

**REPLIES TO THE LIST OF ISSUES IN RELATION TO THE FOURTH PERIODIC  
REPORT OF LATVIA ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL  
COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS OF 16 DECEMBER 1966**

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## ANNEX 1

## Invocation of the Covenant by the Constitutional Court

Decision (link if translation in English available)	Article(s) of the Covenant Invoked	Comment
<a href="#">Judgment in the case no.2014-03-01 of 5 February 2015</a>	Article 25	Used to interpret the obligations of States in the establishment of their electoral systems.
<a href="#">Judgment in the case no.2015-01-01 of 2 July 2015</a>	Article 19	Interpretation of Article 100 of the <i>Constitution</i> (freedom of expression) in line with Latvia's international obligations.
<a href="#">Judgment in case no. 2015-06-01 of 12 November 2015</a>	Article 19(2) and (3)  References also to the <i>General Comment No. 34: Freedom of opinion and expression (Art. 19): 10/09/2011. CCPR/C/GC/34, paras 7, 18.</i>	Used to interpret the right to receive information as enshrined in Article 100 of the <i>Constitution of Latvia</i> to include the right to receive information in possession of the domestic judicial authorities, as well as to delimit the boundaries of the exercise of this right.
<a href="#">Judgment in the case no.2015-10-01 of 23 November 2015</a>	Article 14	Used to interpret the scope of Article 92 of the <i>Constitution</i> rights to a fair trial.
Judgment in the case no.2017-09-01 of 15 February 2018	Article 23	Used to interpret the scope of Article 110 of the <i>Constitution</i> (protection of family).
Judgment in case no. 2017-28-0306 of 29 June 2018	Article 26  References also to the Committee's views in the case <i>Ibrahima Gueye et al v. France</i> , no.196/1985, paragraph 9.4 and the Committee's views in the case <i>Des Fours Walderode and Kammerlander v. Czech Republic</i> , no.747/1997, paragraph 8.4, as well as the Committee's views in the case <i>Van Oord v. the Netherlands</i> , no.658/1995, paragraph 8.5.	Used to interpret the prohibited grounds of discrimination (citizenship) in the light of the Committee's practice.
<a href="#">Judgment in case no. 2018-12-01 of 23 April 2019</a>	Articles 26 and 27  References also to the <i>UN Human Rights Committee (HRC), CCPR General Comment No. 23: Article 27 (Rights of Minorities), 8 April 1994, CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.5</i>	Used to interpret the prohibited grounds of discrimination and to describe the scope of the rights of national minorities (language and nationality).
<a href="#">Judgment in the case no.2018-25-01 of 7 November 2019</a>	Article 26	Used to interpret Article 91 of the <i>Constitution</i> (prohibition of discrimination).
<a href="#">Judgment in case no.2019-33-01 of 12 November 2020</a>	Article 26	Used to interpret the prohibited grounds of discrimination (gender).

<a href="#">Judgment in the case no.2018-22-01 of 13 November 2019</a>	Article 26	Used to interpret Article 91 of the <i>Constitution</i> (prohibition of discrimination).
Judgment in the case no.2020-13-01 of 19 November 2020	Article 23	Used to interpret Article 110 of the <i>Constitution</i> (protection of family).
<a href="#">Judgment in the case no.2020-26-0106 of 11 December 2020</a>	Reference to the Committee's statement on derogations from the Covenant in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic. Particular reference to <i>International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Statement on derogations from the Covenant in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic. Human Rights Committee, 30 April 2020, CCPR/C/128/2, Point 2(c)</i> .	The Committee's statement was used to note the position of the Committee during the COVID-19 pandemic and the permissible derogations during that pandemic.
<a href="#">Judgment in case no. 2020-23-01 of 19 February 2021</a>	Article 15(1)	Used to conclude that the principle of presumption of innocence requires a retroactive application of criminal-law provisions that provide for a milder sanction.
<a href="#">Decision in case no. 2021-10-03 of 18 February 2022</a>	Article 12(4)	Used to interpret the scope of the right to return to one's own country.
<a href="#">Judgment in case no. 2021-23-01 of 30 March 2022</a>	Article 25  References also to the <i>UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 25: The right to participate in public affairs, voting rights and the right of equal access to public service (Art. 25 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights), 12 July 1996, CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.7, para 11</i> .	Used to interpret the scope of active voting rights.
<a href="#">Decision in case no. 2021-34-01 of 27 May 2022</a>	Article 19	Used to interpret the scope of freedom of expression.
<a href="#">Judgment in case no. 2021-40-0103 of 8 June 2022</a>	Articles 7 and 10  References also to the <i>General Comment No. 21: Replaces general comment 9 concerning humane treatment of persons deprived of liberty (Art.10):10/04/92, Human Rights Committee, para 3</i> .	Used to interpret the scope of the rights of detained persons.
<a href="#">Judgment in case no. 2021-43-01 of 3 November 2022</a>	Articles 10 and 25  References also to the <i>UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 25: The Right to Participate in Public Affairs, Voting Rights and the</i>	Used to decide whether detainees shall be entitled to vote in municipal elections.

	<p><i>Right of Equal Access to Public Service (Art. 25 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights), 12 July 1996, CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.7, paras 5, 10) and the General Comment No. 21: Replaces General Comment 9 Concerning Humane Treatment of Persons Deprived of Liberty (Art.10):10/04/92, Human Rights Committee, para. 3.</i></p>	
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Table 1. Source: Constitutional Court

### Invocation of the Covenant by the Supreme Court

Decision	Articles Invoked	Comment
Judgment in case no.SKK-61/2014 of 11 February 2014	Article 14	Used to interpret the right to a fair trial.
Decision in case no.SKC-1681 of 31 January 2014	Article 14 (3) (c)	Used to interpret the right to a fair trial.
Judgment in case no.SA-5/2014 of 31 October 2014	Article 25 (b)	Used to interpret passive election rights.
Judgment in case no.SKA-150/2014 of 29 December 2014	Articles 3 and 7	The Supreme Court noted that the lower court had not sufficiently considered the practice of the Committee when evaluating the seriousness of the restrictions on the individual's rights.
Judgment in case no.SKA-12/205 of 16 March 2015	Article 25 (b)	Used to determine whether the electoral districts and the procedure for casting a vote by persons outside of the territory of Latvia in the elections of the <i>Saeima</i> is compatible with active election rights.
Judgment in case no.SKA-176/2015 of 30 June 2015	Article 5 (1)	Used to determine the content of the prohibition to abuse rights.
Decision in case no.SKC-964/2016 of 1 February 2016	Article 14	Used to interpret the right to a fair trial and reason that the access to court does not require the State to release applicants from all court fees in all cases.
Judgment in case no.SKA-305/2016 of 18 February 2016	Article 17	Used to define obligations under the right to respect for private life regarding transliteration of the person's name in official documents.
Judgment in case no.SKA-495/2016 of 30 March 2016	Article 17 References also to the Committee's views in the case of <i>Raihman v. Latvia</i> no. 1621/2007, paragraph 8.3.	Used to define obligations under the right to respect for private life regarding transliteration of the person's name in official documents and to distinguish the Committee's findings in the case <i>Raihman v. Latvia</i> from the facts and legal context in the case at hand.
Judgment in case no.SKA-58/2016 of 29 April 2016	Article 18(1)	Used to interpret the right to freedom of religion and use to religious items in prison.
Judgment in case no.SKA-424/2017 of 4 October 2017	Article 17	Used to define obligations under the right to respect for private life regarding transliteration of the

	References also to the Committee's views in the case of <i>Raihman v. Latvia</i> no. 1621/2007.	person's name in official documents and to distinguish the Committee's findings in the case <i>Raihman v. Latvia</i> from the facts and legal context in the case at hand.
Judgment in case no.432-2017 of 1 November 2017	Article 17 References also to the Committee's views in the case of <i>Raihman v. Latvia</i>	Used to define obligations under the right to respect for private life regarding transliteration of the person's name in official documents.
Judgment in case no. SKA-240/2017 of 6 December 2017	Article 19	Used to interpret whether freedom of expression entails a freedom of form.
Judgment in case no. SKC-72/2018 of 29 March 2018	Article 14	Used to define the rights entailed in the right to fair trial.
Decision in case no. SKK-362/2018 of 19 July 2018	Article 14	Used to define the scope of the right to appeal in criminal cases.
Decision in case no. SKA-300/2018 of 13 September 2018	Article 17	Used to define obligations under the right to respect for family life.
Judgment in case no. SA-3/2018 in 31 October 2018	Article 25 (b)	Used to interpret passive election rights.
Decision in case no. SKK-62/2019 of 27 February 2019	Article 14	Used to interpret the right to fair trial with respect to proceedings <i>in absentia</i>
Judgment in case no. SKA-77/2019 of 12 June 2019	Article 17	Used to interpret the scope of right to respect for family life
Judgment in case no. SKA-87/2019 of 30 September 2019	Article 12(4)	Used to define the right to return to one's country.

Table 2. Source: Supreme Court

**Examples of training on human rights provided to law-enforcement officials, judges, and legal professionals**

Organiser / Description	Event	Date
The Academy of European Law	"Recent Case Law of the European Court of Human Rights in Criminal Matters"	2019
The Latvian Judicial Training Centre / the European Court of Human Rights	Secondment to the European Court of Human Rights	2020
Riga Graduate School of Law	"Case Law of the European Court of Human Rights "	2021
Riga Graduate School of Law	The Annual Conference on Topicalities of Human Rights	Annual since 2012

The Council of Europe	HELP E-course “Introduction to the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the European Court of Human Rights”	2021
The Latvian Judicial Training Centre	Secondment to the European Court of Human Rights	2021
The Latvian Judicial Training Centre	Secondment to the European Court of Human Rights	2022

*Table 3. Source: MoJ*

**Budget and number of positions at the Office of the Ombudsperson by year (2021-2024)**

	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>The State budget expenditure</b>	1 777 776	1 940 670	2 621 250	3 178 151
<b>Number of positions</b>	51	51	51	55

*Table 1. Source: MoF*

<b>Measures to ensure the implementation of the Ombudsperson's recommendations</b>
The Office of the Ombudsperson disseminates information on the functions and tasks of the Ombudsperson in letters and reports to state and municipal institutions and other stakeholders.
The Office of the Ombudsperson is involved in the legislative work, participating in the meeting of Parliamentary Committees.
The Office of the Ombudsperson gives information on the possible deficiencies and issues, as well as recommendations on how to prevent them during monitoring visits to institutions.
The Office of the Ombudsperson organises meetings and discussions with institutions and other stakeholders to provide assistance regarding deficiencies or implementation of the Ombudsperson's recommendations.
The Office of the Ombudsperson undertakes awareness-raising activities.
The Ombudsperson may apply to the Constitutional Court if recommendations are not being implemented.

*Table 2. Source: Office of the Ombudsperson*

<b>Key measures of the <i>Corruption Prevention and Combating Action Plan 2023-2025</i> implemented in 2023</b>
<b>Improvement of conflict-of-interest verification in public procurements.</b> Launch of a tool for verification of an absence of a conflict-of-interest in the Electronic Procurement System.
<b>Ensuring transparency and access to information on all public construction works, supply, and service contracts by the public sector in "sub-threshold procurements".</b> A study on the necessary technical improvements to the Electronic Procurement System and legal framework to publish information on "sub-threshold procurements" has been prepared.
<b>Increasing awareness of the private sector on reporting irregularities and illegal activities in public procurement.</b> Various lectures and seminars on corruption indicators and competition law violations and procedures for lodging reports.
<b>Promotion and implementation of the KNAB online reporting platform.</b> Launch of the online platform.

Table 1. Source: KNAB

### Number of investigations and prosecutions in corruption cases

	2014 <sup>1</sup>	2015 <sup>2</sup>	2016 <sup>3</sup>	2017 <sup>4</sup>	2018 <sup>5</sup>	2019 <sup>6</sup>	2020 <sup>7</sup>	2021 <sup>8</sup>	2022 <sup>9</sup>	2023 <sup>10</sup>	2024
<b>Investigations initiated</b>	25	27	19	30	38	47	39	39	32	36	25
<b>Proceedings sent for prosecution</b>	27	16	14	17	24	15	23	27	18	18	19
<b>Proceedings in Court</b>			47	49	58	60	64	82	80	90	92
<b>Adjudicated proceedings and the Prosecutor's decision on penalty</b>			12	11	11	16	11	17	23	11	20
<b>Proceedings terminated</b>			16	17	14	15	26	23	10	13	10
<b>Imprisonment</b>			13	13	7	10	12	10	14	10	27
<b>Persons fined</b>			8	12 <sup>11</sup>	4 <sup>12</sup>	7 <sup>13</sup>	13 <sup>14</sup>	6 <sup>15</sup>	15 <sup>16</sup>	12	10
<b>Persons acquitted in first instance</b>			1	3	0	0	1	7	3	1	1

Table 2. Source: MoI

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.knab.gov.lv/en/media/1484/download?attachment>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.knab.gov.lv/en/media/1471/download?attachment>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.knab.gov.lv/en/media/1481/download?attachment>.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.knab.gov.lv/lv/media/780/download?attachment>.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.knab.gov.lv/en/media/1472/download?attachment>.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.knab.gov.lv/en/media/1473/download?attachment>.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.knab.gov.lv/en/media/1856/download?attachment>.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.knab.gov.lv/en/media/1856/download?attachment>.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.knab.gov.lv/en/media/3746/download?attachment>.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.knab.gov.lv/en/media/4890/download?attachment>.

<sup>11</sup> Ancillary penalty, community service for 4 persons.

<sup>12</sup> Ancillary penalty, community service for 5 persons.

<sup>13</sup> Ancillary penalty, community service for 4 persons.

<sup>14</sup> Ancillary penalty, community service for 13 persons.

<sup>15</sup> Ancillary penalty, community service for 3 persons.

<sup>16</sup> Ancillary penalty, community service for 3 persons.



