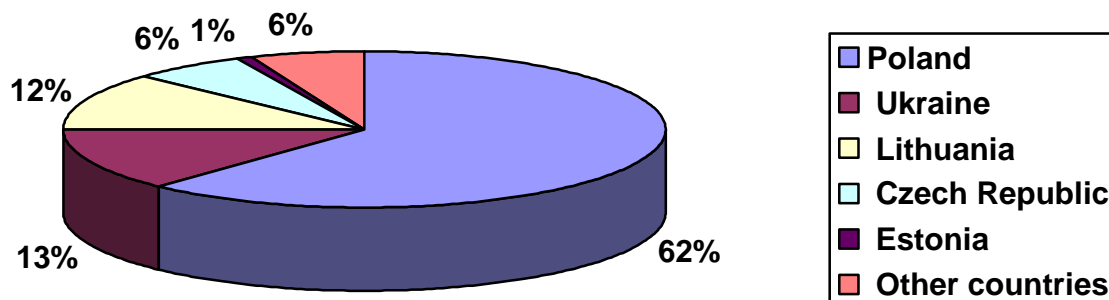
Analyses held by the Rada of the Committee during interviews with the repressed young people showed that the priorities in choosing the country for continuing education are made taking into account the information about the country and if the repressed knows its language. First of all the repressed want to study not far from Belarus in order to have the possibility to take part in actions of protest for the democratization of Belarus (drawing 5).

As we can see in drawing 5 the majority of the repressed want to continue their education in Poland. The educational program of Polish government for the repressed Belarusian students started in 2006. Kastus Kalinovskiy program gives the possibility to get higher education of European level to the repressed or to students from the repressed families. There is no limitation of specialties and entering exams. Starting from 2007 the program gives the possibility to study postgraduate for students who can not do it in Belarus on political grounds.

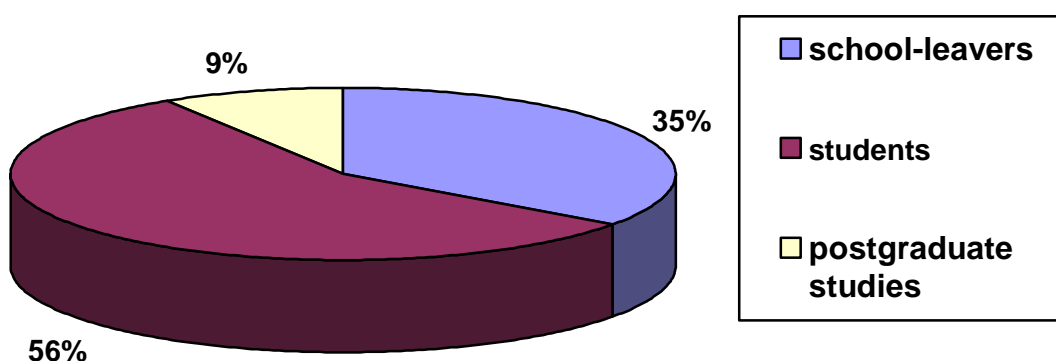
Another country the repressed are choosing is the Ukraine. Its educational establishments are attractive to young people because they can study there by correspondence. There is also no limitation of specialties. The program is supported by the Ministry of Northern Countries.

European Humanitarian University in Vilnius is very popular among the repressed. But only the students who study humanitarian sciences can continue their education there.

Programs of Czech and Estonian governments give the possibility to get education in different countries but the amount of the participants of the programs is limited. Less than 1 percent of the repressed want to get education in such countries as UK, Austria, Norway, Belgium, Romania, France, Latvia, Netherlands. The Committee tries to treat every case individually.



*Drawing 5. Interest in countries for continuing studies*



*Drawing 6. Structure of candidates for studies*

Drawing 6 helps us to understand the structure of candidates for studying in international programs. The majority of them are students who were expelled from Belarusian higher educational establishments for their active civic position.

We worked out the mechanism of defining the suitability of candidates for studying in educational programs and established good relations with the heads of the programs and with donors. The Committee is watching after every student and

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is preparing the Base of Specialists, consisting of people who after getting their diplomas would be needed in Belarus.

Table 1 shows the amount of students who with the help of the Committee “Solidarnasc” have the possibility to get higher education abroad.

