



**Report submitted by Latvia
pursuant to Article 68, paragraph 1
of the Council of Europe Convention
on preventing and combating violence
against women and domestic violence
(Baseline Report)**

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**First report by Latvia on legislative and other measures giving
effect to the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on
Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and
Domestic Violence
March 2025**

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I. Introduction

A. Latvia signed the Council of Europe Convention on violence against Women, and preventing and combating domestic violence (hereinafter referred to as the Convention) on 18 May 2016. Latvia ratified the Convention on 10 January 2024 and the Convention entered into force on 1 May 2024.

B. According to the Law on "the Council of Europe Convention on violence against Women and prevention and combating of domestic violence"¹ within the meaning of Article 10, Paragraph one of the Convention, the coordinating institution in the Republic of Latvia is the Ministry of Welfare, however, other institutions, such as the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Culture, the State Police, the public Prosecutor's Office, the State Education and content Centre, the child Protection Centre, non-governmental organizations are also involved in the implementation of the Convention and prevention and combating of violence against women and domestic violence.

C. By ratifying the Convention, Latvia retained the right not to apply the Convention's the first paragraph of Article 55 concerning minor injuries provided for in Article 35 of the Convention.

D. For the implementation of the Convention monitoring Mechanism, the Group of experts on action against violence against women and domestic violence (hereinafter - GREVIO) requested Latvia to submit its first baseline report by 31 March 2025 as part of the initial evaluation process of Latvia. The structure of the report is based on the questionnaire drawn up by GREVIO.

II. Integrated policies and data collection

Information regarding the adoption of a comprehensive and coordinated policy in Latvia regarding violence against women, financial resources intended to implement these policies, and support for the work of non-governmental organizations and other civil society actors, in particular women's organizations, the establishment of effective co-operation with these organizations, as well as data collection.

A. The Latvian government has made a key priority in recent years on prevention and combating of domestic violence and violence against women, for example on the **government action plan for the implementation of the Declaration of the Intended Activities of the Government Headed by Evika Siliņa**² No. 20.1 envisages advocating modern regulation of fundamental human rights issues, strengthening the laws to eliminate all forms of violence and hate crimes and to regulate couples' cohabitation. Several policy planning documents have been developed which provide for measures aimed at preventing violence and promoting gender equality:

1. **National Development Plan (NAP) 2021 - 2027**³ the course of action "Psychological and emotional well-being" aims to promote psychological and emotional well-being in support of people in crisis situations, development of individual potential and reduction of risks of

¹ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/348233-par-eiropas-padomes-konvenciju-par-vardarbibas-pret-sievietem-un-vardarbibas-gimene-noversanu-un-apkarosanu>

² <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/349266-par-valdibas-ricibas-planu-deklaracijas-par-evikas-silinas-vadita-ministru-kabineta-iecere-to-darbibu-istenosani>

³ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/315879-par-latvijas-nacionalo-attistibas-planu-20212027-gadam-nap2027>

developing deviant behavior by strengthening health as a value and putting forward the following tasks:

[85] Support for improving parent's skills by improving children's psychological and emotional well-being and reducing the risks of developing mental health and learning disorders in the future;

[86] Prevention of violence and timely intervention in various crisis situations, strengthening people's psychological and emotional resilience and ability to find a favorable solution.

2. In the Guidelines for Development of Children, Youth and Family for 2022 - 2027⁴ one of the lines of action is: *eradicating all forms of violence*, the achievement of which is assigned the following tasks:

- 1) educational measures have been implemented for schoolchildren regarding recognition of violence and necessary action in case of risk of violence, promoting the ability to find a favorable solution;
- 2) public awareness campaigns on reducing the tolerance of all forms of violence;
- 3) extension of support services for the protection and rehabilitation of victims of violence;
- 4) reducing discrimination and violence (including bullying) in society, educational institutions and the internet;
- 5) establishment of a system for monitoring violence in Latvia based on evidence and a common methodology;
- 6) implementation of the project "Implementation of Barnahus in Latvia" with the aim of providing intervention measures in one place that are in the best interests of a child victim of violence, including research interviews, assessment of the child's needs and risks, medical, psychological and social support for the child and their non-violent family member.