<b>Anti-corruption institutional framework in 2020</b>
<p>There are several institutions in Latvia that investigate corruption crimes within their scope of competence. The functions of the KNAB are laid down in the <i>Law on Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau</i>. It investigates all cases of corruption that are not within the competence of another institution. Other institutions with investigative functions on corruption cases are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the ISB, which investigates criminal offences within State Police and State Fire and Rescue Service;</li> <li>- an internal security unit of the State Revenue Service (Customs and Tax Police) investigates the State Revenue Service;</li> <li>- an internal security unit of the State Border Guard investigates corruption within the State Border Guard;</li> <li>- the Prison Administration investigates corruption within Latvia's prisons.</li> </ul>
<b>Changes to the Anti-corruption institutional framework in 2024</b>
<p>The ISB's mandate has been amended and now covers the detection, investigation, and prevention of all type of crimes (including related to corruption) committed by the officials and employees of the institutions subordinated to the MoI, except for institutions in charge of national security.</p>
<b>Changes to the Anti-corruption institutional framework in 2025</b>
<p>As of 1 January 2025, to separate the functions of detecting and investigating criminal offences from the functions of a service provider, the KNAB has taken over the investigative and criminal intelligence functions of the ISB with respect to the State Revenue Service.</p> <p>The ISB's mandate has been expanded to cover the detection, investigation, and prevention of all type of crimes (including related to corruption) committed by officials and employees of the Prison Administration.</p>

Table 3. Source: KNAB

#### Budget of the KNAB (2020-2024)

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>State budget expenditure</b>	10 962 456	12 495 629	13 988 231	16 156 194	17 382 582

Table 4. Source: MoF

#### Budget of the ISB (2014-2024)

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>State budget expenditure</b>	3 936 037	3 980 458	4 168 871	4 620 433	5 304 130

Table 5. Source: MoF

**Number of complaints regarding hate speech and hate crime and the results of their assessment (2020-2024)**

	<b>Number of complaints</b>	<b>Hatred and misogyny due to sexual orientation</b>	<b>In relation to those – number of criminal proceedings initiated</b>	<b>In relation to those – refusal to initiate criminal proceedings</b>	<b>Further actions</b>
2020	54	36	12	23	-
2021	16	16	3	12	1 transferred to the ISB
2022	198	7	3	1	3 criminal proceedings terminated
2023	87	6	1	5	1 finding of an absence of a crime
2024	78	8	2	2	2 findings of an absence of a crime 2 administrative offence proceedings initiated

*Table 1. Source: MoI*

**Number of criminal proceedings on hate crimes (2019-2024)**

<b>Legal provision</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>Charges brought</b>				
<b>Article 78 of the Criminal Law</b> – (Triggering of national, ethnic and racial hatred)	1	1	11	6	19
<b>Article 150 of the Criminal Law</b> (Incitement of social hatred and enmity)	0	4	0	2	1
	<b>Proceedings transferred to the court</b>				
<b>Article 78 of the Criminal Law</b> (Triggering of national, ethnic and racial hatred)	0	0	4	3	15
<b>Article 150 of the CL</b> – (Incitement of social hatred and enmity)	0	4	0	0	0
	<b>Sentenced (including by a prosecutor's decision)</b>				
<b>Article 78 of the Criminal Law</b> (Triggering of national, ethnic and racial hatred)	0	3	7	9	7
<b>Article 150 of the Criminal Law</b> (Incitement of social hatred and enmity)	1	3	0	0	1

*Table 2. Source: MoI and PGO*

**Administrative offence proceedings in which hatred of different characteristics of a person such as race, religion, ethnicity, or other distinctly identifiable characteristics of a person is indicated as a motive for committing an offence or aggravating circumstance**

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
10	16	30	13	11

Table 3. Source: SP

**Trainings provided to prosecutors and law-enforcement officials on hate crime and hate speech**

Organiser / Description	Event	Date	Number of participants
The Collage of the State Police, the Prosecutor's Office	Brainstorming on investigating hate crime and hate speech in order identify best practices and develop better understanding of the legal framework.	2022	Approximately 20
European Judicial Training Network	"Antisemitism and Hate Crimes"	21 and 22 April 2022	1
Training Centre for the Prosecutor's Office and the Investigators of the State Police	Brainstorming on the investigation of the hate speech and hate crimes.	11 November 2022	4
Prosecutor's Office of Bulgaria	Conference "Stop the Hate Speech"	5 and 6 December 2022	1
"CALDER: Capacity building and awareness-raising to prevent and counter intolerance in Latvia"	Training "Identification, Investigation, and Prevention of Hate Speech"	26 and 27 October 2022	4
	Training "Identification, Investigation, and Prevention of Hate Speech"	9 and 10 November 2022	4
	Training "Identification, Investigation, and Prevention of Hate Speech"	28 and 29 November 2022	4
	Training "Identification, Investigation, and Prevention of Hate Speech"	14 and 15 December 2022	8
	Training "Identification, Investigation, and Prevention of Hate Speech"	7 and 8 April 2022	4
	Conference "Hate Crimes: Identify, Investigate, and Prevent!"	13 January 2023.	7
CEPOL	Hate Crime	2021	1

	Hate crime against members of the LGBTQ community	2021	1
	Improving hate crime recording and understanding bias indicators	2022	1
	Webinar AdHoc 05/2021 Hate crime - anti-muslim hatred of terrorism - Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme tool	2022	1
	Hate Crime	From 21 until February 2023	2
	Hate crime: Encouraging reporting, improving recording and understanding bias indicators	5 July 2023	1
	Policing Hate Crime against LGBTI people	7 November 2023	1
The Prosecutor's Office of Lithuania	"Identification, Investigation, and Prevention of Hate Crimes in the Light of Contemporary Challenges"	From 28 to 30 March 2024	1
The Training Centre of the State Police	"Investigating Hate Crimes"	10 May 2024	51
The Collage of the State Police, the Prosecutor's Office	Brainstorm "Novelties in Investigation of Hate Crimes"	2024	60

Table 4. Source: PGO and SP

**Awareness-rising measures for the public to prevent hate crime and hate speech**

Organiser	Event / Description	Date
The State Police	Meetings with various NGOs and interest groups in institutions for education to inform the public on the legal consequences of aggressive and intolerant conduct.	Ongoing
The State Police	Campaign "Messenger for Security" which involves educators (teachers), representatives of educational institutions to inform minors regarding security risks, the conduct to prevent of security risks, and self-defence.	2022
The State Police	A public discussion "Hate Speech On and Off the Internet" at the annual civil society festival <i>Lampa</i> .	2022
The State Police	An article in the journal for legal professionals <i>Jurista Vārds</i> .	2022

Table 5. Source: MoI

**Main findings of the Constitutional Court in the case no. 2023-04-01-06**

The case before the Constitutional Court was initiated with respect to Article 58 of Transitional Provisions of the *Immigration Law*, in the wording that was in effect from 24 September 2022 until 19 April 2023. The said provision stipulated that for a citizen of the Russian Federation, who had received a permanent residence permit in accordance with Article 24, paragraph 1, subparagraph 8, of the *Immigration Law*, the permanent residence permit would be valid until 1 September 2023. A person intent on receiving a residence permit had to submit, by 1 September 2023, certification proving proficiency in State language.

On 5 April 2023, the *Saeima* amended the contested Article 58 of Transitional Provisions of the *Immigration Law* that entered into effect on 20 April 2023. They created a possibility to take the examination at least twice to all those who had expressed the wish to take it. Accordingly, the term of validity of a permanent residence permit was extended until 31 December 2023 or until the date when the final decision on granting the status of a long-term resident of the European Union enters into effect. On 14 September 2023, the *Saeima* amended the *Immigration Law* again by, *inter alia*, introducing a right to request a permit to stay in Latvia in cases where a person has attempted to pass the test of proficiency in Latvian or have been unable to take the test due to objective circumstances.

The Applicants are citizens of the Russian Federation, who had been issued a permanent residence permit on the basis of Article 24, paragraph 1, subparagraph 8, of the *Immigration Law*. This legal provision envisaged a simplified procedure for obtaining a permanent residence permit to those foreigners who, prior to obtaining the citizenship of another state, had been citizens or non-citizens of Latvia. For example, the requirements regarding proficiency in the State language, as set-out in Article 24, paragraph 5, of the *Immigration Law* for other aliens did not apply.

To continue residing in Latvia, the Applicants would have to meet the respective requirements. To obtain the status of a long-term resident of the European Union, in accordance with Article 3, paragraph 1, of the *Law on the Status of a Long-term Resident of the European Union in the Republic of Latvia* a person must pass the test of the proficiency in the State language, as well as meet the requirements related to sufficient financial means and continuous residence in Latvia. Likewise, a person would have the possibility to continue residing in Latvia if they obtain a new permanent residence permit, in accordance with Article 58<sup>5</sup> of Transitional Provisions of the *Immigration Law* or a permit to stay in Latvia, in accordance with Article 58<sup>6</sup> of the Transitional Provisions of the *Immigration Law*, or any other residence permit, as long as the requirements set for obtaining these permits are met.

It is noted in the *Saeima's* written reply that the legitimate aims of the restriction on fundamental rights are protecting the democratic state, the security of the state, and other persons' rights, i.e., the contested provision is aimed at preventively addressing security risks that are linked to the armed activities of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, as well as reinforcing the constitutional importance of the State language. The Applicants agree that the legitimate aim of the restriction on fundamental rights is to strengthen the security of the state.

In assessing the restriction on a person's fundamental rights, included in the legal provision, the geopolitical context must be taken into account. It is explained in the explanatory report to the draft law that the contested provision had been adopted in view of the war in Ukraine launched by the Russian Federation and the related need to reinforce the national security of Latvia. For a long time already, the geopolitical situation in the Baltic Sea region has been affected by Russia's defiant and aggressive military and hybrid activities. Latvia's national security is threatened by the operations of informative influence, actively deployed by Russia, in which also propaganda and disinformation are used.

In this regard, it should be taken into account that these persons, to whom the contested provision applies, have deliberately chosen to establish relationships of loyalty and solidarity with the Russian Federation, by becoming citizens of this State. Thus, it can be concluded that the legislator, in introducing changes to the area of immigration, has taken into consideration also the geopolitical context and the risks that can be posed by persons whose country of citizenship is the Russian Federation. Hence, the restriction on fundamental rights, included in the contested provision, is linked to decreasing security risks and is directed at protecting the democratic state order and public security.

Table 1. Source: Constitutional Court, full judgment available in English at: [https://www.satv.tiesa.gov.lv/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2023-04-0106\\_Judgement.pdf](https://www.satv.tiesa.gov.lv/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2023-04-0106_Judgement.pdf)

**Number of foreign nationals affected by the amendments to the *Immigration Law***

Date of the amendments	Number of persons affected	Applications for residence permits	Permits issued	Persons returned	Number of persons that have left the State on their own initiative
22 September 2022	25 316	24 035	23 003	0	2221
20 June 2024	4 650	150	Applications are currently pending	92 76 (voluntary returns) 16 (involuntary return (expulsion))	No data

Table 2. Source: Office of the Citizenship and Migration

<b>The relevant provisions of the <i>Administrative Procedure Law</i></b>
<p><b>Article 80. Suspension of Operation of a Challenged Administrative Act</b></p> <p>(1) A request for administrative review of an administrative act shall suspend the operation thereof from the day when an institution has received the application for review, except for the cases provided for in Article 360, paragraphs 2 and 3, of this <i>Law</i>, and also in the cases where the application for review has been submitted by an addressee of a favourable administrative act in order to request a more favourable administrative act, or if the application for review has been submitted regarding a general administrative act.</p> <p>(2) If a higher institution upholds the administrative act, the operation of the administrative act shall resume from the day when the term for judicial review the administrative act has expired and it has not been challenged. If the challenge of the administrative act suspends the operation thereof but the judicial review in accordance with Article 185, paragraph 4, of this <i>Law</i> does not suspend the operation of the administrative act, the operation of the relevant administrative act shall resume from the day when the deadline for the application for judicial review of the administrative act has passed.</p> <p><b>Article 185<sup>1</sup>. Procedure for Deciding a Request for the Suspension or Renewal of Operation of an Administrative Act or a <i>De facto</i> action</b></p> <p>(1) A court shall examine a request for the suspension of operation of an administrative act or a <i>de facto</i> action or for the renewal of operation of an administrative act in the written procedure.</p> <p>(2) In deciding a request for the suspension of operation of an administrative act or <i>de facto</i> action or for the renewal of operation of an administrative act, a court shall take into account whether the operation of the appealed administrative act could cause a significant damage or losses the</p>

prevention or compensation of which would be significantly hindered or would require unreasonable resources and whether the appealed administrative act is *prima facie* unlawful.

Table 3. Source: the Administrative Procedure Law

### The relevant provisions of the *Immigration Law*

#### Article 41

- (1) If it is established that a foreigner is staying illegally in Latvia, the voluntary return decision shall be issued to him or her, except in the cases laid down in Article 42 of this *Law*. [..]

#### Article 45

- (1) A foreigner regarding who the decision to issue an involuntary expulsion or voluntary return decision has been taken has the right to apply for aid provided by international organisations, associations or foundations so that he or she could voluntarily return to his or her country of residence (hereinafter - the voluntary return programme). [..]

#### Article 47

A foreigner shall not be removed if removal is in contradiction with the international obligations of Latvia.

#### Article 48

- (1) An official of the Office or of the State Border Guard shall acquaint a foreigner with the decision on voluntary return or involuntary expulsion, with the decision to include in the list, and the decision on the prohibition to enter the Schengen Area included therein in a language which he or she understands or which he or she should justifiably understand, if necessary, using the services of an interpreter, by explaining its nature and procedures for its review, as well as informing of the right of the foreigner to legal aid. [..]
- (2) Upon request of a foreigner, the institution which issued the relevant administrative act shall ensure the translation of the main components of the voluntary return decision or involuntary expulsion (the establishment of facts, justification of the administrative act, legal obligation imposed on the addressee, an indication where and in what period of time the administrative act may be reviewed administratively and judicially). The relevant institution shall provide an oral or written translation for the foreigner in a language which he or she understands or which he or she should justifiably understand, if necessary, using the services of an interpreter.
- (3) The institution, upon taking the decision to issue an involuntary expulsion, shall without delay notify the Ombudsperson thereof.

#### Article 49

The Head of the Office or Chief of the State Border Guard may revoke or suspend execution of the voluntary return decision or involuntary expulsion, and the decisions included therein on the inclusion in the list and prohibition to enter the Schengen Area which have been taken by an official of the relevant institution if the circumstances which were the basis for the issue of the relevant administrative act have changed, including such circumstances have been established which are referred to in Article 47 of this *Law*, or on humanitarian grounds.

#### Article 50

- (1) A foreigner has the right, within seven days after entering into effect of the voluntary return decision or involuntary expulsion order, and the decisions included therein on the inclusion in the list and prohibition to enter the Schengen Area, to contest these decisions to a higher authority in accordance with the procedures regarding subordination. The foreigner shall be acquainted with the decision taken on the contested voluntary return decision or involuntary expulsion order in a language that he or she understands or that he or she should justifiably understand, if necessary, using the services of an interpreter, explaining the nature and the procedures for contesting of the decision taken, as well as inform him or her of the right of the foreigner to legal aid.

#### Article 50<sup>1</sup>

- (1) The decision of a higher authority on the issue of the voluntary return decision or involuntary expulsion, and the decisions included therein on the inclusion in the list and prohibition to enter the Schengen Area may be submitted for judicial review to the Administrative District Court within seven days from the day when it has entered into effect. Submission of an application to the court shall not suspend the operation of the aforementioned decisions.
- (2) A judgment of the Administrative District Court may be appealed by submitting an appeal on point of law the Department of Administrative Cases of the Supreme Court.

**Article 50<sup>7</sup>**

- (1) The involuntary expulsion process shall be observed by the Ombudsperson.
- (2) The observation of the involuntary expulsion process shall include:
  - 1) visiting of the detained foreigners subject to removal at their place of accommodation in order to evaluate the conditions of accommodation and maintenance, also the provision of medical assistance and the satisfaction of other needs;
  - 2) a questioning of the foreigner in order to determine his or her awareness of the progress of the involuntary expulsion process, his or her rights and the possibility for implementation thereof;
  - 3) observation of return of the personal property of the detained person seized at the time of detention, transportation from the accommodation centre of detained persons to the departure point, handing-over and registration of luggage, as well as participation in the actual implementation of the involuntary expulsion process in order to evaluate the compliance with the human rights of the foreigner to be removed.
- (3) The Ombudsperson is entitled to involve associations or foundations in the observation of involuntary expulsion process, the purpose of operation of which is related to the observation of the process. Upon involving associations or foundations in the observation of the involuntary expulsion process, the Ombudsperson shall evaluate the competence of the association or foundation for performing the relevant activity and shall agree on the stage of the involuntary expulsion process referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article, which the association or foundation shall be authorised to observe. The Ombudsperson may involve one association or foundation in the observation of each stage of the involuntary expulsion process referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article. The Ombudsperson may not involve an association or foundation which has violated the condition referred to in paragraph 4 of this Article in the observation of the involuntary expulsion process. The Ombudsperson shall inform the State Border Guard of the associations and foundations which are authorised to observe the relevant stage of the involuntary expulsion process.
- (4) The representatives of the Ombudsperson, as well of associations and foundations involved in the observation of the involuntary expulsion process (hereinafter - the Observer) are prohibited from hindering with the involuntary expulsion process during the course of observing the involuntary expulsion process.
- (5) If the Observer has information at the disposal thereof regarding circumstances which may influence the organisation or implementation of the involuntary expulsion process as well as threaten personal safety or health, the Observer shall inform officials of the State Border Guard thereof.
- (6) The Observer has the right:
  - 1) to obtain information from the relevant State institution which is involved in the involuntary expulsion process of foreigners regarding organisation of the involuntary expulsion process of the foreigner and the measures taken;
  - 2) to invite specialists (for example, lawyers, medical practitioners, interpreters) for provision of the necessary consultations to the foreigner subject to involuntary expulsion;
  - 3) to organise assistance for improving living conditions, pastoral care, as well as the provision of <sup>other</sup> support.



- (7) When taking the measures referred to in paragraph 6 of this Article, the Observer shall, without delay, inform the official of the State Border Guard who is implementing the involuntary expulsion process for the relevant foreigner of the planned activities in writing.
- (8) After observation of an involuntary expulsion process is completed, the Observer shall prepare a report on the established deficiencies and recommendations for improving the involuntary expulsion process. The Ombudsperson shall submit the compiled report on the established deficiencies and recommendations compiled for improving the involuntary expulsion process to the Ministry of the Interior for evaluation.