*Table 1. Dynamics of the educational programs*

<i>Country</i>	<i>2006-2007</i>	<i>2007-2008</i>	<i>2008-2009</i>
Poland	244	71	
Ukraine	5	35	-
Lithuania (EHU)	43	23	16
Romania	4	-	-
Estonia	10	5	-
Latvia	1	-	-
Germany	3	-	-
Czech Republic	5	6	6
Netherlands	-	-	1
France	1	1	-

Students are studying in many cities and towns of European countries. They also study many different specialties.

The Committee “Solidarnasc” analyzed this data (Tables 2, 3, 4)

*Table 2. The structure of Kalinovskiy program (supported by the Polish government)*

<i>Number of cities 19</i>	<i>Amount of HEE 37</i>	<i>Number of specialties 77</i>
Warsaw, Wroclaw, Poznan, Gdansk, Gnezna, Lodz, Bialystok, Pultusk, Biala Podlaska, Krakow, Katowice, Torun, Olsztyn, Slupsk, Zheshuv, Lublin, Legnica, Opole, Szczecin.	Warsaw University, Politechnika Warszawska, Jagiellonian University, Higher School of Trade, Kalgium Eurapeyski named after Ian Pavel, University of Mikalay Kapernik, Art Academy, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Adam Mitskevich University, Higher Art School and so on.	Political science, economy, tourism, European communications, mechanics, acting, sound edition, restoration, law, journalism, the history of art, geography, electronics, archeology, linguistics, marketing, international relations, psychology, music, chemistry, photography, geology, graphics, theology, architecture.



**Table 3. The structure of educational programs in the Ukraine (supported by the Council of Ministers of Northern countries)**

<i>Number of cities</i> <b>4</b>	<i>Number of HEE</i> <b>10</b>	<i>Number of Specialties</i> <b>20</b>
Kiev, Lutsk, Donetsk, Lvov	The University of art modeling and design, European University, Law and economics University, National Transport University, Kiev national university of theatre, cinema and TB, Pedagogical University, Donetsk state university of management, National Medical University, Volunskiy State University, National Academy of Management.	Journalism, computer design, management of organizations, it technologies, project management, pre-school psychology, cameraman, film directing, pharmaceuticals, finance, management of international economy.

**Table 4. The structure of EHU educational program, Lithuania (supported by international donors).**

<i>Number of students</i> <b>16</b>	<i>Number of specialties</i> <b>8</b>
	Media and communication, social and political philosophy, political science, cultural legacy and tourism, the history of Belarus and cultural anthropology, international law, visual design, European research.

Everyone who got bachelor's, master's and candidate's of science degree in Europe will be needed for future democratic Belarus. These students who know the system of governing the country they study in, its cultural peculiarities, having good contacts inside the country can become a good "diplomat" in the integration of Belarus into the European Union.

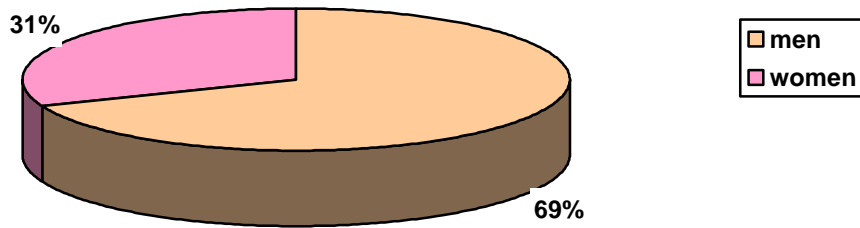
In order to render aid to the repressed more effectively the Committee analyzed the gender structure of the repressed (Table 6).

The numbers of cases of aid in getting visas, the level of education of those who appealed for aid. At drawing 7 we can see that among active citizens who suffered from the regime and asked for aid there are twice more men.

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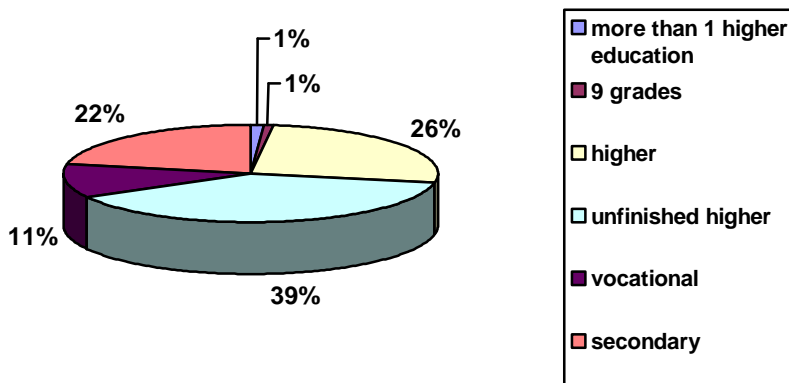
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*Drawing 7. The gender structure of the repressed*

From drawing 8 we can see that activist of democratic movement are mostly people with higher education or students of higher educational establishments.