3. The Plan to prevent and combat violence against woman and domestic violence 2024 - 2029⁵ has been drawn up in accordance with the Convention and its four pillars. The plan includes the tasks that the authorities have committed to by 2029., both in terms of preventing violence, protecting victims and improving support services, strengthening the responsibility of perpetrators, and developing and implementing a coherent and coordinated policy.

4. The measures of the Plan for the Promotion of equal Rights and opportunities for Women and men 2024 - 2027⁶ aim at reducing gender-negative stereotypes and mainstreaming the principle of gender equality in policy planning processes, thus implementing the Convention determined, that the regulatory enactments and measures have been implemented on the basis of a gender-based understanding of violence against women and domestic violence and ensuring security and respect for human rights.

5. One of the sub-objectives of the Plan for the Prevention of child crime and Protection of children from Criminal offences 2023 -2024 is to improve the identification of children victims of crime, provide effective assistance and protection to prevent negative consequences and risks of re-victimization, help them defend their rights and promote

⁴ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/338304-par-bernu-jaunatnes-un-gimenes-attistibas-pamatnostadnem-20222027gadam>

⁵ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/357535-vardarbibas-pret-sievieti-un-vardarbibas-gimene-noversanas-un-apkarosanas-plans-20242029-gadam>

⁶ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/352925-par-sieviesu-un-viriesu-vienlidzigu-tiesibu-un-iespeju-veicinasanas-planu-20242027-gadam>

social recovery. For the moment of drafting the report (March 2025), the Ministry of Interior has drawn up the project **Plan for the Prevention of child crime and Protection of children against Criminal offences for 2025 - 2027**, but the plan is still in the conciliation phase and has not been approved.

6. Preventing and combating violence in general, regardless of its form, has been identified as a priority for the State Police. **State Police Action and Development Strategy 2023 - 2027**, reducing violence is one of the strategic goals.
7. **National Action Plan United Nations Security Council Resolution No. 1325 for the implementation of the objectives of “Women, Peace and Security”** in Latvia 2020 - 2025. The plan defines three main lines of action: (1) promoting the understanding and knowledge of society, including young people; (2) specific training for the defense and home affairs sectors, including the creation of a position as a gender equality consultant and (3) the transfer of Latvian experience and knowledge.
8. In the **Public Health Guidelines 2021 - 2027**⁷ the objectives of the action directions shall be:
 - to develop and implement an educational program for sexual and reproductive health (including prevention and recognition of sexual violence) for local governments, training specialists in different fields (for example, psychologists, public health specialists, employees of adolescents, childcare centers, social institutions and crisis centers), as well as other support persons (including Roma mediators);
 - strengthen the monitoring of mental health, including the study of psychoemotional violence (mobbing, bossing) in workplaces and the prevalence of bullying in educational institutions, as well as the prevalence of mental health disorders in society, etc.;
 - to educate medical practitioners regarding the safety of children and actions in cases of violence, including recognition of violence, reporting and co-operation with other responsible authorities in case of violence;
 - to provide regular training to general practitioners and prenatal care specialists on family planning, sexual and reproductive health issues (including the impact of the working environment on reproductive health), on the role of breast-feeding and breast milk in the first months of a child's life and on artificial feeding, including the prevention and diagnosis of congenital abnormalities and infertility, and the prevention, diagnosis and elimination of incidents of sexual violence;
 - to improve pre-graduate and post-graduate education of medical practitioners by integrating the acquisition of current translational competencies into educational program of institutions of higher education, including on patient safety, communication, violence, gender equality, on digital skills, data analysis, health care statistics, coding of diagnoses and causes of death, etc., as well as by increasing the proportion of practical lessons in the study process, promoting the use of modern technologies, including work environment-based training, simulation training.
9. **The Culture Education Strategy 2025-2027**⁸ includes task 1.5. “To implement measures for ensuring safe education at all levels of education”, envisaging the measure - “to implement measures in vocational secondary education institutions for ensuring a safe learning environment, including to improve internal regulatory enactments and action plan of educational institutions. Implementing measures in institutions of higher education for ensuring a safe study environment, including improving the reporting mechanism; to

⁷ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/332751-sabiedribas-veselibas-pamatnostadnes-2021-2027-gadam>

⁸ <https://www.km.gov.lv/lv/media/48609/download?attachment>

improve codes of conduct for institutions of higher education; provide psychological, legal and informative support, as well as training to students and doctors by attracting additional funding from State budget resources.