*Table 4. Source: the Immigration Law*

**The relevant provisions of the CoM Regulations no.454 of 21 June 2011 “Regulations Regarding Forced Return of Foreigners, Standard Travel Document and Issue Thereof”**

**Article 1**

This Regulation prescribes the procedures for forced return of a foreigner, as well as the procedures for the issue of the standard travel document.

**Article 5**

A foreigner shall confirm his or her becoming acquainted with the decision with his or her signature and receive one copy of the decision. If the foreigner refuses to certify with his or her signature the fact of becoming acquainted with the decision, the official of the State Border Guard shall make a note in respect of this in the decision and issue a copy of the decision to the foreigner. The foreigner is entitled to explain in writing the reason for refusal.

**Article 7**

When implementing involuntary expulsion, a foreigner shall be removed to his or her country of nationality. If this is not possible, the foreigner shall be removed to the third country from which he or she has entered, or to another third country which he or she has the right to enter (hereinafter - the country of destination).

**Article 9**

After performance of all the preparatory activities provided for in this Regulation, the forced return of the foreigner shall be implemented as soon as possible.

**Article 10**

For the implementation of the forced return of the foreigner the State Border Guard shall obtain all the documents necessary (for example, travel (return) documents, visa, insurance document), as well as organise the transportation and accompanying of the foreigner under the supervision of guards (hereinafter - escorting).

**Article 11**

Forced return of the foreigner may be implemented by escorting the foreigner to:

- 11.1. the border crossing point of the Latvia;
- 11.2. the border crossing point of the transit country on the removal route;
- 11.3. the border crossing point of the country of destination;
- 11.4. the place of residence of the foreigner or a specialised institution in the country of destination. The condition referred to in this Sub-paragraph may only be applied to vulnerable persons.

**Article 12**

When taking a decision on escorting the foreigner to the place referred to in Article 11 of this Regulation, the following conditions shall be evaluated:

- 12.1. the state of health of the foreigner;
- 12.2. the psychological traits and risk of absconding of the foreigner;
- 12.3. the availability of direct flights;

- 12.4. the consent of the transit country on the removal route to implement the forced return through the territory of the country in question;
- 12.5. the conditions for participation in the joint return operation to be organised by a European Union Member State;
- 12.6. the need to hand over the vulnerable person to a family member, legal representative or the representative of a specialised institution.

#### **Article 13**

The State Border Guard, when carrying out forced return of the foreigner, shall comply with the requirements of the laws and regulations governing the field of the relevant transport operation. If forced return is carried out, by using air space, the laws and regulations of the European Union laying down the criteria on safety rules in respect of a joint return, by using air space, shall be complied with.

#### **Article 14**

When implementing forced return in the cases referred to in Article 11 of this Regulation, the State Border Guard shall pay the foreigner money in the amount of 30 EUR provided for covering food and transport costs, to be reimbursed from the European Union policy instrument programmes or the funds of other foreign financial assistance. The amount of money shall be issued in cash confirming it with a signature. The amount of money provided for a minor foreigner shall be issued to his or her legal representative.

#### **Article 20**

The State Border Guard shall suspend the implementation of the forced return of the foreigner for a specific period of time if:

- 20.1. the state of health of the foreigner prevents the implementation of forced return;
- 20.2. the implementation of forced return is not possible due to technical reasons, or the issue of the travel (return) document of the foreigner is delayed;
- 20.3. the circumstances referred to in Article 47 of the *Immigration Law* are determined.

#### **Article 21**

The State Border Guard official shall, not later than 12 hours prior to the commencement of return, inform the foreigner being returned regarding the planned return date, and also regarding changes in the implementation of forced return in a language, which the foreigner understands or which he or she should justifiably be able to understand. The foreigner shall certify with a signature that he or she has become acquainted with the abovementioned information and obtains one copy of the certification. If the foreigner refuses to sign the certification regarding becoming acquainted with the provided information, the State Border Guard official shall make a note thereon.

#### **Article 22**

Prior to the implementation of removal a medical examination (check-up) of the foreigner shall be performed in order to determine whether his or her state of health permits travelling.

*Table 5. Source: CoM Regulations no.454 of 21 June 2011 "Regulations Regarding Forced Return of Foreigners, Standard Travel Document and Issue Thereof"*

**The relevant provisions of the *Law on Emergency Situation and State of Exception***

**Article 1. Purpose of this Law**

The purpose of this Law is to ensure national security in case of threat to the national security.

**Article 2. Application of this Law**

This Law prescribes the procedures by which a special legal regime - emergency situation or state of exception - shall be declared and revoked, as well as the rights of State administration and local government authorities, natural persons and legal persons, their restrictions, special duties and provision of the rule of law during validity of such legal regimes.

**Article 3. Time when the Special Legal Regime is in Effect and Legal Consequences Thereof**

(1) All decisions and orders taken for providing emergency situation or state of exception shall be repealed concurrently with the revocation of emergency situation or state of exception or with the end of the time period determined for such special legal regimes.

(2) State authorities have no right to reject claims of persons against the State for the damage caused, if such occur in relation to providing emergency situation or state of exception, justifying the rejection with circumstances of the special legal regime.

**Article 4. Emergency Situation and Declaration Thereof**

(1) Emergency situation is a special legal regime, during which the CoM has the right to restrict the rights and freedoms of the State administration and local government authorities, natural and legal persons, as well as to impose additional duties on them.

(2) Emergency situation may be declared in case of such threat to national security, which is related to a disaster, danger thereof or threat to the critical infrastructure, if safety of the State, society, environment, economic activity or health and life of human beings is significantly endangered.

**Article 5. Right of the CoM to Declare Emergency Situation**

(1) The CoM declares an emergency situation for a definite time period, but no longer than three months.

(2) The CoM revokes a decision to declare emergency situation (hereinafter – decision on emergency situation) prior to the determined term, if threat to national security has been prevented or overcome. The CoM notifies the decision on declaring an emergency situation to the Presidium of the *Saeima*.

(3) Depending on the type, intensity and nature of the threat to national security, as well as upon changes in the size of the endangered territory, the CoM makes relevant amendments to the decision on emergency situation. The CoM has the right, if necessary, to extend the emergency situation for a time period not exceeding three months.

**Article 6. Request to Declare Emergency Situation**

(1) Declaring of emergency situation may be requested by:

- 1) the Crisis Management Council;
- 2) the sectoral ministry;
- 3) representatives of a local government.

(2) The authorities referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article have a duty to inform regarding a decision to request declaration of emergency situation:

- 1) the local government, in the territory of which declaration of emergency situation is planned;
- 2) the ministry the competence of which includes corresponding measures related to emergency situation.

**Article 7. Territory in which Emergency Situations is to be Declared**

Depending on the type, intensity and nature of the threat to national security, as well as on the size of the endangered territory the CoM may declare emergency situation:

- 1) in the entire territory of the State;
- 2) in part of the territory of the State;

3) in part of an administrative territory.

#### **Article 8. Rights of the CoM when Declaring Emergency Situation**

4

(1) In declaring emergency situation, the CoM has the right to stipulate:

- 1) special procedures or restrictions for movement and assembly;
- 2) special procedures or restrictions of traffic;
- 3) special procedures or restrictions for economic activity;
- 4) special procedures for access to goods, medicinal products, energy resources, services, and other material and technical resources;
- 5) the right of State and local government authorities to take a decision to evacuate inhabitants and their movable property, as well as, if necessary, by physical compulsion;
- 6) the right of officials of State and local government authorities to access a private property;
- 7) additional rights for officials of State and local government authorities to detain and hand over persons who refuse to obey lawful requests of officials or commit offences, to officials of law enforcement authorities;
- 8) the right of State and local government authorities to determine a prohibition for persons to be at certain places without authorisation or personal identification documents;
- 9) which State and local government authorities prepare and disseminate official information regarding the emergency situation;
- 10) complete or partial suspension of implementation of the obligations prescribed in international agreements, if the implementation may have a negative impact on the ability to prevent or overcome threat to national security.

(2) In declaring emergency situation, in addition to the rights referred to in Article 8, paragraph 1, of this *Law* the CoM has the right to determine measures necessary in the particular emergency situation, which are provided in the laws on the prevention or overcoming of threat to national security and consequences thereof in, as well as the competence of State administration and local government authorities in the prevention or overcoming of threat to national security.

#### **Article 9. Decision on Emergency Situation**

(1) A decision on emergency situation shall include the following information:

- 1) the reason for declaring emergency situation;
- 2) the time period for which it is declared;
- 3) the territory in which emergency situation is declared;
- 4) the responsible authority and the co-responsible authorities, as well as their special powers;
- 5) the resources to be used;
- 6) restrictions to the rights of natural persons and legal persons;
- 7) special duties, tasks, and rights of State and local government authorities;
- 8) the procedures for disseminating the decision on the emergency situation;
- 9) other information according to the type, intensity, and nature of the threat to national security as well as to the size of the endangered territory.

(2) The CoM may determine the international organisations and States to be informed regarding the declaration of an emergency situation and its reasons, the territory in which the emergency situation has been declared, and the time period for which it has been declared.

(3) The CoM shall notify the Presidium of the *Saeima* within 24 hours about its decision to declare or extend an emergency situation as well as any amendments to the decision on an emergency situation, if additional territorial restrictions or restrictions of rights are necessary.

(4) Public electronic mass media disseminates the decision on an emergency situation free of charge and provides other information regarding the emergency situation and recommendations for conduct for the inhabitants taking into account the urgency and in accordance with the rules of the CoM and the responsible authority on the procedure for providing such information.

**Article 10. Competence of the Saeima to Decide on Justification of Emergency Situation**

(1) The Presidium of the *Saeima* shall include a decision of the CoM on emergency situation or on such amendments to a decision on emergency situation which determine additional territorial restrictions or restrictions of rights, as well as on extending the declared emergency situation in the agenda of the *Saeima* meeting without delay.

(2) If, in examining the decision referred to in Paragraph one of this Article, the *Saeima* rejects it, the relevant decision shall be repealed and the measures introduced according thereto shall be revoked without delay.

*Table 1. Source: the Law on Emergency Situation and State of Exception*

**The relevant provisions of the CoM Ordinance no.518 On declaring the state of emergency as adopted on 10 August 2021**

1. Taking into consideration the huge increase in the number of cases of illegal crossing of the state border of the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of Belarus and also observing the number of cases of illegal crossing of the state border of the Republic of Lithuania and the Republic of Belarus, the emergency situation shall be declared from 11 August 2021 to 10 February 2023 in the following administrative territories:

- 1.1. Ludza municipality;
- 1.2. Krāslava municipality;
- 1.3. Augšdaugava municipality;
- 1.4. the city of Daugavpils. [..]

6. The units of the State Border Guard and other institutions located in the territory where the emergency situation has been declared shall not accept the applications to grant the status of a refugee or alternative status.

*Table 2. Source: the CoM Ordinance no.518 On declaring the state of emergency*

**The relevant provisions of the Cabinet of Ministers Ordinance no.518 On declaring the state of emergency as of 6 April 2022**

1. Taking into consideration the huge increase in the number of cases of illegal crossing of the state border of the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of Belarus and also observing the number of cases of illegal crossing of the state border of the Republic of Lithuania and the Republic of Belarus, the emergency situation shall be declared from 11 August 2021 to 10 February 2023 in the following administrative territories:

- 1.1. Ludza municipality;
- 1.2. Krāslava municipality;
- 1.3. Augšdaugava municipality;
- 1.4. the city of Daugavpils. [..]

6. The units of the State Border Guard and other institutions located in the territory where the emergency situation has been declared shall not accept the applications to grant the status of a refugee or alternative status. The afore-said is not applicable to the border crossing points located in the territories indicated in paragraph 1 of this *Ordinance*, and the State Border Guard Accommodation Centre for Detained Aliens “Daugavpils”.

*Table 3. Source: the CoM Ordinance no.518 On declaring the state of emergency*

## **The Explanatory reports to the CoM's Ordonnances pertaining to the State of Emergency**

### **The Explanatory report to the CoM *Ordonnance no.518 of 10 August 2021 On Declaring the State of Emergency***

#### **1.3. Current situation, problems and solutions**

Pursuant to Article 4, paragraph 1, of the *Law on State of Emergency and State of Exception*, the state of emergency is a special legal regime during which the Cabinet of Ministers has a right within the limits imposed by the law to limit the rights and freedoms of the State and local authority institutions, real and legal persons, and to impose on them obligations.

The state of emergency may be proclaimed in a situation that is related to a catastrophe, threats thereof or threats to the critical infrastructure, if the safety and State, the population, the environment are threatened or the lives and well-being of individuals is at stake.

The state of emergency pursuant to Article 5, paragraph 1, of the *Law on State of Emergency and State of Exception* is proclaimed by the Cabinet of Ministers for a limited period of time not exceeding three months.

Considering the number of illegal crossings of the Latvia-Belarusian border and its rapid increase (on 9 August 2021 343 illegal crossings (from which 100 in the last 24 hours)), as well as taking into account the high number of illegal crossings of the Lithuanian-Belarusian border into the neighbouring State Lithuania (on 9 August 2021 – 4112 persons), in accordance with Articles 4, paragraph 2, 5, paragraph 1, 6, paragraph 1, subparagraph 2, and Article 7, paragraph 3, of the *Law on State of Emergency and State of Exception* it is necessary to proclaim the state of emergency from 11 August 2021 until 10 November 2021 in the following administrative territories:

- Ludza municipality;
- Krāslava municipality;
- Augšdaugava municipality;
- Daugavpils city.

In line with the above, an *Ordonnance* of the Cabinet of Ministers has been prepared, which sets out: [..]

5. the right for people seeking international protection who leave the territory of the Republic of Belarus by land, to submit requests for the refugee or alternative status on the official border crossing points with Belarus – “Pāternieki” and “Silene”. The State Border Guard has to increase the resources available for the acceptance of requests for the refugee or alternative status to ensure that individuals may submit requests for international protection. [..]

### **The Explanatory report to the CoM' *Ordonnance no.254 of 6 April 2022 “Amendment to the Cabinet of Ministers' Ordonnance no.518 of 10 August 2021 On Declaring the State of Emergency”***

#### **1.2. Objective**

##### **Description of the objective**

To clarify paragraph 6 of the Cabinet of Ministers' *Ordonnance no.518 of 10 August 2021 On Declaring the State of Emergency* in order to implement the judgment of the Rēzekne Courthouse of the Administrative District Court. [..]

#### **1.3. Current situation, problems and solutions**

##### **Current situation**

Paragraph 6 of the Cabinet of Ministers' *Ordonnance no.518 of 10 August 2021 On Declaring the State of Emergency* (hereinafter – the *Ordonnance*) provided that: “[t]he units of the State

Border Guard and other institutions located in the territory where the emergency situation has been declared shall not accept the applications to grant the status of a refugee or alternative status.”

#### **Description of the problem**

On 14 March 2022, the Rēzekne Courthouse of the Administrative District Court adopted a judgment in the case no.A420290221, on 18 March 2022 – a judgment in the case no.A420287621, and on 22 March 2022 – a judgment in the case no.A420291421, holding that paragraph 6 of the *Ordonnance* had to be annulled as regards the claimants. This was justified by the fact that, according to the court, paragraph 6 of the *Ordonnance* did not provide persons with a genuine and effectively accessible opportunity to submit an application to grant the status of a refugee or alternative status at the border crossing points or at the border crossing transit zone before entering Latvia.

#### **Description of the solution**

In view of the above, as well as the fact that several other similar cases are pending before the Rēzekne Courthouse of the Administrative District Court, it is necessary to amend paragraph 6 of the *Ordonnance* by clarifying its grammatical expression. Accordingly, the Draft Amendment, in view of Article 6, paragraph 2, subparagraph 1, of the *Asylum Law*, foresees to supplement paragraph 6 of the *Ordonnance* with a sentence, determining that the said condition is not applicable to the border crossing points located in the territories indicated in paragraph 1 of this *Ordonnance*, and the State Border Guard Accommodation Centre for Detained Aliens “Daugavpils”.

Accordingly, the Draft will not affect the border crossing points specified in the Cabinet of Ministers’ Regulations no.704 of 27 July 2010 *Regulations regarding border crossing points and the checks to be performed therein* – 1) which have been established on the highways – Silene, Pāternieki, Terehova, Grebņeva; 2) which have been established on railways – Indra, Zilupe, Kārsava; 3) at airports and aerodromes – Daugavpils.

