

Council of Europe

Contribution for the

52nd UPR session (April-May 2026)

Latvia

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Strasbourg, 22 September 2025

1. The present contribution is based on the recommendations of the Council of Europe bodies in respect of Latvia and aims at providing up-to-date information relevant for assessment of compliance with recommendations issued by the last UPR cycle in respect of Latvia.

Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights

2. Concerning recommendation 132.233 and 132.234 (detention of asylum seekers and detention of children). Alleged summary returns of asylum seekers to Belarus - In October 2024, the Commissioner for Human Rights submitted a [third-party intervention](#) to the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights regarding alleged summary returns of asylum seekers to Belarus.
3. While recognising the challenge of instrumentalised migration pressure posed by actions by Belarus, the Commissioner stressed that such actions may exploit migrants and asylum seekers and put them in a situation of particular vulnerability or even in a human rights emergency, which only corroborates the need to fully protect their rights. The Council of Europe member States' efforts to address the practice of instrumentalisation should therefore be without prejudice to their obligations under Article 2 and Article 3 of the European Convention, and the obligation to ensure genuine and effective access to a possibility to apply for protection.

Execution of Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights

4. There is 1 case under enhanced supervision and 9 cases under standard supervision currently pending before the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers in respect of Latvia.
5. Concerning recommendation 132.124, 127-129, 131: Prison hierarchies - The Committee of Ministers supervises under enhanced procedure a case concerning the degrading treatment inflicted on the applicant due to his position at the lowest level of an informal prisoner hierarchy in the prisons where he was incarcerated between 2008 and 2017 ([D.](#) v. Latvia, app.no. 76680/17, [judgment](#) of 11 January 2024). Under Article 46, the European Court of Human Rights considered that to prevent future similar violations, the domestic authorities must address the issue of informal prison hierarchies. It falls to the competent authorities to draw the necessary conclusions from the present judgment and to take appropriate general measures to address the problem at the origin of the violations. The domestic courts are required to take due account of the Convention standards as applied in this judgment. In its decision adopted at their 1531st meeting (10-12 June 2025) on this case, the Committee of Ministers welcomed the adoption of an action plan to address the root causes of informal hierarchies in Latvian prisons and noted with interest the ongoing

measures to modernise the prison estate, reform the system of execution of sentences, improve detention conditions and facilitate post-sentence reintegration, while encouraging the authorities to act decisively in implementing the measures to eradicate informal prison hierarchies. The Committee of Ministers invited further the authorities to provide examples of relevant domestic case-law demonstrating the application of the principles set out by the Court in this judgment. The authorities were invited to provide information on the progress achieved by 1 March 2026.

6. The cases under [standard](#) supervision concern the lack of an effective prosecution of homophobic attack against the applicant; the disproportionate seizure of electronic materials during criminal proceedings; the refusal to grant access to the documents on which the applicants' pre-trial detention was based, the unlawful eviction, and the lack of procedural safeguards in a labor dispute.
7. Concerning recommendation 132.60 (preventing, documenting and responding to gender-based violence) and also 132.68, 87, 93, 113, 132, 137. Effective prosecution of homophobic attacks - In the case of [Hanovs](#) v. Latvia (appl.no. 40861/22, [judgment](#) of 18 July 2024), the authorities provided an action report outlining a set of measures taken to ensure effective prosecution of homophobic attack by Latvian police, prosecutors and courts (action report [DH-DD\(2025\)135](#) of 5 February 2025). These measures included, *inter alia*, the 2021 and 2024 legislative amendments to the Criminal Code and the practice guidelines on the investigations of hate crimes.

European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT)

8. The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) visits places of detention to assess the treatment of persons deprived of their liberty. Following each visit, it adopts a detailed report for the State concerned, outlining its findings along with recommendations, comments, and requests for information. The submission is based on the reports on the CPT May 2022 visit [[CPT/Inf \(2023\) 16](#)] and the CPT May 2024 visit [[CPT/Inf \(2025\) 04](#)].
9. Concerning recommendation 132.131: Police - While most detainees reported being treated appropriately by police, the CPT has documented cases of physical ill-treatment, particularly after apprehension and restraint, including slaps, punches, and kicks. Material conditions are generally adequate, and persons are offered daily outdoor exercise. The CPT recommends that measures be taken to reinforce that any use of excessive force is illegal and punishable, to provide further practical training to law enforcement officers on proportionate use of force and control/restraint techniques.
10. Immigration Detention Centres - At Daugavpils and Mucenieki Immigration Detention Centres, detained foreign nationals generally reported correct treatment, though some instances of verbal abuse were noted. Conditions are generally good, with an open-door regime. The CPT recommends that detained persons be offered purposeful activities, that the detention of migrant children be avoided, in particular unaccompanied minors.
11. During the 2021–2022 influx of irregular border crossings, allegations of severe ill-treatment by special police forces were reported, including punches, kicks, truncheon blows, and electric shocks, allegedly aimed at forcing returns to Belarus. The CPT emphasises the urgent need for training on lawful and proportionate use of force at the border and regular reinforcement that excessive force is illegal and punishable.