10. Education Development Guidelines 2021 - 2027, it is planned to ensure an inclusive education approach at all levels of education, including attention will be paid to reducing the risk of violence among students and preventing violations in a timely manner.

B. Financial resources (Article 8)

Institutions use ESF + funding for the program period 2021 - 2027 as financial sources for anti-violence measures, State budget resources and other sources of financing. The financial resources devoted to preventing violence against women and domestic violence may vary from year to year according to the allocated State budget resources. For example, the *Plan to prevent and combat violence against a woman and domestic violence 2024 - 2029*, the additional indicative financial calculation required from the State budget for 2026 - EUR 1 427 421, for 2027 – EUR 1 641 717, for 2028 – EUR 1 745 885, and for 2029 – EUR 1 773 254.

C. Cooperation with non-governmental organizations

Civil society and non-governmental organizations (hereinafter referred to as “organizations”) are regularly involved in the development and implementation of policies, measures and programs to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women and domestic violence. In relation to policy development, organizations participate in meetings and working groups organized by ministries, as well as participate in Parliament (Saeima) Commissions of the Republic of Latvia where they provide their own expert opinion on the topical issue. In connection with the provision of programs, individual organizations have been delegated or participate in a public procurement competition and provide social rehabilitation programs for adults and minors affected by violence, as well as a social rehabilitation programme for persons with violent behavior. This enables organizations to obtain funding from the State budget.

In addition, the Society Integration Foundation administers a fund of non-governmental organizations aimed at strengthening the sustainable development of civil society and democracy in Latvia, and organizations can submit their project applications in an open competition.

D. Coordinating body (Article 10)

In accordance with Article 3 of the Law on the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention and Combating of violence against Women and domestic violence⁹, the Co-ordinating institution in the Republic of Latvia is the Ministry of Welfare.

The Ministry of Welfare is the leading public administration in the field of labor, social protection, children's and family rights, as well as equal opportunities and gender equality for persons with disabilities. The total (consolidated) expenditure of the Ministry of Welfare in accordance with the Law on the State budget for 2025 and the budget framework for 2025, 2026 and 2027 is determined in the amount of EUR 5 606.2 million (including social insurance financing). The Ministry of Welfare has 17 departments, around 220 staff members who work within its competencies. Activities related to the Convention are implemented in the Department of Child and Family Policy, where one to two senior experts, alongside their other

⁹ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/348233-par-eiropas-padomes-konvenciju-par-vardarbibas-pret-sievietem-un-vardarbibas-gimene-noversanu-un-apkarosanu>

official duties, carry out priority actions in accordance with the Convention. Additionally, the implementation of several activities is also carried out within the project "Support instruments for violence reduction" that operates within the Department of Child and Family Policy.

E. Authorities collecting relevant data

- a) Law enforcement authorities (police, information Centre of the Ministry of the Interior, courts, State Probation Service, administration of the place of imprisonment);
- b) Health (hospitals, Centre for Disease Prevention and Control);
- c) Social field (social services of local governments, social service providers, including NGOs, Orphan's and Custody Courts, Child protection center).