At the same time, the Draft does not change the asylum procedure laid down in the *Asylum Law*. Accordingly, actions after submitting an application for granting refugee or alternative status shall be determined in accordance with the *Asylum Law*.

Table 4. Source: the CoM

<b>Main policy actions of the <i>Plan for the Promotion for Equal Rights and Opportunities for women and men 2024-2027</i></b>
1) promotion of equal rights and opportunities in the labour market and education; 2) reduction of harmful gender-based stereotypes; 3) integration of gender-mainstreaming in policy-planning process.

Table 1. Source: MoW

<b>Measures to promote access to the labour market for women</b>
<p>Active labour market measures are one of the factors contributing to favourable conditions for labour market development. Clients of the State Employment Agency (registered unemployed persons and jobseekers) receive support for job search in order to start employment more quickly and efficiently. The State Employment Agency offers active labour market measures according to the individual profile of the client, taking into account education, age, work experience, other features and individual interests of the client. According to the State Employment Agency, out of all unemployed persons in 2019 53.7% were women; In 2023, the proportion of women was 52.6%. At the end of September 2024, 55.1%.</p> <p>Between 2020 and 2023, the proportion of women participating in events organised by the State Employment Agency exceeded 50% out of all participants. In 2023, the share of women enrolled in exercises was 60%. Women have used career counselling offered by the State Employment Agency more actively than men (20% more than men, on average).</p> <p>The State Employment agencies have adopted measures to facilitate entrepreneurship or self-employment, which assists unemployed persons with prior preparedness and mentoring to successfully operate in the selected field for not less than two years. The number of participants in the event shows a higher proportion of women. Each year, on average, 50 developed business plans receive a positive expert evaluation and are recommended for implementation. In 2020-2023, 554 persons drafted and submitted business plans, of which 66% were women. Agreements were concluded with 292 persons during this period, 67% of them were women.</p> <p>Social entrepreneurship can be considered as an initiative indirectly promoting gender equality in entrepreneurship in Latvia. On 1 April, 2018, the <i>Social Enterprise Law</i> entered into force in Latvia. The purpose of the <i>Social Enterprise Law</i> is to promote improvement of the quality of life of society and to promote employment of groups of residents at risk of social exclusion, creating an economic activity environment favourable to social enterprises. The <i>Social Enterprise Law</i> defines a social enterprise as a limited liability company which has been granted the status of a social enterprise and carries out an economic activity which produces beneficial and significant social impact by employing target groups or improving the quality of life of groups of society whose lives are affected by problems relevant to society (for example, the provision of social, health care or educational services, as well as the production of specialized goods) or by other activities relevant to society which cause long-term positive social impact (e.g. building an inclusive civil society, supporting science, protecting and preserving the environment, protecting animals, or ensuring cultural diversity). In January 2025, 235 active social enterprises were registered in Latvia; 25% of them are active in the field of education, 19% in the field of labour integration, as well as in several other fields. Since 2016, the MoW has been implementing the project “Support for Social Entrepreneurship” (period of 2016/2020 and period of 2024-2020) co-financed by the EU. The project includes activities such as awareness-raising activities (on social enterprises, their role and contribution to the economy and society), as well as support for social enterprises and promotion of the establishment of social enterprises.</p>

Table 2. Source: MoW



**Number of participants in the State Employment Agency event “Measures to promote self-employment and entrepreneurship”**

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Total</b>	129	157	164	211	213	156	158	160	157	397
<b>Women</b>	90	127	118	146	154	107	106	115	114	261
<b>Men</b>	39	30	46	65	59	49	52	45	43	136

Table 3. Source: MoW

**Awareness-raising measures implemented as part of the project “Balance for All (B4A)”**

Type of activity	Number of events
Report	4
Methodological material	3
Online training course	1
Online lecture	3
Events during “Work-Life Week”	11
Photo exhibition	2
International conference	1
Work-life balance awards	2
Discussion	8
Seminars	15
Video	18
Animation clips	9
Infographs	4
Podcasts	5
Opinion piece	10

Table 4. Source: MoW

<b>The policy action envisaged in the National Plan for the Prevention and Combating of Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence 2024-2029</b>
(1) prevention of violence against women and domestic violence; (2) provision and improvement of support measures for victims of violence; (3) strengthening the responsibility of perpetrators and provision of rehabilitation services to reduce violent behaviour; and (4) establishment of a unified and coordinated policy to combat and prevent violence against women and domestic violence.

Table 5. Source: MoW

**Participation of the State Police officers in training related to prevention of violence, investigation and awareness-raising**

Organiser	Event	Number of participants	Year
Iceland-Liechtenstein-Norway grants	Support for the introduction of Barnahus into Latvia	10	2021
The College of the SP	Interrogation of a victim. Insights from psychology.	21	2021
CEPOL	Combating child sexual exploitation -	1	2021

	Interviewing child sex offenders		
NGO “Crisis and Consultation Centre “Skalbes””	European day for victims of crime 2021	26	2021
NGO ”Centre MARTA”	Emotional abuse. Interinstitutional cooperation in case solving and support	5	2021
NGO “C Modulis”	Cooperation and professional boundaries in the field of protection of the rights of the child	1	2021
CEPOL	Welfare for online child sexual exploitation teams	1	2021
The College of the SP	Psychological and legal aspects of police officers' conduct in cases of sexual violence	52	2021
	Psychological and legal aspects of police officers' conduct in cases of sexual violence	46	2022
NGO ”Centre Marta”	Violence-free society of tomorrow. Ensuring the rights of the victim and prosecuting the perpetrator	6	2022
The College of the SP	Conduct of a police officer in cases involving domestic violence	105	2022
NGO “Centre Dardedze”	Harmful sexual behaviour – can a child harm a child?	1	2022
NGO “Crisis and Consultation Centre “Skalbes””	European day for victims of crime 2022	16	2022
CEPOL	080/2022/ONS Prevention of Juvenile Crime and Domestic Violence	1	2022
Iceland-Liechtenstein-Norway grants	Support for the introduction of Barnahus into Latvia	4	2022
The College of the SP	Interrogation of a victim. Insights from psychology. Working with victims	6	2022
	Working with victims.	51	2023
	Working with victims.	27	2023
NGO “Crisis and Consultation Centre “Skalbes””	European day for victims of crime 2023	13	2023

The College of the SP	Practical and psychological aspects of communication with the person (including the victim) who reports the violence.	22	2023
	Offences against sexual inviolability, in particular against minors and persons in a state of vulnerability	45	2023
NGO "Centre MARTA"	Problem of violence and assistance to victims	2	2023
The College of the SP	Conduct of the police officer in cases involving domestic violence	149	2023

Table 6. Source: SP

### Registered offences related to violence against women

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Article 159 of the <i>Criminal Law</i> (rape)	107	88	122	123	147
Article 130, paragraph 3, subparagraph 6, of the <i>Criminal Law</i> (intentional bodily injury of minor severity, if caused as part of domestic violence)	56	51	57	72	87
Article 174 of the <i>Criminal Law</i> (cruelty and violence against a minor)	127	90	143	191	204

Table 7. Source: MoI

<b>Information on the safe house (shelter) service offered to victims of domestic violence</b>
<p>The safe house (shelter) is provided for up to 30 days and, if necessary, the stay in the safe house (shelter) can be extended up to 180 days. If necessary, during the stay in the safe house (shelter), individual special consultations or support services will also be provided to the victim of violence.</p> <p>Victims of violence are also entitled to receive further social rehabilitation services. For example: (i) a social rehabilitation course for up to 30 days in a social rehabilitation institution (with accommodation); (ii) up to ten 45-minute consultations of a psychologist, social worker, and lawyer at the place of residence (without accommodation). Consultations can also be received in the form of online consultations or in a crisis centre without accommodation.</p> <p>If a person's health and life are in danger because of violence, a person can receive additionally: (i) up to 50 hours of support from a trusted person for solving problems related to everyday life issues; (ii) up to 120 consultations of a psychologist, social worker and lawyer at the place of residence, incl. online; (iii) up to 180 days in the form of a social rehabilitation course in a social rehabilitation institution with accommodation.</p>

Table 8. Source: MoW

## Number of deaths in prisons and their investigations (2020-2024)

Year	Total number of deaths	Due to asphyxia and other forms of self-harm	Biological death	Cases Investigated	Criminal Proceedings initiated	Result
2020	35	7	28	13	13	13 cases closed without a charge
2021	26	6	20	13	13	13 cases closed without a charge
2022	29	7	22	23	16	16 cases closed without a charge
2023	22	6	16	16	0	-
2024	29	6	23	19	4	4 ongoing investigations

Table 1. Source: PA

Information regarding the resocialisation programme “I am aware”
<p>“I am aware” programme has the following tasks: (i) helping prisoners focus on the present, being “here and now”; (ii) develop skills to think and act consciously, and promote emotional management skills in cases of intense difficulties; (iii) improve concentration and attention-shifting; (iv) encourage focus on the present; (v) awareness of your emotions and actions; (vi) help to distinguish thoughts from emotions; to recognize and focus on a particular thought, to dismiss it; (vii) encourage the use of creative techniques to study emotions; identify, and analyse emotions leading to destructive actions; (viii) develop emotional regulation skills; (ix) help prisoners develop interpersonal relationship building skills; (x) practice different acceptance of different opinions; recognise conversation styles.</p> <p>The program consists of 14 group classes and the group's size is 4 to 8 people. The class duration of one group is 90 minutes organised once a week. The total duration of the programme is 14 weeks. Individual consultations are organized between program group classes when there are no lessons and it is also possible to attend a month after completion of the program. The duration of the individual consultation is between 45 and 60 minutes. 98 prisoners have participated since its introduction in 2022 (in 2022 - 31 prisoners, in 2023 - 53, in 2024 - 14). The programme will be implemented by the specialists of the Resocialisation Division that received training for the specific programme.</p>

Table 2. Source: PA

**Number of deaths in psychiatric institutions, the number of investigations carried out and criminal proceedings initiated for such deaths, and their results in 2014- 2019**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of deaths in psychiatric hospitals in Latvia<sup>17</sup></b>	<b>Number of deaths in the Latvian Prison Hospital<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>The number of pathological anatomical examinations of deceased patients in Latvian psychiatric hospitals<sup>18</sup></b>	<b>Criminal proceedings initiated regarding deaths in Latvian psychiatric hospitals<sup>2,19</sup></b>
<b>2014</b>	306	14	7	0
<b>2015</b>	292	9	4	0
<b>2016</b>	250	11	14	0
<b>2017</b>	236	5	9	0
<b>2018</b>	252	8	4	0
<b>2019</b>	217	6	6	0
<b>2020</b>	162	16	5	0
<b>2021</b>	255	12	7	1
<b>2022</b>	212	10	15	0
<b>2023</b>	148	1	5	0
<b>2024</b>	-	-	14	-

*Table 3. Source: MoH and the Centre for Disease Prevention and Control of Latvia*

<sup>17</sup>Data provided by the Centre for Disease Prevention and Control of Latvia.

<sup>2</sup> Data provided by the National Mental Health Center, "Ģintermuiža" Hospital, "Ainaži" Children's Psychoneurological Hospital, Strenči Psychoneurological Hospital, Children's Clinical University Hospital, Daugavpils Psychoneurological Hospital, Piejūra Hospital

<sup>3</sup>In response to an information request, Latvian psychoneurological hospitals stated that either no criminal proceedings have been initiated regarding patients who have died in these hospitals, or such information is not available.

**Number of cases examined by the courts regarding the violation of the provisions on the prohibition of torture**

Article of the <i>Criminal Law</i>		First Instance	Appeals	Result
	Year	Number of cases (examined)	Number of cases (examined)	
Article 130 <sup>1</sup> (prohibition of torture)	2020	0	0	-
	2021	0	0	-
	2022	1	0	Acquittal
	2023	0	1	Acquittal
	2024	0	0	-
Article 125, paragraph 2, subparagraph 4 (intentional bodily injury of major severity, if the act has the nature of torture)	2020	0	0	0
	2021	1	0	Acquittal
	2022	0	1	1 Imprisonment (4-5 years)
	2023	1	0	1 Imprisonment (2-3 years)
	2024	1	2	Acquittal
Article 126, paragraph 2, subparagraph 2 (intentional bodily injury of moderate severity, if the act has the nature of torture)	2020	0	0	-
	2021	0	0	-
	2022	0	0	-
	2023	1	0	0
	2024	0	0	0

Article 130, paragraph 3, subparagraph 2 (intentional bodily injury of minor severity, if the act has the nature of torture)	2020	0	0	0
	2021	0	0	-
	2022	1	0	Acquittal
	2023	0	0	-
	2024	0	0	-
Article 301, paragraph 3 (Compelling other to give of false testimony, explanation, opinion, or translation, if the act has the nature of torture)	2020	0	0	-
	2021	0	0	--
	2022	0	0	--
	2023	0	0	-
	2024	0	0	-
Article 317, paragraph 3 (Exceeding public authority, if the such act has the nature of torture)	2020	0	0	-
	2021	1	0	1 Imprisonment (1-2 years) 1 Imprisonment (1-2 years, suspended)
	2022	1	0	Acquittal
	2023	0	0	-
	2024	0	1	Acquittal

Table 1. Source: Administration of Courts

**Number of complaints, criminal proceedings initiated, and persons convicted regarding offences within the competence of the ISB**

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Complaints received	1335	1147	978	987
Complaints on matters that fall within the scope of the competence of the ISB	632	754	636	649
Complaints alleging violence	212	266	220	234
Decisions to refuse to initiate criminal proceedings	329	248	260	248
Decisions to refuse to initiate criminal proceedings regarding complaints alleging violence	173	149	140	134
Criminal proceedings initiated	58	48	50	50
Criminal proceedings taken over	26	32	25	27
Ongoing criminal proceedings	91	63	61	65
Proceedings at the investigative stage	108	84	72	92
Proceedings where the charges have been brought	51	45	43	48
Proceedings where the charges regarding allegations of violence have been brought	6	3	5	8
Convicted persons	26	34	19	32

*Table 2. Source: ISB*

**Number of complaints regarding ill-treatment by the officials of the Prison Administration received by the Prison Administration and disciplinary cases initiated**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of complaints received</b>	<b>Number of disciplinary investigations initiated</b>	<b>Penalty</b>
<b>2020</b>	92	-	-
<b>2021</b>	73	-	-
<b>2022</b>	46	1	1 reprimand and an adverse notation
<b>2023</b>	38	0	
<b>2024</b>	76	5	4 reprimand 1 reduction of salary for 10% for a month

*Table 3. Source: PA*



Non-custodial security measures under the *Criminal Procedure Law*

Article of the <i>Criminal Procedure Law</i>	Description	Comment
Article 252 <sup>1</sup>	Obligation to notify in case of a change of residence	An obligation of the suspect or the accused to inform the official in charge of the criminal proceedings in writing about any change of residence within one day.
Article 252 <sup>2</sup>	Obligation to appear at a police station	An obligation of the suspect or the accused to appear at a police station at a certain day or days of the month.
Article 253	Restraining order	An obligation of the suspect or the accused to refrain from being located closer than the distance referred to in a decision to the relevant place or person, from having physical or visual contact with the relevant person, and using means of communication, or techniques for transferring information, in order to make contact with the relevant person.
Article 255	Prohibition to leave the state	The suspect or the accused to refrain from departing from the State without the permission of the official in charge of the proceedings.
Article 256	Obligation to remain at a designated place (house arrest)	A written obligation of the suspect or the accused to reside during the time indicated and at the place specified by the official in charge of the proceedings or to not leave the specifically indicated place of residence or temporary residence for longer than 24 hours without the permission of the official in charge of the proceedings, as well as to comply without delay with the summons of the official in charge of the proceeding and to fulfil other criminal-procedural duties.
Article 257	Bail	A payment of a monetary sum, specified in a decision of the official in charge of the proceedings, in order to ensure the compliance of a suspect or accused on with the summons and the performance of other procedural duties.
Article 258	Undertaking	<p>A written obligation with which a natural person indicated in the official in charge of the proceedings that the suspect or the accused will comply with the summons and perform other procedural duties.</p> <p>Undertaking may be issued by a natural person (guarantor) who has expressed such desire and in which the official in charge of the proceedings places confidence that he or she can ensure that the suspect or the accused will fulfil his or her procedural obligations. There shall be not less than two guarantors.</p>
Article 260	Parents' supervision of a minor	A written obligation of one person or several of such persons, regarding the application of a security measure to ensure that the suspected or the accused minor will comply with the summons and other procedural duties.