12. Concerning recommendation 132.127, 128, 131: Prisons - Despite some positive reports of staff treating prisoners correctly, the informal prisoner hierarchy continues to undermine state authority and facilitate access to illicit drugs. Inter-prisoner violence remains a serious issue, particularly affecting prisoners of the “lowest caste,” who may be subjected to forced labour-like conditions. Material conditions are generally adequate in renovated facilities, but sections such as the Grīva unit of Daugavgrīva Prison remain dilapidated and unsuitable. Healthcare provision is insufficient, with persistent shortages of medical personnel.
13. The 2024 follow-up visit confirmed ongoing concerns: dormitory-style accommodations remain largely unconverted to cellular units, inter-prisoner violence is not adequately recorded or investigated, custodial staff numbers are insufficient, and prisoner reintegration programs are underdeveloped. Conditions for the lowest-caste prisoners may constitute a violation of Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights prohibiting inhuman or degrading treatment. The CPT recommends taking resolute action to eradicate the informal prisoner hierarchy, strengthening recording, reporting, and investigation of inter-prisoner violence, and increasing custodial staff presence in detention areas. Healthcare provision and staffing should also be improved, reintegration programs be extended, and adequate support for substance-related problems be provided.
14. Psychiatric hospitals - At Daugavpils and Akniste Neuropsychiatric Hospitals, most patients reported no ill-treatment, and living conditions are generally adequate. Psycho-social and occupational activities are offered, but participation remains low. The CPT has also raised concerns about the legal safeguards for involuntary placement, noting that some patients are effectively deprived of liberty without proper protections. The CPT recommends ensuring full legal safeguards for involuntary placement in psychiatric facilities, increasing patient participation in therapeutic and occupational activities, and improving the therapeutic environment of patients’ rooms and common areas.

Group of States against Corruption (GRECO)

15. Concerning recommendation 132.119 (Government transparency & lobbying): In its 2022 Second Compliance Report, GRECO still rates several key recommendations only partly implemented. Draft Law on Transparency in Lobbying has stalled; Cabinet members remain outside the 2021 ethics regulation; ad-hoc conflict-of-interest registration and systematic asset-declaration checks for PTEFs are not yet mandatory.
16. Latvia ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents (Tromsø Convention) in January 2025. It entered into force in respect of Latvia on 1 May 2025. The baseline compliance evaluation by the Access Info Group (the monitoring mechanism of the Tromsø Convention) will be available in 2026.

European Social Charter (ESC)

17. Concerning recommendation 132.166 – Right to social security: ECSR, Conclusions 2021, Article 12 - Right to social security, paragraph 1, the Committee concludes that the situation in Latvia is not in conformity with Article 12§1 of the Charter on the ground that the minimum levels of unemployment, old age and disability benefits are not adequate.
18. Concerning recommendation 132.120 – Human rights & poverty: ECSR, Conclusions 2023, Article 17 - Right of children and young persons to social, legal and economic protection, Paragraph 1 - Assistance, education and training, the Committee notes from EUROSTAT that 20.1% of children in Latvia in 2021 were at risk of poverty or social exclusion, a decline in comparison with 2018, when the percentage was 23.6%. The

Committee notes that the 2021 rate is lower than the EU average of 24.4%.

19. Concerning recommendation 132.167-168 – Right to health: ECSR, [Conclusions 2021](#), Article 11 - Right to protection of health, Paragraph 1 - Removal of the causes of ill-health, while noting that public spending on healthcare remains low while out-of-pocket payments appear to remain among the highest in Europe, the Committee considers that insufficient measures have been taken to effectively guarantee the right of access to healthcare and, therefore, maintains its conclusion of non-conformity. The Committee concludes that the situation in Latvia is not in conformity with Article 11§1 of the Charter on the grounds that:
 - the measures taken to reduce maternal mortality have been insufficient;
 - insufficient measures have been taken to effectively guarantee the right of access to healthcare.
20. Concerning recommendation 132.159, 161, 162 – Labour rights and right to work: ECSR, [Conclusions 2022](#), Article 4 - Right to a fair remuneration, paragraph 3 - Non-discrimination between women and men with respect to remuneration, the Committee notes from the 2022 country report on gender equality in Latvia that there are no company-level job evaluation and classification systems, except for state officials and employees employed in state and municipal institutions. The Committee notes that, in order to establish whether the work performed is equal or of equal value, factors such as the nature of tasks, skills, as well as educational and training requirements must be taken into account. States should seek to clarify this notion in domestic law as necessary, either through legislation or case law. In this respect, job classification and evaluation systems should be promoted and where they are used, they must rely on criteria that are gender-neutral and do not result in indirect discrimination (see in this respect collective complaints Nos. 124 to 138, University Women of Europe (UWE) v. Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia and Sweden, 5-6 December 2019). In view of the above, the Committee requests that the next report provide more information on the parameters making it possible to establish the equal value of the work carried out (such as the nature of the work, training and working conditions).