The Central Statistical Bureau (CSB) publishes the data prepared by the Ministry of Welfare regarding the number of women and men receiving social rehabilitation services according to the type of violence in the section "[Gender Equality](#)" of the statistical portal, while the publication "Children in Latvia" publishes data regarding the distribution of children who have received social rehabilitation services from illegal activities according to the types of violence, etc. The Central Statistical Bureau on section "[Gender Equality](#)" also publishes data from the Ministry of the Interior Information Centre on the *number of victims in criminal offences* by their gender, age and type of criminal offence, and data on the number of *accused persons and the number of criminal offences committed by accused persons* by their gender, age and type. Currently, the Ministry of Welfare is working with other ministries on the preparation of the *Report on the establishment of monitoring of data on domestic violence and violence against children*, which is based on a study carried out by the Ministry of Welfare in 2023 "Study on the establishment of a system for monitoring data on domestic violence and violence against children" (see Section F, point 1). The **purpose** of the report is to provide a framework for ensuring the comparability and interoperability of data on single incidents of violence, improving, collecting and analyzing data collection, increasing accessibility, as well as establishing uniform requirements for regular monitoring of domestic violence and violence against children, thereby further ensuring effective policy planning, reducing public tolerance to violence and improving the support system for victims of violence.

F. State-funded studies on violence research (Article 11 point 1b)

1. "[Study on the establishment of a system for monitoring data on domestic violence and violence against children](#)" – Ministry of Welfare commissioned study (2023)

The study includes an analysis of the accumulated administrative data of the services and institutions involved in reducing violence on the prevalence of different forms of domestic violence and violence against the child. An in-depth analysis and evaluation of research data and international recommendations carried out in Latvia has also been carried out to improve the quality of future violence research included in the monitoring system. Based on this data set, as well as in-depth interviews with specialists active in reducing violence, the results of specialist surveys and focus groups, the report summarizes the most relevant indicators of the impact of violence reduction measures, which make it possible to assess the dynamics of the situation and the effectiveness of intervention mechanisms. The report also proposes and justifies a set of key indicators of public safety and awareness that demonstrate public trust in state and local government institutions in addressing violence issues and changes in public understanding and tolerance to violence.

2. "[Population survey on changing attitudes on domestic violence](#)" - Child Protection Centre (2020)

The study looked at the following topics: the parenting methods used by adults during childhood and attitudes towards their use, the assessment of parent's behavior towards children and its changes over the last decade, the assessment of parenting methods, the perception of child abuse and the necessary involvement of institutions in preventing it, as well as action in situations of domestic violence against the child. According to the study's findings, "beating with a strap or other object" is considered child abuse by most respondents (83%), while "beating a slap, pinching, tugging behind the hair and/or ear or "shooting at the bottom" with a hand" is considered child abuse by a smaller number of respondents, or 59% of respondents. The study also shows that 41% of parents surveyed have applied one of the parenting techniques with physical punishment, most often "slap, pinch, tug behind hair and/or ear, or "shoot up the bottom" with a hand."

G. Surveys

1. in **2021**, the Central Statistical Bureau conducted a survey "Gender-related violence Survey". Information was collected on personal safety and exposure to unwanted behavior in the workplace, society, partnerships, family and childhood. Data were published on the prevalence of undesirable behavior in Latvia – interpersonal violence (psychological, physical and sexual), workplace harassment, persecution, as well as other indicators related to the topic of violence. The target group of the survey is persons aged 18 to 74 who live in private households in the territory of Latvia. Persons residing in institutions are not interviewed (i.e., retirement homes, interns for disabled children, student dorms, hotels, hospitals, sanatoriums, prisons, etc.). Only the person from the household who entered the sample is informed during the survey. The results are published in:

- [In the data collection, prevalence of Violence, 2021.](#)
- [In the tables of the Official Statistical Portal database, prevalence rates of Violence in Latvia.](#)

2. a **2021** study [on overcoming the crisis caused by](#) the coronavirus in Latvia and proposals for the future sustainability of society.
3. a **2023** study ["Expert-examination on instruments for evaluation and provision of emotional wellness in Latvian educational institutions"](#) was implemented.

III. Prevention

Information on preventive actions taken, including to promote changes in the social and cultural patterns of behavior of women and men, to eradicate prejudices, customs, traditions and other practices based on female imperfections or stereotypical roles of women and men. As well as measures to encourage the whole society to play an active role in preventing all forms of violence.

