

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am writing to express my strong interest in applying for the scholarship to study in the master's program "International Law and Security" at the European Humanities University. With a professional background deeply rooted in human rights advocacy, I am committed to furthering my expertise and contributing significantly to the field of transitional justice, particularly in the context of Belarus.

Since 2008, I have been a member of the Minsk City Bar Association. My legal practice has consistently focused on defending human rights, leading me to represent individuals in politically motivated criminal and administrative cases. To enhance my knowledge in this crucial area, I completed the "Bring International Standards Home" course at the Belarusian Human Rights House with distinction.

The events of 2020 in Belarus marked a significant turning point in my career. I became actively involved in defending political prisoners, which, due to the high-profile nature of these cases, rendered my continued presence in the country unsafe. Consequently, I had to leave Belarus and have been residing in Lithuania since October 2022.

During my time in Lithuania, I have engaged actively with Belarusian democratic centers to develop the Transitional justice framework for Belarus. As an expert and manager, I contributed to creating a Compensation Concept for victims of politically motivated repression, which was presented to the public in September 2023¹. Continuing this work, I prepared an analytical material on managing archives during the transition period, currently being prepared for publication and expert discussion. Additionally, I am part of a group of experts exploring the possibility of initiating proceedings against Belarus in the International Court of Justice for violating the Convention Against Torture.

Despite my forced departure from Belarus, I have continued to enhance my knowledge in human rights protection. I participated in two seminars organized by the Contact Group for Cooperation between the Council of Europe and Belarus and the CEELI Institute in Prague, Czech Republic, on the European Convention on Human Rights: "How to Build an Anti-Discrimination Case" and the "Right to a Fair Trial."

I am also a founding member of the Belarusian Association of Human Rights Lawyers. This organization brings together lawyers and legal practitioners who have either been disbarred or forced to leave Belarus due to their defense of individuals in politically motivated criminal cases, utilizing international human rights standards in their practice.

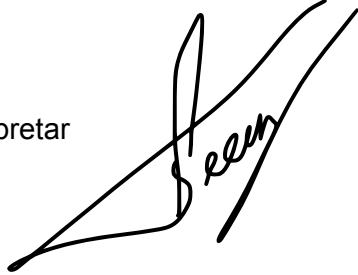
Pursuing education at the European Humanities University will provide me with the opportunity to deepen my knowledge and professional skills, allowing me to continue my work on developing transitional justice concepts for Belarus. This scholarship will enable me to contribute more effectively to this vital cause, ensuring justice and accountability for the victims of political repression.

¹ https://tsikhanouskaya.org/kancepciya_kampensacii_ru.pdf

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the possibility of advancing my studies and contributing to the pursuit of justice and human rights through the opportunities provided by the European Humanities University.

Sincerely,

Dzmitry Lepretar

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dzmitry Lepretar', written over a diagonal line.