Article 261	Police supervision	A set of measures applied to the suspect or accused including: a restriction of the movement and capacity to act; change his or her permanent or temporary residence without the permission of the official in charge of the proceedings; visit certain locations or institutions; meet with the certain; requirement to be present at the place of residence at certain hours of the day, as well as appear before the police not more than three times a week.
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Table 1. Source: the Criminal Procedure Law

### Number of security measures applied in 2020-2024

Security Measure	The number of security measures applied				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Prohibition from approaching a specific person or location	246	192	178	246	183
Prohibition from a specific employment	43	53	57	90	167
Prohibition to leave the state	1 471	1 033	836	943	1 128
Bail	43	60	32	27	22
Police supervision	912	660	497	531	343
Detention on remand	1 453	1 092	1 156	1 151	1 289
Detention (Article 54 of the <i>Immigration Law</i> )				2	3
Obligation to notify in case of a change of residence	969	620	489	443	478
Obligation to appear at a police station	602	397	274	294	343
Obligation to remain at a designated place (house arrest)	2 726	1 567	929	892	1 236

Table 2. Source: Administration of Courts

Number of persons detained on remand in 2020-2024	
2020	810
2021	808
2022	734
2023	774
2024	1001

Table 3. Source: PA

### Right to information and access to lawyer of a detained person

Rights of the detained
to immediately retain a defence counsel and enter into an agreement with him or her or to use the legal assistance ensured by the State if the person is incapable of entering into an agreement with the defence counsel at the person's own expense.
to meet a defence counsel in circumstances that ensure confidentiality of the conversation without a special permit from the person directing the proceedings and without limitation of time.
to request participation of an advocate for ensuring defence in a separate procedural action in the cases provided for by the law, if an agreement on defence has not been entered into yet with a particular advocate or this defence counsel has been unable to appear.
to receive from the official in charge of the proceedings a list of advocates who practice in the relevant court district, as well as to use telephone free of charge for retaining a defence counsel.
to be notified of what assumption has been made or what suspicion has arisen against the person and why the charges has been brought against him or her.
to receive an oral or written translation in a language comprehensible to him or her.
to stay silent, testify, or refuse to testify.

to request information regarding the conduct of the criminal proceedings, regarding officials who conduct or have conducted the criminal proceedings, and regarding the restrictions of the rights applied to the person and their length.
to familiarise him or herself with the materials of a case in the cases provided for in the law.
to familiarise with such materials of a case which justify the proposal to apply a security measure related to the deprivation of liberty;
to request that his or her immediate family, educational institution, or employer is notified of his or her detention or arrest, as well as to contact one of them, insofar it does not endanger the fundamental rights of other persons, public interests and does not hinder the achievement of the objective of criminal proceedings. A foreigner has the right to request that the diplomatic or consular mission of his or her country is notified of his or her detention or arrest, as well as to contact it.
to receive information regarding rights to emergency medical assistance and healthcare.
to receive information regarding the maximum number of hours or months for which the person's liberty may be restricted during pre-trial proceedings.

Table 4. Source: the Criminal Procedure Law

Rights of a detained who is a minor
to participate in procedural actions together with a representative;
to participate in procedural actions together with a trusted person
to specific arrangements for the protection of private life
to receive individual assessment
to have alternative to deprivation of liberty applied primarily

Table 5. Source: the Criminal Procedure Law

#### Number of minors convicted and the penalties applied

		2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Number of criminal proceedings</b>		440	376	349	272
<b>Convicted persons</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>148</b>
<b>Penalty</b>	Fine	3	0	1	1
	Community service	196	190	95	64
	Probation	x	x	6	25
	Short-term imprisonment	13	12	14	5
	Imprisonment	77	107	72	53

Table 6. Source: MoI

<b>Coercive measures of a correctional nature may be applied to children</b>
A warning.
An obligation to apologise to the victims, if they agree to meet the perpetrator;.
A personal guarantee from the child’s parents or guardians, as well as other persons, institutions or organisations.
An order that the consequences of the damage caused be rectified through work.
To oblige, if a child is 15 or older and has income, to compensate for the loss caused.
To impose restrictions on conduct.
To oblige to perform community service, to place social correctional educational institution for children, or probation.

Table 7. Source: MoI

**Training provided to judges and law-enforcement officials to encourage use of non-custodial alternatives**

<b>Organiser / Description</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>
The Academy of European Law	“Recent Case Law of the European Court of Human Rights in Criminal Matters”	2019
The Riga Graduate School of Law	“Case Law of the European Court of Human Rights ”	2021
The Council of Europe	HELP E-course “Introduction to the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the European Court of Human Rights”	2021
The Latvian Judicial Training Centre	Training of the Investigative Judges	2021
The Latvian Judicial Training Centre	Application of procedural sanctions	2022

Table 8. Source: MoJ

**Number of criminal proceedings initiated and number of persons recognised as suspects  
in criminal proceedings in accordance with Article 154<sup>1</sup> of the *Criminal Law*  
(Trafficking in Human Beings)**

Year	Criminal proceedings		Number of victims
2020	7	3 work of foreigners (internal) 3 on the operation of work (internal) 1 investigation into sexual exploitation (international)	15 men 1 woman
2021	4	1 marriages of convenience (international) 1 marriages of convenience (international) 1 agricultural work (internal) 1 work in the catering sector. (internal)	0 0 15 men, 1 woman 1 Chinese citizen of legal age.
2022	8	2 recruitment to set up networks for fraud (international) 4 sexual exploitation in Latvia 1 exploitation in HORECA (international) 1 marriages of convenience (international)	2 Women 4 Women 1 man 2 Women victims in criminal proceedings initiated in previous years: for work exploitation (2 men in Latvia)
2023	2	exploitation of domestic work operation of work abroad.	2 men 0 victims in criminal proceedings initiated in previous years: for work exploitation (2 women in Latvia)
2024	3	Begging abroad Begging/donations domestic Exploitation of domestic work	2 men and 2 women 0 0 victims in criminal proceedings initiated in previous years: 1 woman for sexual exploitation abroad

Table 1. Source: MoI

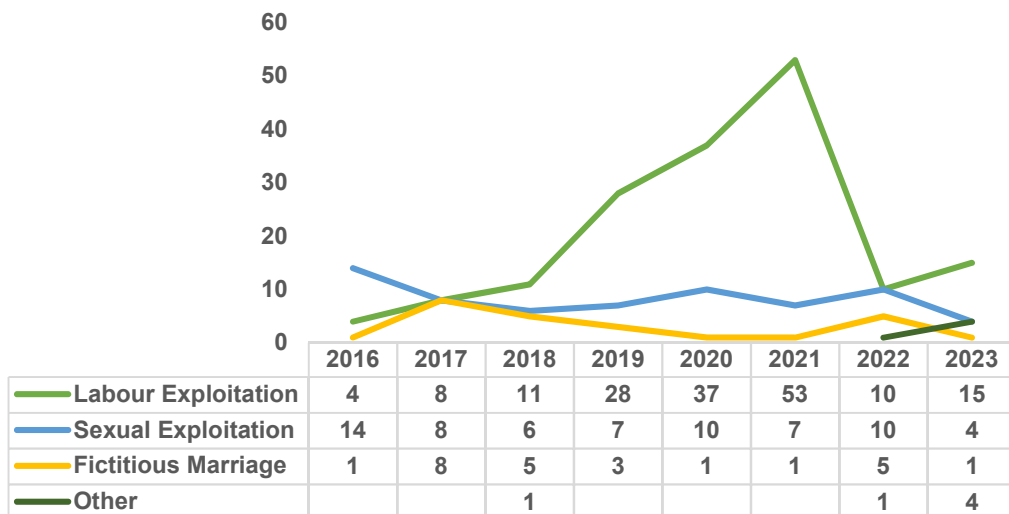
**Number of sentences imposed in accordance with Articles 154<sup>1</sup> (Trafficking in Human Beings) and 165<sup>1</sup> of the *Criminal Law* (Sending a Person for Sexual Exploitation)**

Year	Legal provision	Number of convicted persons	Type and duration of sentence	Actual/suspended
2020	Article 154 <sup>1</sup> of the <i>Criminal Law</i> (Trafficking in Human Beings)	1	1 (deprivation of liberty, no data)	Actual
	Article 165 <sup>1</sup> of the <i>Criminal Law</i> (Sending a Person for Sexual Exploitation)	0	-	-
2021	Article 154 <sup>1</sup> of the <i>Criminal Law</i> (Trafficking in Human Beings)	1	1 (imprisonment, 5-10 years)	Actual
	Article 165 <sup>1</sup> of the <i>Criminal Law</i> (Sending a Person for Sexual Exploitation)	3	2 (imprisonment, 1-2 years 1 year) 1 (imprisonment, 5-6 years)	2 Actual 1 Suspended

2022	Article 154 <sup>1</sup> of the Criminal Law (Trafficking in Human Beings)	1	1 (imprisonment, 2-3 years)	1 Suspended
	Article 165 <sup>1</sup> of the Criminal Law (Sending a Person for Sexual Exploitation)	2	2 (imprisonment, 2-3 years)	1 Actual 2 Suspended
2023	Article 154 <sup>1</sup> of the Criminal Law (Trafficking in Human Beings)	7	3 (imprisonment, 4-5 years) 2 (imprisonment, 5-6 years) 1 (imprisonment, 6-7 years) 1 (fine)	1 Suspended 5 Actual
	Article 165 <sup>1</sup> of the Criminal Law (Sending a Person for Sexual Exploitation)	0	-	-

Table 2. Source: MoI, Administration of Courts

### Number of victims disaggregated by type of trafficking in human beings (2016-2023)



Graph 1. Source: SP, NGO "Centre MARTA", and NGO "Shelter Safe House"

### State compensations granted to persons recognised as victims of criminal offences involving trafficking in human beings

	Number of victims	Compensations	Amount (EUR)
2020	2	The State compensation	3 870
2021	14	The State compensation	29 295
2022	10	The State compensation	20 250
2023	5	The State compensation	11 790
2024	4	The State compensation	10 620

Table 3. Source: MoI

**Total the State budget funding for the social rehabilitation of victims of trafficking in human beings**

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
135 418	135 110	135 110	192 311	192 311

Table 4. Source: MoI

<b>Social rehabilitation service to victims of trafficking provided pursuant to Regulation no.344 of 16 July 2019 “Regulations regarding the procedures by which victims of trafficking in human beings receive a social rehabilitation service”</b>
Two organisations could provide social rehabilitation service to victims of trafficking in human beings – the NGO “Centrs MARTA” un and the NGO “Shelter Safe House”.
Social rehabilitation course for up to 180 days may include: (i) psychosocial care, including individual consultations with a social worker, psychologist, lawyer, medical practitioner, and other specialists according to the needs of the client; (ii) shelter and accommodation; (iii) the opportunity to develop or improve self-care; (iv) enrolment into training and education programmes to facilitate the reintegration and access to the labour market; (v) five consultations to family members that are minors, if they reside in Latvia; (vi) psychosocial support (individual consultations of a lawyer, social worker, and psychologist), services of an interpreter, assistance in drawing up legal documents and, if necessary, representation in court in connection with the criminal proceedings to participate as a victim or witness, in total not more than 150 hours per year; and (vii) if necessary and if such persons are unable to travel on their own, organising the re-unification of the person’s minor children.

Table 5. Source: MoI

**Number of victims of trafficking in human beings granted a recovery and reflection period (by sex, age, nationality, type of exploitation)**

Year	Number of victims granted a recovery or reflection period	Number of victims by sex	Number of victims by age	Number of victims by nationality	Number of victims by type of operation
2020	8	8 men	8 adults	7 Indian national 1 Uzbekistan national	8 exploitation of labour, forced labour
2021	-	-	-	-	-
2022	-	-	-	-	-
2023	-	-	-	-	-
2024	-	-	-	-	-

Table 6. Source: MoI

**Awareness-raising activities on identification and prevention of human trafficking for the professionals (2020-2024)**

Organiser	Event	Number of participants
NGO “I want to help refugees”	Seminar “Human Rights for All: Introduction to Refugee Law and Rights to Health, Life, Liberty, and Security”.	12

NGO “ <i>Shelter Safe House</i> ”	Seminar “One remains human (stereotypes, discrimination, communication, international protection, hate speech, human trafficking, fake news recognition)”	6
NGO “ <i>Centrs MARTA</i> ”	Seminar “What is trafficking in human beings?”	2
CEPOL	Trafficking in Human Beings	1
FRONTEX	Training course “Anti-trafficking course: EUATHB/2024/11”	1
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Seminar “What is trafficking in human beings?”	2
International Migration Organisation	Seminar “What is trafficking in human beings?”	1
The Office of the Ombudsperson and the Child Protection Centre	A two-day seminar for staff of guardianship and curatorship institutions on the indications of possible trafficking in human beings	No data
The Office of the Ombudsperson and the NGO “ <i>Centre MARTA</i> ”	Two online lectures to staff of the out-of-family care institutions.	No data
The Ministry of Interior	Training seminars "Discovery, investigation and prosecution of human trafficking for labour exploitation" to the employees of the SLI.	70

Table 7. Source: MoI

### Trainings on identification, investigation, and prevention of human trafficking (2020-2024)

	Target group	Themes covered	Approx. total number of participants
2020	Migration officers, the State Police, the State Border Guard, guardianship and curatorship institutions, the Child Protection Centre, municipalities, judges, prosecutors, national coordinator, the Office of the Ombudsperson	Signs of trafficking, identifying and referral of victims, investigating, prosecuting trafficking in human beings (THB) cases, work with victims of trafficking.	Approx. 1200
2021	Migration officers, the State Police, the State Border Guard, guardianship and curatorship institutions, the Office of the Ombudsperson, the national coordinator, municipalities, students, judges	Signs of trafficking, identifying and referral of victims, investigating, prosecuting THB cases, work with victims of trafficking.	Approx. 700



2022	The State Police, the State border guards, guardianship and curatorship institutions, Child protection Centre, municipalities, judges, prosecutors, lawyers, financial investigation units	Sings of trafficking, signs of child trafficking, response to the war in Ukraine, investigating, prosecuting THB cases, judging THB cases, labour exploitation and sexual exploitation, financial indicators of possible trafficking	Approx. 500
2023	Migration officers, the State Police, the State Border Guard, guardianship and curatorship institutions, the Child Protection Centre, municipalities, judges, prosecutors, NGOs working with minors, national coordinator, the Office of the Ombudsperson	Sings of trafficking, signs of child trafficking, investigation and prosecution of THB, Labour exploitation, sexual exploitation, “social path”	Approx. 500
2024	The State Police, the State Border Guard, migration officers, judges, prosecutors, national coordinator, social worker in municipalities, procurement specialists.	Trafficking in human beings in asylum procedure, labour exploitation, working with victims of violence and trafficking, sexual exploitation, benefit and financial fraud in relation to trafficking, carrying out interviews with victims, work with victims, risks of THB in procurements.	Approx. 400

Table 8. Source: Mol

**Projects to enhance identification, investigation, prevention, and support to victims of trafficking in human beings**

Title	Description
CAPE “Development of competences, assistance, and prosecution in labour exploitation in the Baltic Sea Region”	<p>The project was implemented from September 2019 to December 2022. The main objective of the project was to support partners and stakeholders in combating and disrupting the exploitation of labour by analysing and strengthening information, improving victim assistance, and strengthening the investigation and prosecution of cases of trafficking in human beings.</p> <p>Three international workshops (Norway, Germany, Finland) were organised and research work carried-out in Denmark, Latvia, Norway, Poland, and Germany. The authors of the</p>

	study carried out an in-depth investigation into problem of human trafficking in their respective State.
THALIA “Towards thoughtful, informed and compassionate journalism on human trafficking issues”	Seminars organised for students and academics of journalism on media coverage of human trafficking topics. In Latvia, the project was implemented by academics from Riga Stradins University.
ELECT THB “Strengthened cooperation between law-enforcement agencies and improved training on trafficking in human beings”	Implemented from 2021 to 2023, the main tasks of the project were to identify the current situation in trafficking in human beings in Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Finland, and Ukraine, identify good practices, organise training seminars and promote networking and cooperation of international law-enforcement institutions.
NET-WORKS “to ensure the long-term integration of Third-Country Nationals Survivors of Trafficking (SOT) promoting job opportunities and work-life balance measures”	The aim of the project was to support and promote the reintegration of third-country nationals who have been victims of trafficking in human beings into the labour market. The project analyses what support measures are provided to victims of trafficking in human beings, develops various interactive tools that will be useful to professionals in dealing with victims, create video material that will help victims to navigate society and the labour market. The project partners are non-governmental organisations from Italy, Spain, Lithuania, Sweden, Germany and Latvia.
COALESCE	The aim of the project was to provide support to migrant women who have suffered trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation in Europe through gender-based psycho-social, legal, and economic support and assistance; develop synergies and complementarities by facilitating the identification, assistance and support of victims' needs, and improve transnational cooperation between leading professionals and practitioners. In 2021, as part of the project, interviews with women victims of trafficking in human beings were conducted with third-country nationals and at the end of 2021, a report based on interview results and analysis of sources of information “Notice the Difference” in the needs of victims, the support and integration received and the conclusions and recommendations of the report.