A. Campaigns and programs for awareness raising (Article 13)

1. Information measures aimed at raising awareness are implemented by ministries and their subordinate institutions, but implementation of the measures depends on the available funding. As a result, institutions are looking for opportunities to implement outreach measures, attracting foreign financial instruments, as well as collaborating with several institutions and NGOs.
2. The Ministry of Welfare has implemented campaigns to raise awareness of domestic violence and emotional abuse, providing information about support options for victims of violence. To reduce stereotypes about the traditional roles of women and men, as well as to strengthen the role of the father in society and the life of the child, while promoting a shift

in public attitudes regarding the division of responsibilities between women and men into the family, the Ministry of Welfare has carried out campaigns and outreach events specifically addressing fathers. To raise issues regarding the role of boys and men in ensuring gender equality, promote co-operation among various stakeholders in solving the issue, the Ministry of Welfare organized an international conference in 2024 to promote a more active involvement of boys and men in discussions and dialogue on gender issues. In 2025, it is expected to continue to raise awareness on this matter.

3. On the other hand, to draw public attention to issues of discrimination, tolerance and unequal treatment, the Society Integration Foundation organized the “openness is value” information campaign, updating one of the groups of society at risk of discrimination each year. The 2021 activities were focused on reducing age discrimination and disability in 2022. Various employment-promoting, motivating, educational and inspiring activities have been implemented as part of the 2021 and 2022 campaigns for employers, 50 + age group residents, people with disabilities, young people and other target audiences. In 2021, the total number of publications - 62, in 2022 - 42. The Society Integration Foundation also organized targeted events between September and December 2022 to raise awareness of discrimination on various grounds, including gender. As part of the “Tell cohesiveness” campaign, discussions took place on topics such as: stereotypes that characterize the employment of men and women and, as a result, the preconceptions of the jobs they must perform and the remuneration they must receive on the basis of gender rather than human abilities and skills in a given profession; on professionalism and leadership regardless of gender, on the role of employers in creating an inclusive and fair working environment free from stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination, on the pay gap between women and men and how to address them, on equal representation of women in leadership positions.
4. Within the framework of the service “State-guaranteed compensation for victims” provided by the Court Administration of the Republic of Latvia, a cooperation agreement has been concluded with the association “Skalbes” for the provision of informative support in criminal offenses, also ensuring the operation of the telephone number 116006 “Help service for victims of crime” since January 1, 2016.

The functions delegated to the association “Skalbes” for the provision of the service shall be:

- providing emotional and psychological support to victims of crime;
- providing information support to victims, including information on victim’s procedural rights (e.g., rights in criminal proceedings, right to damages, State compensation, etc.), available services and victim support services;
- compilation and maintenance of information relating to victims support and rights on an internet website for www.cietusajiem.lv.

The association "Skalbes" is involved in campaigns by other organizations and public institutions, including ministries, to prevent violence and provide victim support. In addition, the "Skalbes" has implemented several programs and initiatives to provide accessible and effective assistance to victims, as well as to raise public awareness of the consequences of violence and the need for support.

5. The Child Protection Centre campaigns annually to draw the attention of the public, special children and their parents to child abuse, the risks of sexual exploitation, and calls for supportive and respectful relationships to protect children from violence.
6. On awareness-raising in 2022, 2023 and 2024, the Ministry of Welfare, in collaboration with the NGO Centre MARTA, held negotiating workshops for 15 to 19-year-olds on

respectful relationships. Conversations workshops took place each year in various cities of Latvia, during which the awareness of young people regarding gender equality was promoted through informal educational methods and the skills of young people regarding the development of respectful and equality-based relationships and the reduction of violence in society, as well as the skills of young people to recognize different forms of violence in mutual relations were improved. A total of 436 young people has visited workshops over these 3 years.

B. Curricula at educational level (Article 14)

According to Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No.747 November 27, 2018 “Regulations regarding the State basic education standard and model basic education programs”¹⁰ and Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No.416 September 2, 2019 “Regulations regarding the State general secondary education standard and model general secondary education programs”¹¹, the educational content includes issues about favorable and unfavorable relationships with people, behavioral principles that help reduce inequalities, emotional and physical violence, human rights, etc.