*Drawing 8. Educational level of the repressed*

Gender and educational analyses help the Committee to plan programs of rendering aid to the repressed who were fired from their working places. It is a pity, but we have to state the fact that programs of short-term employment abroad Belarus which started in 2006 were almost closed because of the entering of the neighboring countries to Shengen Zone. The large amount of bureaucratic procedures, world financial crisis are restraining employers from hiring workers from abroad.

*Table 5. Number of people the Committee helped to find a job*

2006	2007	2008
35 people	31 people	11 people

During all the term of our activities the Committee “Salidarnasc” rendered aid to the activists of democratic movement in getting visas. Thanks to the simplified procedure of getting document the repressed citizens could take part in educational programs, keep contacts with NGOs abroad, find a job, parents and families of students who study abroad could visit the young people.

We want to thank the embassies of Poland, Lithuania, France, Czech Republic for the support of democratic activists in simplifying the procedure of getting visas.

*Table 6. The amount of democratic activists who got aid in getting visas*

2006	2007	2008
370 people	403 people	117 people

Starting from 2007 the Committee for Defence of the Repressed “Salidarnasc” started to render professional **legal aid** to the repressed activists. Our legal service managed to fulfill the following tasks:

- Prevention of repressions against civic activists and their families
- Monitoring the facts of repressions
- Creating the database of activists who suffered from repressions
- To enlarge the number of lawyer working with civic activists

In 2008 we established working contacts with all HR defence organizations in Belarus and managed to fulfill the number of joint projects in monitoring HR defence situation, legal assistance and the protection of civic rights.

The representatives of legal service took active part in joint legal campaigns aimed at setting political prisoners free, in analytical round tables and meetings of HR defenders. It was done in the frames of one of the main strategic tasks of the Committee’s legal service – creation of effective system of activists’ protection from politically motivated repressions.

In the frames of realization of the task aimed at the rising of level of self defence of democratic activists legal service of the Committee prepared several memos-recommendations of legal character. They were placed at the Committee’s web-site and at the pages of the Committee’s newspaper “Don’t Be Afraid!”

Legal service is continuing to prepare letters of reaction-pressure. They are sent to state officials, employers, administrations of educational establishments and so on

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in cases when they are persecuting democratic activists on political grounds. Letters prepared by the lawyers of the Committee are signed by Alexander Milinkevich. These letters claim to stop politically motivated repressions such as expulsions from educational establishments, perjuries, unmotivated detentions, illegal judicial decisions.

They are important as an element of moral pressure at state official and as the element of support of democratic activists. They are also one of the methods of gathering information about the facts of political repressions. When we inform the officials that all their activities are being recorded we warn them about the responsibility for their actions.

According to the Belarusian legislation about the appeals of citizens state officials have to give answer in the definite term, to explain and to ground the legality.

Parliamentary elections were held in Belarus in 2008. During the campaign the Committee's legal service together with the regional coordinators held the monitoring of repressions against those who took active part in the electoral campaign.

In some cases legal service rendered aid to the activists who suffered from persecution of the authorities. The results of monitoring were every week sent to diplomatic missions, foreign partners and international HR defence organizations. We paid a lot attention to politically motivated firings from job and expulsions from educational establishments.

From the very beginning of Committee's activities program **"Parents' Initiative"** exists. In three years it became the example of the development of independent civic initiative.