Table 9. Source: MoI

#### Awareness-raising activities on the risks of trafficking in human beings

Organiser	Description	Date
The Office of the Ombudsperson	A campaign “not everything is gold that shines!” on social media to explain the problem of trafficking in human beings in Latvia. The campaign focused particularly on the digital environment, where people often see enticing offers of work but are not careful enough to check this information. The campaign aimed to draw attention, through examples, to how vulnerable every person can be. Eight stories were created about how a person could be exposed to human trafficking. In the campaign, the Ombudsperson called for the search for “red flags,” or warning words and phrases	2022

The MoFA and the MoI	An information campaign “Don't allow yourself to be used” or “Working abroad, critically evaluating tempting offers.” The aim of the campaign was to encourage people to think before responding to tempting job offers, to raise awareness of human trafficking, its risks, consequences and opportunities for help. The campaign informative materials with messages on labour exploitation and information on possibilities to seek assistance were distributed on websites and social networks in Latvia with the support of the Latvian Association of Local Governments and the State Employment Agency. The informational videos were shown on screens on Riga public transport and on the premises of Riga International Airport.	2022
NGO “ <i>Latvijas Drošāka interneta centrs</i> ”, the State Police and the Child Protection Centre	An educational campaign “dangerous friendship!”. During the campaign, children, parents, and educators were asked to fill out self-help tests developed by experts to assess whether there are any dangers to a child's friendship, learn how to recognize attempts to seduce children and where to seek help.	2022
The National Child Protection Inspectorate	A newsletter “break your silence!” that aimed to draw public attention to the problem of sexual violence by calling for psycho-emotional and informative support where necessary on issues related to child sexual abuse.	2022
The Ministry of Interior, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the NGO “ <i>I want to help refugees</i> ”.	Distribution of informative materials and banners on risks of trafficking in humans and where to seek help in support centres, border crossings, accommodation centres.	2022
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	A campaign "Don't let yourself be exploited!" or "Work abroad: Critically assess tempting offers."	2023
Office of the Ombudsperson	A campaign “Not everything is gold that shines!”	2023
Office for citizenship and Migration	Digital campaign “Be aware of trafficking signs”.	2024
Ministry of the Interior	Information in Telegram groups about signs of trafficking. Target group: Ukrainians living in Latvia.	2024
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	A campaign "Don't let yourself be exploited!" or "Work abroad: Critically assess tempting offers."	2024

Table 10. Source: MoI

### Implementation of the *Plan for the Prevention of Trafficking in Human beings 2021-2023*

Action Point No	Action	
1.1.	Organise information campaigns and activities on trafficking in human beings for the purposes of sexual exploitation, forced labour, fictitious marriage, or organ removal in order to promote public awareness.	√
1.2.	Develop and disseminate clear and user-friendly information (in several foreign languages) on trafficking issues.	√
1.3.	Provide regular education and information to pupils and students on the problem of trafficking in human beings, its causes, risks, and consequences.	√
1.4.	Provide activities for children and their legal representatives to educate and inform them about security on the Internet, as well as to provide psychological support and assistance on security on the Internet issues that protect children from abuse on Internet in the environment and maintain control over children's activities in the digital world, thus also contributing to the prevention of trafficking in human beings.	√
1.5.	Provide educational activities/training to specialists and employees of different sectors of law-enforcement institutions, State and local government institutions.	√
1.6.	Ensure informative work (regarding exploitation, rights of victims and possibilities to seek help) in day centres, group houses, “half-way apartments”, shelters, or other similar institutions.	x
1.7.	Provide training of judges and court staff on trafficking issues.	√
1.8.	Conduct studies regarding public awareness of trafficking in human beings, its risks, threats, and consequences, as well as trends in trafficking in human beings, risks, and recruitment mechanisms.	√
1.9.	Provide a survey on the understanding of trafficking in human beings among pupils and teachers.	x
2.1	To draft a law on the national cooperation and coordination mechanism for preventing trafficking in human beings.	x
2.2	To draft the CoM regulations regarding the procedures for implementation of cooperation and exchange of information to recognise victims of trafficking in human beings, provide assistance and support, and redirect projects to social service providers.	x
2.3	Provide State-funded social rehabilitation services and support services for victims of trafficking in human beings in criminal proceedings in cooperation with social service providers to the identified victims of trafficking in human beings.	√
2.4	Assess the need for amending the <i>Law On the Residence of a Victim of Trafficking in Human Beings in the Republic of Latvia</i> , determining that the recovery period is 180 days.	√
2.5	Evaluate possibilities for State-funded social rehabilitation services for victims of trafficking in human beings and support services in criminal proceedings to ensure as close as possible to the place of residence of the person and the continuity of services.	x

3.1	Organise a discussion in the Permanent Working Group of the Criminal Law of the Ministry of Justice regarding the possibility to prescribe criminal liability for the use of services of victims of trafficking in human beings and, if necessary, prepare amendments.	√
3.2	Assess whether the criminal offences provided for in Article 164, Article 165 <sup>1</sup> , Article 166, paragraphs 3, 4, and 5, of the <i>Criminal Law</i> overlap with the criminal offence provided for in Article 154 <sup>1</sup> of the <i>Criminal Law</i> .	√
3.3	Evaluate Article 280, paragraph 2, of the <i>Criminal Law</i> and the necessity to make amendments, to prescribe criminal liability for employing a victim of trafficking in human beings has been deliberately employed.	√
3.4	Evaluate the conformity of the procedures for granting the recovery period included in the <i>Law On the Residence of a Victim of Trafficking in Human Beings in the Republic of Latvia</i> with the best interests and fundamental rights of the victim of trafficking in human beings in order to ensure the right of appeal for the decision regarding refusal to grant the appeal of recovery periods.	√
3.5	Ensure the detection, investigation, prosecution, and adjudication of criminal offences of trafficking in human beings and the risk related thereto.	√
3.6	Ensure effective fight against money laundering as a result of trafficking in human beings.	√
3.7	Ensure cross-border cooperation in the investigation of trafficking in human beings.	√
3.8	Ensure the development of a study of case law on trafficking in human beings.	√
4.1	Improve and develop the activities of the Inter-institutional Working Group on Coordination of Implementation of the Plan for the Prevention of trafficking in Human beings 2021-2023, including by organising separate discussions on topics, for example, possibilities for extension of the duration of rehabilitation programmes and the range of beneficiaries.	<b>Partial implementation</b>
4.2	Improve the data collection approach and procedures, with particular attention to the development of data selection criteria.	√
4.3	Develop and improve cooperation and exchange of information between the State Police, the State Labour Inspectorate, the State border Guard, the State Revenue Service, and the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs, evaluating the forms and methods of co-operation of institutions, creating an effective multidisciplinary approach.	<b>Partial implementation</b>
4.4	Promote cooperation between social services of local governments and providers of social services for victims of trafficking in human beings, with a view to further reintegration of the victim of trafficking in human beings after receipt of the State financed social rehabilitation services.	√
4.5	Develop and improve cooperation and exchange of information with the Financial Sector Association, its members and credit institutions.	<b>Partial implementation</b>

4.6	Ensure cooperation of public sector institutions with non-governmental organisations and civil society in the field of preventing and combating trafficking in human beings.	√
4.7	Ensure representation of Latvia's interests and participation in the Baltic Sea Council Working Group on Combating trafficking in Human beings (CBSS TF-THB).	√
4.8	Ensure representation of Latvia's interests and exchange of information within the framework of the informal Network of European Union national rapporteurs or alternative mechanisms for preventing trafficking in human beings (EU NREM), meetings and activities of the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Working Group on Combating trafficking in Human beings of the United Nations and other international organisations.	√
4.9	Evaluate the models for the establishment of the national rapporteur on trafficking in human beings.	<b>Partial implementation</b>

Table 11. Source: Mol

**Number of asylum seekers apprehended and number of apprehended foreigners  
staying at the Accommodation Centres in 2014**

Men	Men (under the age of 18)	Women	Women (under the age of 18)	Children staying with their parents	Total
214	4	50	1	38	269
SYR – 22; – 2; ARM – 3; BEN – 1; BGD – 1; COD – 1; CUB – 2; DZA – 5; GEO – 148; IRQ – 12; LBY – 1; LKA – 3; RUS- 4; SOM – 1; SYR – 22; UZB – 1; VNM - 6	GEO -1; AFG – 1; IRQ – 1; VNM - 1	AFG – 3; ARM – 3; BLR – 1; CMR – 1; COD – 1; CUB – 1; GEO – 32; LKA – 1; RUS- 1; SYR – 2; VNM – 4	AFG	AFG – 2; ARM – 2; GEO – 33; RUS – 1	

*Table 1. Source: Office of the Citizenship and Migration*

**Number of asylum seekers apprehended and number of apprehended foreigners  
staying at the Accommodation Centres in 2015**

Men	Men (under the age of 18)	Women	Women (under the age of 18)	Children staying with their parents	Total
150	16	46	2	32	213
AFG – 10; COD – 1; GEO – 30; IRN – 1; IRQ – 26; KAZ – 1; PAK – 8; RUS – 2; SYR – 3; UKR – 5; VNM – 63	AFG – 1; IRQ – 4; MRT – 1; VNM - 10	AFG – 6; COD – 2; GEO – 5; IRN – 2; IRQ – 17; VNM - 14	AFG - 2	AFG – 7; COD – 1; GEO – 1; IRQ – 20	

*Table 2. Source: Office of the Citizenship and Migration*

**Number of asylum seekers apprehended and number of apprehended foreigners  
staying at the Accommodation Centres in 2016**

Men	Men (under the age of 18)	Women	Women (under the age of 18)	Children staying with their parents	Total
92	5	16	2	18	115
AFG – 4; ARM – 1; BGD – 3; BLR – 2; CHN – 1; COD – 1; DZA - 1; GEO – 2; IND – 22; IRN – 1; IRQ – 7; LKA – 5; MDA – 1; NPL – 9; PAK – 22; RUS- 5; SYR	IRQ – 1; RUS – 2; VNM – 2	AFG – 3; CHN – 1; GEO – 1; IRQ – 6; NPL – 1; PAK – 3; VNM – 1	IRQ – 1; VNM – 1	AFG – 9; GEO – 1; IRQ – 7; PAK - 1	

-2; TJK -2; UKR -2					
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Table 3. Source: Office of the Citizenship and Migration

**Number of asylum seekers apprehended and number of apprehended foreigners staying at the accommodation centres in 2017**

Men	Men (under the age of 18)	Women	Women (under the age of 18)	Children staying with their parents	Total
38	9	21	3	9	71
ARM - 1; AZE - 1; BGD - 5; BLR - 2; COD - 1; GEO - 2; IND - 6; ISR - 1; KAZ - 1; LBN - 1; NPL - 1; RUS - 1; TUN - 1; TUR - 1; VNM - 13	ARM - 1; VNM - 8	AFG - 1; ARM - 1; AZE - 1; CHN - 1; GEO - 1; LBN - 1; TJK - 1; VNM - 14	VNM - 3	AFG - 3; ARM - 2; AZE - 2; LBN - 2	

Table 4. Source: Office of the Citizenship and Migration

**Number of asylum seekers apprehended and number of apprehended foreigners staying at the accommodation centres in 2018**

Men	Men (under the age of 18)	Women	Women (under the age of 18)	Children staying with their parents	Total
27	1	8	1	6	37
ARM - 1; BGD - 5; CMR - 1; IRQ - 8; LKA - 2; PAK - 2; RUS - 6; SYR - 1; VNM - 1	VNM - 1	IRQ - 4; RUS - 2; VNM - 2	IRQ - 1	IRQ - 4; RUS - 2	

Table 5. Source: Office of the Citizenship and Migration

**Number of asylum seekers apprehended and number of apprehended foreigners staying at the accommodation centres in 2019**

Men	Men (under the age of 18)	Women	Women (under the age of 18)	Children staying with their parents	Total
39	1	2	0	2	42



AFG – 2; BGD – 2; CUB – 3; EGY – 2; GEO – 3; IND – 16; IRN – 2; IRQ – 1; KAZ – 1; NGA – 2; PAK – 2; RUS – 2; UKR – 1	IRN-1	CHN – 1; UKR – 1		UKR-2	
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Table 6. Source: Office of the Citizenship and Migration

**Number of asylum seekers apprehended and number of apprehended foreigners staying at the accommodation centres in 2020**

Men	Men (under the age of 18)	Women	Women (under the age of 18)	Children staying with their parents	Total
31	0	4	0	0	35
AFG -2; AZE – 1; BLR – 1; BGD – 4; COD – 1; DZA – 2; GEO - 2; IND – 4; IRN – 3; MAR – 1; NPL – 1; PAK – 3; RUS- 2; SYR – 3; bezvalstnieks - 1		AFG – 1; SYR – 1; VNM – 2			

Average length of detention – 68 days

Table 7. Source: Office of the Citizenship and Migration

**Number of asylum seekers apprehended and number of apprehended foreigners staying at the accommodation centres in 2021**

Men	Men (under the age of 18)	Women	Women (under the age of 18)	Children staying with their parents	Total
123	2	36	1	29	162
AFG – 6; AZE – 1; BLR – 2; DZA – 1; EGY – 4; GEO – 1; IND – 3; IRN – 2; IRQ – 83; KWT – 1; LKA – 4; NGA – 1; PAK – 2; RUS – 10; UKR - 2	AFG – 1; IRQ - 1	AFG – 1; AZE – 2; CMR – 1; ZAF – 1; IRN – 3; IRQ – 24; RUS – 3; UKR - 1	ZAF - 1	COD -2; IRN – 2, IRQ – 15; AZE – 5; AFG – 5	

Average length of detention – 49 days

Table 8. Source: Office of the Citizenship and Migration

**Number of asylum seekers apprehended and number of apprehended foreigners staying at the accommodation centres in 2022**

Men	Men (under the age of 18)	Women	Women (under the age of 18)	Children staying with their parents	Total
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151	4	36	0	64	191
AFG – 7; ARM – 1; AZE – 5; BGD – 3; BLR – 2; EGY – 1; ERI – 1; GEO – 3; GIN – 1; IND – 8; IRN – 22; IRQ – 43; LKA – 16; MAR – 8; NGA – 2; PAK – 6; RUS – 5; SYR – 4; TJK – 1; TUR – 3; UKR – 4; UZB – 3; YEM – 2	AFG – 1; MAR – 1; IRQ – 1; EGY – 1	AFG – 3; AZE – 1; IRN – 13; IRQ – 14; LKA – 2; NGA – 2; RUS – 1		IRQ – 24; IRN – 23; AFG – 16; AZE – 1	

Average length of detention – 55 days

Table 9. Source: Office of the Citizenship and Migration

**Number of asylum seekers apprehended and number of apprehended foreigners staying at the accommodation centres in 2023**