In accordance with Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No.569 September 11, 2018 “Regulations regarding Education and Professional Qualification necessary for teachers and procedures for improvement of Professional competence of teachers”¹² teachers need to regularly supplement their knowledge, including in the field of children's rights and regarding reduction of violence. For example, promoting the merits of the education process in preventing and mitigating the risks of violence has been identified as a mandatory topic for professional improvement of teachers for state grammar schools and primary educational institutions – special educational development centers. The professional improvement of teachers implemented by the State Education Development Agency (until 31 December 2024 – State National Centre for Education) shall include topics regarding inclusive education, mental health development in educational institutions, different needs of pupils, risk management of violence, etc.

In relation to improvement of educational curricula and identification of the situation, the Ministry of Education and Science in co-operation with other ministries has developed an informative report [“On elimination and prevention of emotional and physical violence in an educational institution, as well as on co-operation of State and local government institutions”](#) (approved by the Cabinet of Ministers on 27 August 2024), which describes the current situation in detail, identifies co-operation problems between State and local government institutions, as well as offers specific solutions for reduction of violence.

One of the tasks of the report is to make amendments to the Education Law, stipulating that each educational institution must use one of the programs for reducing/preventing violence according to the age of the student. Amendments are currently being adopted, and at the time of drafting the report, it is envisaged that educational institutions must begin implementing the above-mentioned programs as a mandatory condition no later than December 31, 2026.

Since 2023, the international programme “KiVa” has been operating in Latvian educational institutions to reduce offences. It is a prevention and early intervention programme developed by the University of Turku (Finland), which has been in operation since 2006, and has so far been implemented and successfully implemented in 20 countries, including Estonia. Key elements of the programme include a universal prevention programme for use in educational settings (lessons and online games for pupils, manuals, methodological materials and practical

¹⁰ <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/303768-regulations-regarding-the-state-basic-education-standard-and-model-basic-education-programs>

¹¹ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/309597-noteikumi-par-valsts-visparejas-videjas-izglitiba-standartu-un-visparejas-videjas-izglitiba-programmu-paraugiem>

¹² <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/301572-noteikumi-par-pedagogiem-nepieciessamo-izglitibu-un-profesionalo-kvalifikaciju-un-pedagogu-profesionalas-kompetences-pilnveides>

tasks for educators, guidance for parents), early intervention while working with both the abuser and the child victim, and a computerized monitoring system. The programme focuses on working with children aged 6-16. 2023./2024.a.y. The KiVa program will be implemented at 61 educational institutions, 2024./2025.a.y. An additional 115 new educational institutions have joined the KiVa programme regiment.

In addition, in 2023, the Ombudsman's Office has developed educational material for students in the 10th graders of the High School on the psychological and legal importance of dignity - <https://www.tiesibsargs.lv/resource/materials-vidusskoleniem-par-cienu/>.

In order to promote a common understanding and action on the part of educational institutions regarding cases of violence, the Child Protection Centre, in co-operation with the Ministry of Education and Science, has developed an [Algorithm for solving cases of violence in educational institutions](#) in 2024. The purpose of the algorithm is to provide staff of general and vocational education institutions with additional knowledge in the prevention and meaning of violence. This will help educational staff respond to and prevent violence in a timely manner. In addition, the algorithm includes an action plan for cases where a minor learner commits a behavioral violation or endangers the safety, health and life of himself or herself or others.

C. Training of professionals (Article 15)

The study programs of the professions concerned contain general information on dignity, non-discrimination, violence, additional information contained in Table 1 initial training.

1. Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 617 of 24 September 2024 “Regulations on the competence of medical practitioners and students who are studying medical education programs in medical treatment and the scope of theoretical and practical knowledge of these persons”¹³ point 3 states that the scope of theoretical and practical knowledge and the acquisition of competence include the acquisition of cross-cutting competences using supervision as a method of improving self-directed learning, emotional intelligence, communication skills (including in the field of sexual and reproductive health), cooperation and reflection abilities, as well as competences in the field of law and ethics, patient data protection, digital skills, patient safety, protection of children's rights, recognition of violence and gender equality.
2. It is necessary for social workers to acquire professional knowledge in social work with victims of violence and persons who have committed violence by acquiring an educational programme that achieves the qualification “social worker”.
3. Given that judges take office after a long history of high-knowledge lawyers, the new judges don't have specific training on topics related to violence against a woman and domestic violence when they take office. Domestic contact and the themes of violence are addressed in the only mandatory area that judges have been mandated and that is the rights of children. Any other in-depth training shall be at the discretion and initiative of the judges.
4. Both formal and informal educational programs for State Police officials are being implemented at the State Police College, where the content of the programs includes topics regarding the competence of the police in preventing violence.
5. The right to perform an independent professional activity of a psychologist shall be certified by: 1) a higher education diploma regarding the acquisition of an accredited Bachelor's study programme and an accredited master's study programme in psychology in the amount of at least 200 credits (at least one of these programs shall be a professional study programme); 2) registration in the Register of psychologists; 3) a psychologist's certificate in a specific [field of professional activity](#), for example, educational psychologists help to

¹³ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/355161-noteikumi-par-arstniecibas-personu-un-studejoso-kuri-apgust-mediciniskas-izglitiba-programmas-kompetenci-arstnieciba-un-so-personu-teoretisko-un-praktisko-zinasanu-apjomu>

solve learning difficulties of students, problems of a social and emotional nature. Clinical and health psychologists are working, among other things, on long-term rehabilitation of children and adults affected by violence, which includes detecting signs of violence and mitigating the consequences of violence for the victim himself and the entire family system, as well as reducing the risks of repeated violence, including work with the perpetrator.

D. Professional development for specialists on violence against women

1. The training of the methodology developed by the Ministry of Welfare in 2020 “Professional Social work Development in local governments” for [social work with persons injured in violence and perpetrators of violence was](#) acquired by 61 social employees of local governments in 2022 and by 39 social employees of local governments in 2023. It is planned to continue methodological training also within the framework of the European Union funds 2021-2027 planning period, implemented by the Ministry of Welfare under activity No. 4.3.5.4 in the project “Development of professional and modern social work”.
2. Within the framework of the project “Providing Education opportunities for persons involved in medical treatment” implemented by the Ministry of Health, training is offered to medical practitioners on current developments in respect of the rights of patients, including children, and processing of personal data in the field of health and social care. Nurses in general care have the opportunity to apply for the ethics and rights continuing education curriculum, which provides nurses in general care with the necessary professional knowledge and develops professional skills in the basic principles and legal framework of health care ethics, including fundamental human rights principles (<https://www.talakizglitiba.lv/etika-un-tiesibas>). The program has been available since October 2024 and has featured 107 health nurses through January 15, 2025.
3. Training involving 233 specialists, including 27 judges, 22 prosecutors, 71 attorneys and 113 national Police officers, was organized in 2023 as part of the project “improvement of the support system for children with encounters, behavioral disorders and domestic violence.” The training was organized to provide expertise in the field of protection of children's rights and to promote a professional approach to dealing with domestic violence. In addition, in the family psychotherapy counselling programme on second half year 2023, 2054 consultations of 2224 hours were provided to 199 families with children, providing support for crisis management and improvement of family relations.
4. In 2023, the Children Protection Centre organized seminars for the employees of Orphan's and Custody Courts “Conversations with children Basic principles for evaluation of the Case of negligence and violence of parents or lawful representatives”, in which the employees of Orphan's and Custody Courts supplemented their knowledge regarding how to talk to children of different ages for evaluation of the case of violence (the purpose of the conversation with the child is to clarify the opinion of the child and to verify information regarding domestic violence, the presence of the child in health or life-threatening circumstances, as well as to assess whether further family presence may endanger the health or life of the child). In 2023, 80 employees of Orphan's and Custody Courts participated in seminars.
5. On January 1, 2025, the Academy of Justice began work in Latvia. The functional supervision of the Academy of Justice over the implementation of tasks and competences will be performed by the Council of Justice, but institutional supervision or administrative capacity to operate – by the Cabinet of Ministers through the Minister of Justice. The Academy of Justice will implement a complex approach to the development of professional