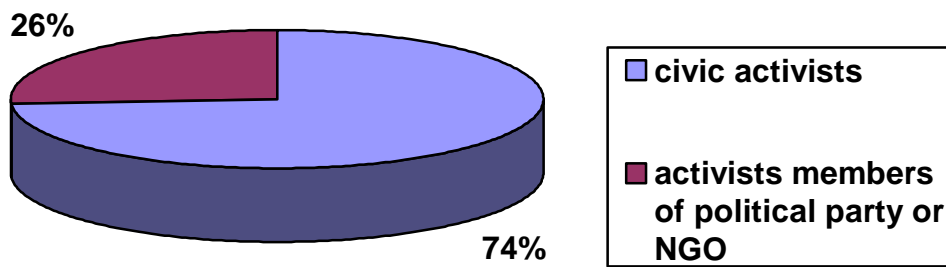
One of the main tasks of the Committee is the organization of solidarity campaigns with the politically repressed activists. In order to spread the information about repressions the Committee launched web-site [www.solidarnasc.org](http://www.solidarnasc.org) and publishes newspaper "Don't Be Afraid". Sometimes the Committee publishes special editions of the newspaper in order to protect one of the activists.

Starting from 2006 the Committee has been creating the database of the repressed. The information which is in that base helps us to plan effective programs of the support of the repressed and to analyze the structure of the repressed. So the analysis of membership of the repressed activists in political and civic structures shows that the majority of them do not belong to any political party or NGO (drawing 9).