Men	Men (under the age of 18)	Women	Women (under the age of 18)	Children staying with their parents	Total
585	11	176	9	137	781
AFG – 61; AZE – 2; BDI – 3; BGD – 20; BLR – 1; CAF – 1; CIV – 1; CMR – 20; COD – 14; COM – 9; CUB – 6; DZA – 2; EGY – 6; ERI – 7; ETH – 11; GEO – 1; GHA – 10; GIN – 9; GMB – 7; IND – 86; IRN – 77; IRQ – 24; LKA – 10; MAR – 2; MLI – 10; NGA – 4; PAK – 3; RUS – 3; SDN – 3; SEN – 5; SOM – 3; SYR – 149; TGO – 1; TJK – 3; UKR – 6; YEM – 5	BDI – 1; COD – 1; GIN – 1; IRN – 1; MLI – 1; SYR – 6	AFG – 28; AZE – 1; BDI – 1; CAF – 1; CIV – 1; CMR – 14; COD – 4; COG – 1; COM – 7; CUB – 6; ERI – 1; ETH – 4; GHA – 2; GIN – 6; GMB – 2; IND – 4; IRN – 30; IRQ – 11; LBR – 1; LKA – 1; MLI – 2; PAK – 1; PHL – 1; RUS – 1; RWA – 1; SDN – 1; SEN – 1; SOM – 8; SYR – 29; TCD – 1; TJK – 1; TUR – 1; UKR – 2	CMR – 1; COD – 3; ERI – 1; GIN – 1; IRQ – 1; SOM – 1; SYR – 1	IRN – 37; SYR – 21; IND – 3; IRQ – 22; AFG – 42; CMR – 2; RUS – 1; SUB – 4; AZE – 2; COD – 2; UKR – 1	

Average length of detention – 43 days

Table 10. Source: Office of the Citizenship and Migration

**Number of asylum seekers apprehended and number of apprehended foreigners staying at the accommodation centres in 2024**

<b>Men</b>	<b>Men (under the age of 18)</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Women (under the age of 18)</b>	<b>Children staying with their parents</b>	<b>Total</b>
446	12	76	4	40	538
AFG – 103; BDI – 1; BGD – 51; BLR – 4; CAF - 1; CMR – 3; COD – 1; CUB – 2; DZA – 4; ETH – 1; GEO – 1; GIN – 1; GMB – 2; IND – 90; IRN – 19; IRQ – 28; LKA – 14; MAR – 8; MDA – 1; MLI – 1; NPL – 6; PAK – 23; RUS- 12; SDN – 1; SEN – 1; SOM – 12; SYR – 35; TJK – 15; TUR – 3; UKR – 4; UZB – 3; YEM – 2	AFG – 3; BGD – 1; IRN – 1; SOM - 7	AFG – 13; CMR – 1; COD – 2; COG – 1; CUB – 3; IND – 4; IRN – 10; IRQ – 8; LKA – 1; MDA – 1; NGA – 1; PAK – 1; RUS – 1; SOM – 12; SYR – 2; TJK – 11; UKR – 1; UZB – 1; ZWE – 2	ETH – 1; SOM – 2; TJK – 1	SYR – 1; IRQ – 6; NGA – 1; IRN – 3; AFG – 9; TJK – 16; COS – 1; LKA – 1; UZB – 1; IND – 1	

Average length of detention – 50 days

*Table 11. Source: Office of the Citizenship and Migration*

**Number of non-citizen residents in the period of 2020-2024 by ethnicity**

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Latvian</b>	431	410	392	375	362
<b>Belarusian</b>	28 297	27 200	26 037	24 999	24 131
<b>Roma</b>	231	223	215	206	201
<b>Jew</b>	862	832	765	720	705
<b>Estonian</b>	250	233	220	207	199
<b>Russian</b>	130 399	125 560	120 205	115 719	111 593
<b>Lithuanian</b>	4 720	4 529	4 266	4 065	3 896
<b>Polish</b>	7 156	6 896	6 611	6 349	6 137
<b>Ukrainian</b>	19 343	18 636	17 895	17 214	16 687
<b>Other</b>	6 199	6 003	5 769	5 547	5 365

Table 1. Source: Central Statistics Office

**Number of non-citizen residents in the period of 2020-2024 by gender**

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Male</b>	93 699	90 405	86 813	83 818	81 063
<b>Female</b>	104 189	100 117	95 562	91 583	88 213
<b>Total</b>	197 888	190 522	182 375	175 401	169 276

Table 2. Source: Central Statistics Office

**Number of non-citizen residents in the period of 2020-2024 by age**

Years	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>0-4</b>	234	156	104	62	29
<b>5-9</b>	834	627	458	329	244
<b>10-14</b>	1 604	1 490	1309	1 096	874
<b>15-19</b>	1 541	1 365	1297	1 224	1 181
<b>20-24</b>	1 702	1 612	1495	1 410	1 347
<b>25-29</b>	3 387	2 563	2038	1 743	1 594
<b>30-34</b>	7 323	6 701	5907	4 937	3 942
<b>35-39</b>	10 031	9 241	8 660	8 148	7 439
<b>40-44</b>	12 928	12 185	11 500	10 693	10 033
<b>45-49</b>	15 075	14 637	13 906	13 330	12 911
<b>50-54</b>	17 569	16 523	15 627	15 092	14 498
<b>55-59</b>	22 709	21 609	20 345	18 996	17 702
<b>60-64</b>	21 729	21 649	21 752	21 697	21 322
<b>65-69</b>	22 564	21 506	20 339	19 600	19 406
<b>70-74</b>	20 558	22 054	21 966	21 428	20 278
<b>75-79</b>	13 233	11 629	11 380	12 487	14 424
<b>80-84</b>	14 629	14 723	14 095	12 536	10 820
<b>85 and older</b>	10 238	10 252	10 197	10 593	11 232

Table 3. Source: Central Statistics Office

**Number of stateless residents**

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Total</b>	157	136	138	140	142

Table 4. Source: Central Statistics Office

**Number of stateless and non-citizen residents on 1 January 2025**

<b>Stateless persons</b>			
<b>Age</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Under 17</b>	2	3	5
<b>18-60</b>	43	50	93
<b>61 and older</b>	28	30	58
			<b>156</b>
<b>Non-citizen residents</b>			
<b>Age</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Under 17</b>	851	728	1579
<b>18-60</b>	44 329	30 680	75 009
<b>61 and older</b>	39 385	57 756	97 141
			<b>173 729</b>

Table 5. Source: MoI

**Number of participants in informative days on naturalisation**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>
2020	40
2021	47
2022	61
2023	51
2024	44

Table 6. Source: Office of the Citizenship and Migration

**Number of applications for naturalisation**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of applications</b>	<b>Number of naturalised persons</b>
2020	669	725
2021	562	419
2022	1175	518
2023	1280	595
2024	774	694

Table 7. Source: Office of the Citizenship and Migration

### General budget of the general judicial system courts

Year	Budget (euros)	Change
2020	73 241 003	+19%
2021	73 247 094	0
2022	75 531 914	+3%
2023	87 716 535	+16%
2024	92 527 967	+5%

Table 1. Source: MoF

### General budget of the Supreme Court

Year	Budget (euros)	Change
2020	6 122 187	+7.2%
2021	6 748 474	+12%
2022	7 449 90	+10%
2023	8 557 968	+14.9%
2024	9 755 845	+13.9%

Table 2. Source: Supreme Court

### General budget of the Constitutional Court

Year	Budget (euros)	Change
2020	2 908 898	+24.8%
2021	3 608 844	+24%
2022	3 277 610	-10%
2023	3 497 848	+6.7%
2024	4 207 887	+20.2%

Table 3. Source: MoF

<b>Conclusions of the Report on the Evaluation of the Territorial Reform of Courts</b>
The court territories have been significantly expanded, simplifying and facilitating access to the court.
The differences in the duties of court employees that existed between different court locations have been reduced, and work has been optimized.
By consolidating smaller courts into larger regional centres, the efficiency of the judicial system has been increased, improving the speed of case processing and reducing litigation time.
The reform has helped equalize the workload of judges within the relevant judicial districts
A more centralized court management has improved administrative efficiency, enabling better allocation of resources and reducing administrative costs.
The reform has promoted the introduction of new technologies and e-services in the functioning of the courts. The introduction of digital solutions and e-services has facilitated access to the court.

Table 4. Source: Council of the Judiciary

**Average length of criminal proceedings (in months) in courts of first instance and appellate courts**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Average length of proceedings (in months) in courts of first instance</b>	<b>Average length of proceedings (in months) in appellate courts</b>
2020	5.1	3.7
2021	6.2	3.7
2022	8.7	4.2
2023	9.1	4.8
2024	7.3	6.0

*Table 5. Source: Administration of Courts*

**Average length of civil proceedings (in months) in courts of first instance and appellate courts**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Average length of proceedings (in months) in courts of first instance</b>	<b>Average length of proceedings (in months) in appellate courts</b>
2020	7.7	4.5
2021	3.0	4.1
2022	3.1	4.3
2023	2.8	4.5
2024	2.6	4.8

*Table 6. Source: Administration of Courts*

**Average length of proceedings in administrative offence cases (in months) in courts of first instance and appellate courts**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Average length of proceedings (in months) in courts of first instance</b>	<b>Average length of proceedings (in months) in appellate courts</b>
2020	3.3	1.6
2021	4.1	1.9
2022	4.7	2.3
2023	3.8	3.2
2024	4.3	3.4

*Table 7. Source: Administration of Courts*

**Average length of administrative proceedings (in months) in courts of first instance and appellate courts**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Average length of proceedings (in months) in courts of first instance</b>	<b>Average length of proceedings (in months) in appellate courts</b>
<b>2020</b>	8.3	6.4
<b>2021</b>	7.9	6.2
<b>2022</b>	8.0	6.4
<b>2023</b>	8.4	7.3
<b>2024</b>	7.2	8.2

*Table 8. Source: Administration of Courts*

<b>Key improvements to the E-Case platform</b>
The implementation of two-factor authentication using user credentials.
Case materials are now being transmitted multiple times per day.
A technical solution was ensured for pre-trial stage case material publication for prosecutors.
The capacity for file submissions via the portal was significantly increased, with the permissible file size raised from 10 MB to 15 MB per individual file.
Accessibility to information was enhanced, facilitating user access to materials concerning proceedings on criminally acquired property, materials examined outside court hearings, and materials considered in the civil procedure.
The "Packager Tool" was introduced for use at the advocate's workplace, allowing all case materials to be compiled into a single file.
The "Case Participant Calendar" was launched, providing a unified overview of all court hearing information for participants.
Enhancements to the "Advocate's Calendar" included functionalities for viewing reserved hearing dates in administrative offense cases, the registration date of hearings, visibility of deleted absences, a monthly view option, and access for the court to view an advocate's absences.
The e-form system underwent upgrades, including the addition of a text editor and various improvements.
A new e-form, titled "E-Application to the Court," was introduced, enabling the submission of applications to any court online, thereby promoting greater efficiency and accessibility in judicial processes.

*Table 9. Source: Council of the Judiciary*



### Institutions and roles within which alternative service may be performed

Institution (or its unit)	Role	Description of duties
The State Defence Centre for Military Resources and Procurement	Property administration and maintenance	Administration, maintenance, and inspection of the infrastructure of the National Armed Forces.
The State Defence Centre for Logistics and Procurement	Driver, logistics administrator, warehouse manager, contract manager	Transportation of materials and equipment between warehouses, assembly of equipment, processing documents, warehousing, etc.
The Agency for Geolocation Information of Latvia	Geodesist, cartograph, photogrammetry, printing technician	1) survey of the national geodetic network; 2) survey of geographic areas; 3) assistance to remote sensing works, laser sensing, and other related tasks; 4) packaging and logistics of the printed material and maintenance of printing equipment.
The Museum of War	Archiver, restorer, assistant, technician.	Tasks related to preservation and accounting of historical and cultural objects.

Table 1. Source: MoD

### The Curriculum of the Youth Guard

Subject	Number of classes								Total
	1 Level		2 Level		3 Level		4 Level		
	1 Semester	2 Semester	3 Semester	4 Semester	5 Semester	6 Semester	7 Semester	8 Semester	
Individual – region – the State	1	0	1	1	0	2	3	2	10
Teambuilding	2	4	3	3	1	2	2	1	18
The National Armed Forces	1	1	0	2	2	1	1	1	9
Laws	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	3	15
Marching	2	3	2	4	4	2	3	3	23
First aid	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	18
Safe handling of weapons	6	6	9	7	9	6	7	6	55
Cyberspace and communications	2	1	3	4	3	4	4	4	25
Topography	9	8	8	7	6	6	7	6	57
Field exercises	8	8	4	4	10	8	8	8	58
Healthy and active lifestyle	8	8	7	7	6	10	6	10	62
Conclusions	16	14	16	15	15	16	14	16	122
Total									480

Table 2. Source: MoD

### The Curriculum of the National Defence Course

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Hours</b>
Laws	10
Cyberspace and communications	10
Topography	24
Safe handling of weapons	30
Field exercises	22
Marching	6
Resilience in crisis	4
Role of civic activities in national security	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>

Table 3. Source: MoD

**Main conclusions of the Constitutional Court in the case no. 2024-06-01**

The *Saeima* notes that the legitimate objectives of the restriction of fundamental rights laid down in the contested provisions are the protection of the democratic state, the security of the state, and the rights of others. Taking into account the historical experience of Latvia and the fact that currently Latvian language usage is insufficient, as well as the special geopolitical situation, the state should implement positive measures and strengthen protection of the official language, including its use in pre-election campaigning. According to the applicant, the legitimate objectives of the restriction of fundamental rights could be the protection of democratic public facilities and the rights of others, but it has doubts as to those objectives, since minority languages do not weaken democracy.

National security may justify restricting freedom of expression, including by regulating the use of language in certain ways, taking into account the circumstances surrounding security risks. The security policy of any country is influenced by its geopolitical position. Latvia's security policy takes into account the fact that Latvia's neighbour is Russia, whose current ideology is aimed at war and aggression against neighbouring countries. The State Security Service and the Constitution Protection Bureau consistently point to the threat posed by Russia as a neighbouring state of Latvia to public security and democratic institutions.

Russian politics and propaganda have developed the ideological concept of the "Russian world," namely the idea that the Russian world extends beyond Russia, all borders of the former Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. Russia uses the protection of its "compatriots" interests as a pretext to interfere in other countries' internal affairs, use military force and violate their territorial integrity.

A country may need to take specific self-defence measures in order to protect its own democratic system and guarantee the stability of its democratic system. Elections are an essential democratic process in which the nation exercises its sovereign power. One of the elements characterising a democratic state machine is free elections, and this principle also applies to the pre-election period. The contested norms are aimed at reducing the exposure of Russian informative influence measures during the pre-election campaigning period. Russia's outreach activities are targeted specifically at countries where elections are planned, aimed at influencing public opinion and political course in favour of Russian interests.

The contested norms protect the security of the State and the democratic state institutions by strengthening the application of the Latvian language, including the Latgalian language and the Livonian language, in pre-election campaigning. The Latvian language is an integral part of the constitutional identity of the Latvian State, and the Latvian national identity is also formed by the Latvian written language as the historical type of the Latvian language and the Livonian language, which as the only indigenous (autochthonic) language has special national protection.

In assessing the proportionality of restrictions on the use of languages in pre-election campaigning, the severity of such restrictions is essential, namely whether pre-election campaigning in foreign languages is not prohibited in full. The contested provisions concern paid pre-election campaigning. Unpaid campaigning, such as individual communication with voters and on social networks, as well as debate, can take place in any language.

It should be noted that the limitation of fundamental rights contained in the contested provisions covers a limited period of time. This means that at another time the rights of political parties to use foreign languages other than the official languages of the European Union are not restricted. Thus, the contested provisions do not provide for a total prohibition to use foreign languages, which are not official languages of the European Union, in the

communication of political parties with voters during the pre-election campaigning period and outside that period.

Taking into account the above, the Constitutional Court concludes that the legislator, by adopting the disputed norms, has balanced the interests of the security of the State and democratic state institutions, the protection of which in the current geopolitical situation has a significant importance in terms of the use of the official language, including the Latgalian and Livonian languages, and the right of political parties to freedom of expression in pre-election campaigning. The benefit that society derives from the fact that paid pre-election campaigning is to be performed in the official language, also in the Latvian language of articles and in the Livonian language, is greater than the restrictions that the political party faces as a result of the restriction of its fundamental rights.

