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Answer given by Mr Brunner
on behalf of the European Commission
(11.9.2026)

The Commission follows closely the situation in Belarus and strongly condemns measures introduced by Decree No 278, restricting the issuance of passports and other consular services to Belarusians abroad. This is a form of transnational repression which punishes Belarusians perceived as hostile by the regime while creating security risks for Member States.

The Commission recognises the importance of ensuring that Belarusians in the EU have access to identity and travel documents, despite the lack of access to consular services. Together with the European External Action Service, it promotes exchanges with Member States on national best practices to help identify appropriate solutions for Belarusian citizens in the EU. Member States are encouraged to draw on the flexibility offered by EU and national migration and residence rules to facilitate the legal entry and stay of affected persons.

Any third country national in the EU who cannot obtain a passport from their country of origin should primarily seek a travel document – such as an aliens’ passport – from the Member State they are resident in¹. EU and national frameworks may provide for flexibility in the assessment of residence permit applications and of cases where the conditions for entry and stay are no longer formally met due to absence of a valid passport.

The EU reiterates its commitment to continue supporting people-to-people contacts between Belarus and the EU, *inter alia* by supporting mobility, in line with the principles included in the Council Conclusions of 2020 and 2024². Since 2020, the EU has mobilised EUR 200 million to support the people of Belarus, which has included providing mobility opportunities for Belarusian students, researchers, artists and professionals.

¹ Member States already issue passports and other identity documents to third country nationals that cannot acquire those from their own government, according to national law.

² <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/46076/council-conclusions-on-belarus.pdf>; and <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-6737-2024-INIT/en/pdf>.