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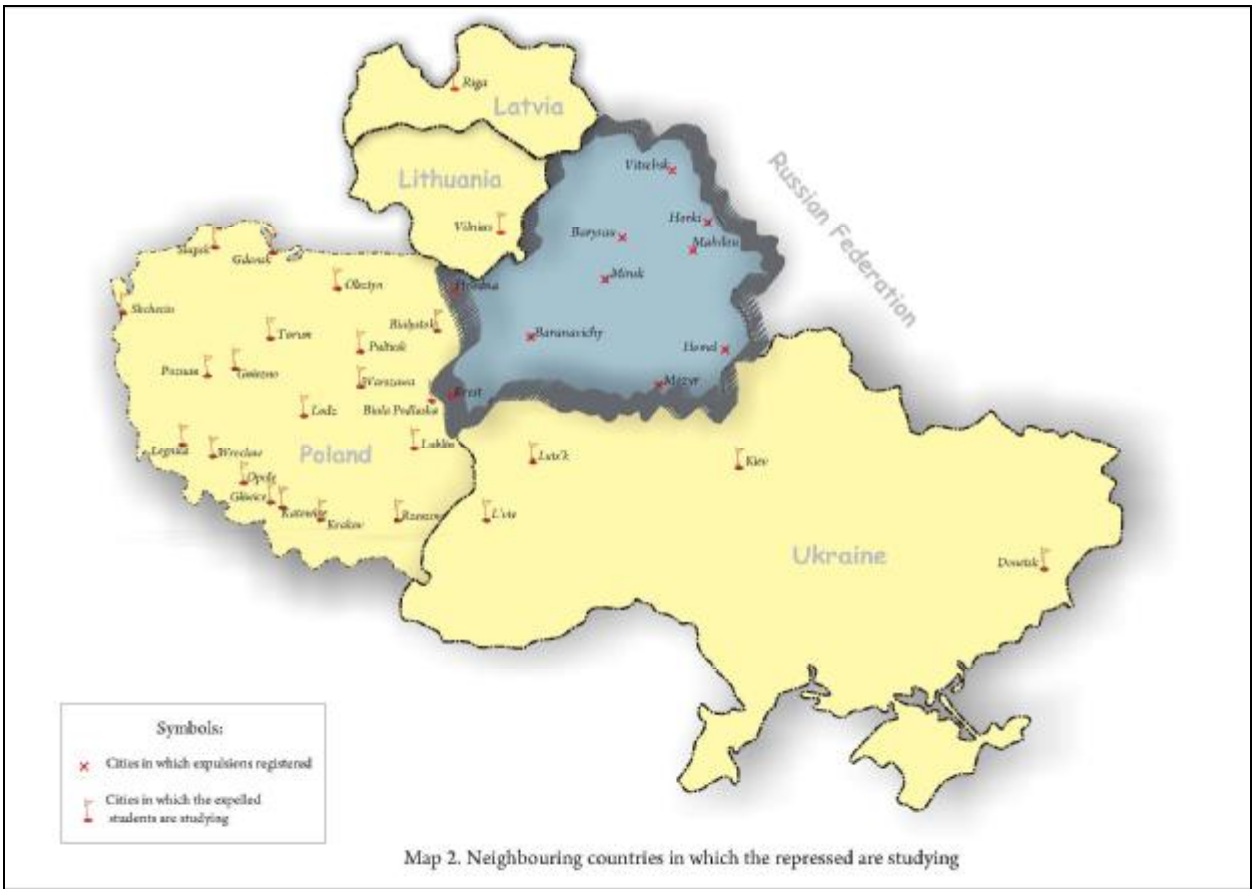
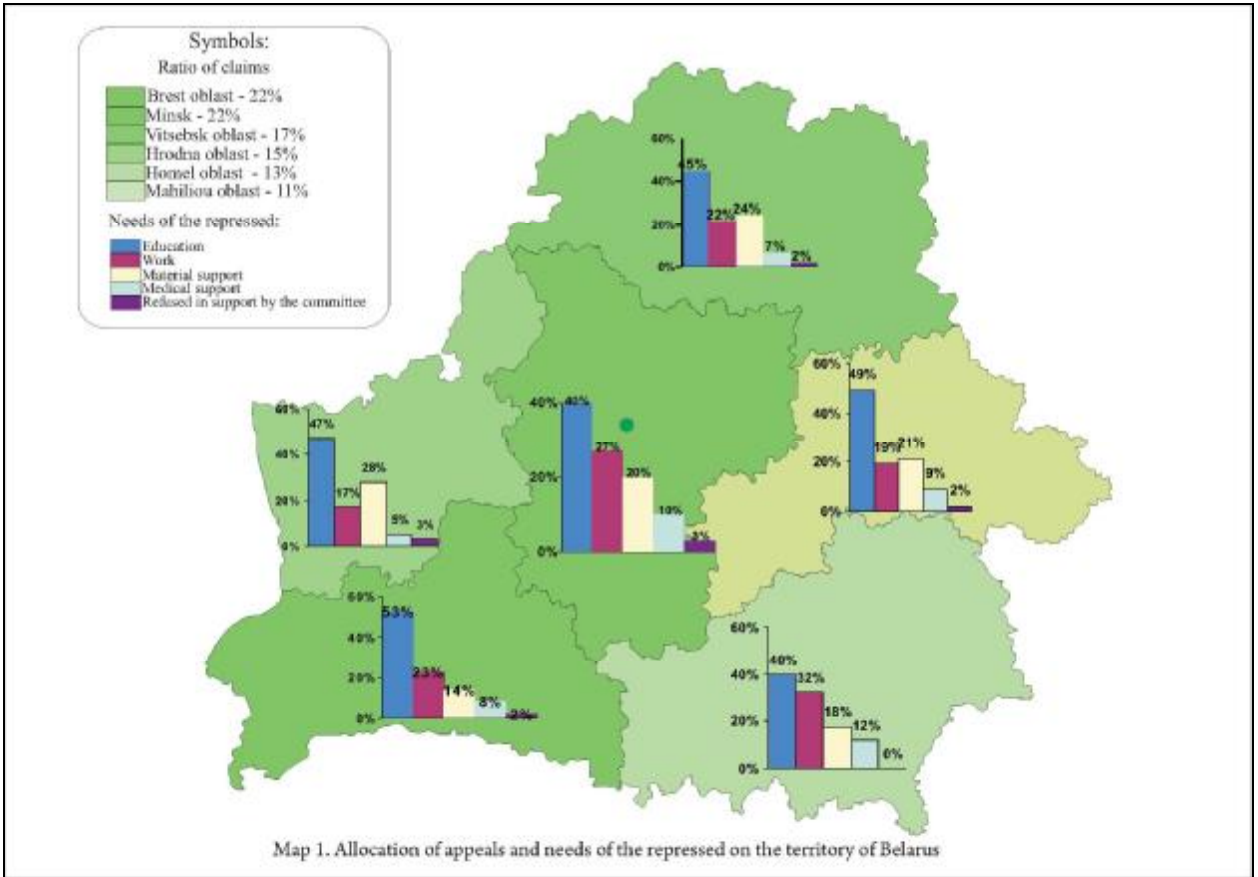
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*Drawing 9. Membership of the repressed in political parties or NGOs*

Democratic activists are usually mobile and well informed. So, according to the database of the Committee “Solidarnasc” there are almost twice more activists who use Internet 63% than not having access to it 37%.

During all the time of the Committee’s activities Rada refused to render aid to 2,6% of claimants because of the absence of evidence about the facts of repressions.



Map 3. European countries with which we have established partnership relations