Table 1. Source: Constitutional Court, judgement available in Latvian at:

[https://www.satv.tiesa.gov.lv/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/2024\\_06\\_01\\_Priekšvelesanu-agitacijas-valoda.pdf](https://www.satv.tiesa.gov.lv/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/2024_06_01_Priekšvelesanu_agitacijas-valoda.pdf).

### Measures to assist voters with visual or hearing impairments

Since 2014, the political information and information regarding the electoral process has been translated in languages and formats that are easier for voters to understand. Pre-election programmes are translated into Latvian sign language and are available on the CEC website.

For the 2014, 2018, and 2022 the *Saeima* elections, a booklet and a special section on elections was prepared and published on the CEC website in easy-to-understand language. Information regarding the voting procedures, candidate lists, and pre-election programmes were recorded in audio format and the recordings were available on the CEC website and sent to the Latvian Society for the Blind for dissemination. The information was also prepared in Braille for 2018 and 2022 the *Saeima* elections.

In 2022, in addition to previously mentioned measures, the platform for the announcement of the election results were tailored to voters with visual impairments and the training of election officials included topics on the communication and support at a polling station for voters with disabilities

Table 2. Source: Central Election Commission

### *The Plan to Promote Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2024-2027*

The objective of the Plan is to promote the development of a support system oriented towards the needs of persons with disabilities at a cross-sectoral level by establishing five policy action points:

**Improvement of the system for recognising a disability.** This action point envisages reviewing the system for recognising a disability for children, improving disability assessment for adult persons, strengthening the evaluation of functioning in the disability expert-examination process, strengthening the capacity and knowledge of the State Medical Commission for Health and Working Ability Expert-examination (hereinafter – SMC), including improving the knowledge of SMC specialists regarding the efficient organisation of the expert-examination process and knowledge of SMC employees regarding the development of a client-oriented approach and provision of information targeted for personal needs.

**Improvement of support services for reduction of the consequences of disability at cross-sectoral level.** This action point aims to improve and develop support services to promote integration of persons with disabilities into society for both children and adults.

**Promotion of inclusive employment.** This action point envisages improving employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, providing the necessary support for starting and staying in the workplace and strengthening professional skills for increasing competitiveness in the labour market, promoting understanding and knowledge of employers in employment of persons with disabilities.

**Promoting access to the environment, information and services.** This action point envisages the development of measures to facilitate accessibility of the environment, information, and public services, thereby facilitating the ability of persons with disabilities to receive the necessary information and public services in a convenient and accessible manner, to integrate freely and without hindrance into various public processes.

**Promoting public awareness.** This action point provides for measures aimed at reducing stereotypes prevailing in society and raising awareness of disability-related issues by promoting discussions with the public on various issues of relevance to disability.

In order to successfully fulfil Latvia's obligations by implementing the principles laid down in the UN Convention on the Rights of persons with Disabilities, the Plan addresses cross-sectoral issues, covering as wide a cross-sectoral coverage as possible, envisaging measures to strengthen inclusive education, promote accessibility of health care services, promote accessibility of public transport, development of information diversity, etc.

Table 3. Source Central Election Commission

#### Proportion of women holding an elected office (2014-2022)

##### The Saeima:

Year	Candidates (%)	Elected (%)
2011.	30,3	21
2014.	33,0	19
2018.	31,8	31
2022.	36,4	30

Table 4. Source: Central Election Commission

##### Local Governments:

Year	Candidates (%)	Elected (%)
2013.	40,6	31,2
2017.	39,0	34,0
2020.—2021.	37,6	30,5

Table 5. Source: Central Election Commission

### Measures taken to train teachers on the transition to teaching in Latvian

<b>Training of teachers</b>
<p>In accordance with the CoM Regulations no. 569 “<i>Regulations on Education and Professional Qualification Required for Educators and Procedure of Enhancing the Professional Competence of Educators</i>”, the Latvian Language Agency (LLA) has provided and keeps providing support for educators in enhancing Latvian language skills. The support has been provided by enhancing Latvian language skills of minority teachers for professional needs, ensuring various methodological courses and cooperation activities, developing teaching and methodological materials, and involving and informing minority families.</p>
<p>In 2013-2017, a total of 857 pre-school teachers were educated. Although, since 1999, the Latvian language proficiency of minority teachers must correspond to the highest level, namely, Level C, until 31 August 2021, pre-school teachers and school educators had the opportunity to undergo 120-hour language courses, 24-hour and 36-hour methodological courses, as well as 50-hour intensive courses oriented on the acquisition of Latvian language and culture.</p>
<p>Teachers are provided with the opportunity to strengthen Latvian language skills at Level C1 and to improve them to reach Level C2. 2 conferences on learning the Latvian language in a linguistically heterogeneous environment (200 participants) and 156 support measures for educators implementing the curriculum in a linguistically heterogeneous environment (2352 participants) have taken place.</p>
<p>A digital self-assessment and self-learning tool is being developed, which will allow the teachers to learn and self-assess Latvian language.</p>
<p>From 2018 to 2021, the ESF project “Competence-based approach to curriculum” was implemented aiming, <i>inter alia</i>, to provide comprehensive support to teachers in implementing teaching process in the Latvian language. 3050 teachers completed the courses for improvement of the Latvian language skills for professional needs (120 hours) to strengthen pre-school and school teachers’ C1 level skills and upgrade them up to the C2 level.</p>
<p>In 2022 and 2023, the LLA organized combined methodology and higher language proficiency improvement courses to improve the Latvian language skills of minority pre-school teachers and teaching assistants (651 teachers and teaching assistants were educated during the courses). In order to provide support to teachers who need to improve their Latvian language skills, the State Employment Agency offers pre-school and primary education teachers an opportunity to participate in the course "Improvement of the State Language Skills" (40 academic hours) as part of the competitiveness improvement measures. The topics are related to the teaching profession; therefore, they allow teachers to improve and consolidate knowledge that is useful for their work. In order to ensure a successful transition to teaching in the State language, a set of support measures for educational institutions and teachers working in a linguistically heterogeneous environment is being implemented from 2022 to 2026. In addition, the involvement and cooperation of teachers from all educational institutions (both former schools for linguistic minorities and Latvian schools). The LLA organizes professional development courses for teachers, practical workshops and master classes, individual and collective consultations, and these measures provide teachers with opportunities to improve their Latvian language skills and promote its use for professional needs.</p>
<b>Methodological materials</b>
<p>In order to ensure access to electronic materials, in 2013, the LLA launched a website “Teach and Learn Latvian” (subsection on <a href="http://www.valoda.lv">www.valoda.lv</a>). It offers e-classes, games for learning the language, methodological and learning materials, videos, animations, and other multimodal materials. For the time being, this storage of resources contains more than 600 units of different sizes. Each year, the number of visitors increases. In 2019, the number of users reached 188 469. The analysis of the materials commonly used by language learners</p>

suggests that they use mostly games, self-learning and self-testing tasks, as well as e-classes, In 2020, during the health emergency, the website was visited by around 5000 visitors on a daily basis.

The LLA systematically develops methodological materials for teachers, such as guides for teachers as part of sets of learning materials, methodological publications published in series, such as “For Latvian Language Teacher”, “For Bilingual Education Teacher”, and “For Pre-School and Elementary School Teacher”, the scientific methodological journal “*Tagad*” (“Now”), a dictionary of linguodidactic terms, and the electronic dictionary “*E-Pupa*”.

Since 2018, the professional development of educators and development of learning and methodological materials takes place within the project No. 8.3.1.1/16/I/002 “Availability of Competences in the Curriculum”, where the LLA as the collaboration partner in implementing specific secondary activities of the project provides comprehensive support to educators, ensuring the enhancement of Latvian language skills for professional needs and the improvement of their professional competence in a linguistically heterogeneous environment.

Digital self-assessment and self-study tool was created to improve the Latvian language skills of teachers in accordance with the highest level of the Latvian language proficiency.<sup>20</sup>

Table 1. Source: MoES

#### **Main findings of the Constitutional Court in the cases no. 2022-45-01 (private schools)**

In view of the content of the contested provisions, the facts of the case, and the reasoning provided in the application regarding the alleged incompatibility of the contested provisions with the *Constitution*, it can be concluded that the matter to be reviewed in the case pertains to the right of persons who belong to ethnic minorities to acquire general education in private education institutions at the levels of pre-school and basic education and to learn, preserve and develop their language, as well as ethnic and cultural uniqueness.

The Constitutional Court finds that the use of Russian language in Latvia is still widespread. It has been characterised as self-sufficient. The specific circumstances of Latvia as a result of its occupation by the USSR and because of the vast Russification policies implemented by the occupying power, which have a particular importance in the current geopolitical context, clearly justify the need to strengthen the status of the Latvian language as the State language in Latvia. Consequences of the lack of sufficient knowledge of and proficiency in Latvian still affect persons belonging to minorities. In particular, it affects the ability of persons belonging to minorities to take part in democratic processes, their success in the labour market, etc. These persons are particularly vulnerable to and affected by Russian disinformation, which can ultimately lead to their self-segregation. Transition to education in Latvian, the State language of Latvia, aims to prevent self-segregation of people belonging to minorities and to facilitate their inclusion in the society of Latvia. It also strives to create a cohesive society, which is especially important in the current geopolitical circumstances.

The applicants hold that the contested provisions had been adopted without due consultations with persons belonging to the affected ethnic minorities. The *Saeima*, however, provided information regarding the involvement of the civil society in the process of drafting the contested provisions. When adopting decisions that affect the rights of persons belonging to ethnic minorities, compliance with the principle of good legislation means that the participatory right of persons belonging to ethnic minorities must be respected.

Relevant persons and organisations submitted 86 views and proposals. The *Saeima* and the MoES point out that, even before the draft law had been submitted to the *Saeima*, social partners, representatives of the sector, and parents of pupils had been heard at the Advisory

<sup>20</sup> <https://maciunmacies.valoda.lv/pasvertesanas-un-pasmacibas-riks>

Council's sitting. A meeting between the Minister for Education and Science and representatives of the institutions of minority education was held.

The draft law was uploaded to the public portal of draft legal enactments on 8 April 2022. During the public discussion, natural persons, non-governmental organisations, *inter alia*, "The Latvian Human Rights Committee of the International Federation of Human Rights", "Public Inspectorate of the Russian Language", "Daugavpils Branch of the Latvian Russian Community", "Association of Parents of Private Schools", "Latvian Institute for Future Studies", "Latvian Association for the Support of Russian Language Schools", movement "Parents' Voice", as well as political parties, *inter alia* "The Latvian Russian Union" and "the New Harmony", submitted comments, predominantly expressing objections to the draft law.

After the draft law was adopted in the first reading at the sitting of the *Saeima* on 16 June 2022, it was further discussed at six sittings of the Committee of Education, Culture and Science of the *Saeima*, with the participation of the Minister for Education and Science, representatives of various ministries, institutions of local governments, the Office of the Ombudsperson, the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Government, the Latvian Association of Education Managers, representatives of the parents' association "Parents' Voice", heads and teachers of the educational institutions that implemented programmes of minority education, as well as parents of pupils belonging to ethnic minorities and 40 proposals were assessed at these sittings.

After the draft law had been adopted in the second reading, 23 proposals for the third reading of the draft law were examined at two more sittings of the Committee of Education, Culture, and Science of the *Saeima*. While the draft law was prepared for both the first and the second reading, *inter alia*, the matter of private educational institutions was also considered. The Constitutional Court concludes that, at the time of drafting and adopting the contested provisions, the authorities considered the proposals and objections advanced by the stakeholders, including proposals related to the functioning of private educational institutions.

The Constitutional Court concludes that the 2022 stage of the education reform ensures that pupils in private education institutions, including pupils with special needs, can continue to enjoy their language and culture, learn about it and develop it. The Constitutional Court also recognises that the 2022 stage of the reform respects the autonomy of private education institutions in the creation of educational content that is related to minority culture, including through interest-related education programmes. Additionally, the minority interest-related education programme set up by the State is available to all pupils of public education institutions free of charge. This ensures that minority language and culture is preserved and developed. Pupils from both private and public education institutions can receive individualised and personalised support to learn the State language.

With respect to Latvia's obligations under the Framework Convention on National Minorities, the Constitutional Court explains that interest-related education programmes are an appropriate measure to ensure that children belonging to national minorities can learn their minority language, culture, and preserve their unique characteristics. Education institutions in Latvia are not prevented from expanding the interest-related minority education programmes

The Constitutional Court finds that the 2022 stage of the education reform does not affect the quality of education to be obtained in private schools. When implementing the transition to education in Latvian, the competent authorities have provided for the necessary financial and other resources and materials, guidelines and trainings for teachers. The authorities have also assessed the impact of the reform on education institutions and pupils and have established a mechanism to control and monitor the quality of education. Changes to the



domestic legal framework on the use of Latvian in education entered into force approximately 10 months after their adoption by the legislator. In this period of time, it was possible for those affected to properly prepare for the impact of the changes. Whereas, pupils who underwent the transition received support, for which the legislator had foreseen additional funding. Therefore, the contested provisions are consistent with the *Constitution*.

Table 2. Source: Constitutional Court, judgment available in English at:

[https://www.satv.tiesa.gov.lv/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/2022-45-01\\_spriedums\\_ENG-1.pdf](https://www.satv.tiesa.gov.lv/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/2022-45-01_spriedums_ENG-1.pdf)

#### **Main findings of the Constitutional Court in the cases no. 2023-15-01 (public schools),**

The contested provisions, in conjunction, constitute regulation, which does not envisage the possibility, in State and local government educational institutions, to acquire education in educational programmes for ethnic minorities, as of 1 September 2023, at the level of pre-school education and Grades 1, 4 and 7 at the level of basic education, as of 1 September 2024, in Grades 2, 5 and 8, and, as of 1 September 2025, in Grades 3, 6, and 9.

The Applicants have pointed out that the interest-related educational programme of the language and cultural history of ethnic minorities cannot be deemed to be appropriate due to its non-mandatory nature. In its judgement in case No.2022-45-01, the Constitutional Court concluded that interest-related education was a suitable measure for mastering the minority language, as well as the curriculum related to the minority culture and ethnic uniqueness for children starting already from the age of eighteen months and also at the level of basic education if the content of interest-related classes was tailored to children's abilities and needs. Interest-related education in general is a suitable measure for acquiring the minority language, as well as the curriculum related to the cultural and uniqueness of ethnic minorities, also for children with special needs. Such involvement of children in interest-related classes is confirmed by the experience of educational institutions, inter alia, Rēzekne Polish State Gymnasium, Rīga Pre-school Educational Institution No.224, as well as the private educational institution "Dzirnaviņas".

The Applicants hold that the contested provisions had not been adopted in compliance with the principle of good legislative procedure because, in the process of drafting these provisions the reform to the language of instruction of 2018 and the applicable opinions of international organisations had not been duly assessed. Likewise, the Saeima had not received the approval of the contested provisions from the pupils' parents.

The Constitutional Court concludes that the Applicants' arguments pertaining to compliance with the principle of good legislative procedure are largely the same as the ones already examined in the Constitutional Court's case No.2022-45-01. The Constitutional Court already has recognised that the representatives of ethnic minorities were properly involved in the process of adopting the provisions of Draft Law "*Amendments to Education Law*" and decisions by international organisations were examined, likewise, the impact of the legal regulation on pupils was discussed.

Changes to the domestic legal framework on the use of Latvian in education entered into force approximately 10 months after their adoption by the legislator. In this period of time, it was possible for those affected to properly prepare for the impact of the changes. Whereas, pupils who underwent the transition received support, for which the legislator had foreseen additional funding.

The Constitutional Court finds that the 2022 stage of the education reform does not affect the quality of education to be obtained in public schools. When implementing the transition to education in Latvian, the competent authorities have provided for the necessary financial and other resources and materials, guidelines and trainings for teachers. The authorities have also assessed the impact of the reform on education institutions and pupils and have established a

mechanism to control and monitor the quality of education. Therefore, the contested provisions are consistent with the *Constitution*

*Table 3. Source: Constitutional Court Judgment available in English at:*  
[https://www.satv.tiesa.gov.lv/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/2023-15-01\\_Judgement.pdf](https://www.satv.tiesa.gov.lv/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/2023-15-01_Judgement.pdf)

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