competencies of the judiciary, developing both initial training (including training for candidates for the office of judge), qualification improvement programs, and innovation, research and international cooperation competencies. The Academy of Justice will implement long-term curricula that sequentially complement each other, so that learning culture will be part of professional responsibility and contribute to an appropriate environment to ensure the sustainability of learning outcomes. To promote a common understanding among judges and prosecutors of the specifics of domestic violence and violence against women, from 2022. The HELP (Human Rights Education for legal professionals) e-course “Combating violence against Women and domestic violence” has been provided twice in 2024, with the attraction of national experts for face-to-face seminars, the third time the course will be delivered in 2025. Up to 40 participants participate in one course.

In 2023, within the framework of the “Academy of Justice” project, a course was developed “An approach to the needs of victims of violence in the justice system”. The first course cycle took place in 2024. The class size is up to 30 judges and prosecutors. Judges have also had the opportunity to participate in the following online seminars - “child in divorce, violence between partners” and Victim's Rights in the EU in practice: violence against woman and children.

6. In order to promote the knowledge and skills of police officers, the State Police College organizes several seminars focused on violence against women and domestic violence. Latvian police officers and staff of the State Police College, also took part in the launching of a new Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) online course on “Violence against women and domestic violence for law enforcement”¹⁴ in Riga.
7. To raise awareness among specialists working with victims of violence or perpetrators of violence, international conferences focusing on forms of violence, strengthening of victim protection, improvement of support services and other developments are organized annually, such as:
 - 24.11.2022. Conference “Violence free society of tomorrow. Ensuring the rights of the victim and prosecuting the perpetrator”, with 199 participants (specialists), 87 in person and 112 online;
 - 16.11.2023. at the conference “Interinstitutional Cooperation: a comprehensive approach to life in Safety”, 527 persons applied for participation, 69 of whom were listened to in person and the others online;
 - 25.11.2024 Conference “Step before: Working with adolescents to prevent violence”. The conference brought together 125 specialists in person, with more than 1,500 views online. In addition to the conference on 26.11.2020, a masterclass was organized with foreign experts who gave participants a more in-depth understanding of support mechanisms for dealing with teenagers to prevent violence.

E. Social rehabilitation programme for persons with violence behavior (Article 16)

1. A state-funded social rehabilitation programme.

From 1 January 2015, a social rehabilitation service for adult persons with violent behavior shall be financed from the resources of the State budget. The service to reduce violent behavior is provided based on a decision of both a social worker and a court or judge on temporary

¹⁴ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/-/launching-of-help-course-on-violence-against-women-and-domestic-violence-for-police-in-latvia>

protection against violence. The service to reduce violent behavior is provided to all those with violent behavior who have appealed for help, there is no limit to the number of customers. Total number of persons who received services to reduce violent behavior: 509 persons in **2019**; 492 persons in **2020**; in **2021** - 445 persons, of which 21 persons with a court or judge decision in **2022** - 708 persons, of which 154 persons with a court or judge decision, while in **2023** - 805 persons, of which 267 persons with a court or judge decision. Within the framework of the programme, it is not intended that a service provider providing a service for the reduction of violent behavior co-operates with victim support services, but after carrying out an evaluation of the effectiveness of the programme within the framework of the ESF + project "Support instruments for the reduction of domestic violence", the existing programme for the reduction of violent behavior will be improved in accordance with European international standards for work with domestic violence perpetrators. Financing for the provision of the service, including training and super-visions of specialists - EUR 545 531 (2022); EUR 719 487 (2023). Since 2015, no measures have been taken to assess the impact of the service to reduce violent behavior, but it is planned to undertake this evaluation under the ESF + project "Support instruments to reduce domestic violence".

2. Probation programs implemented by the State Probation Service.

The State Probation Service shall implement the probation programme "Building respectful relationships", which involves persons who have been tried for violence in a partnership, the criminal offence of which is related to violent behavior in the family, or their "risk and needs assessment" has identified the criminogenic need – impulsivity, emotional inadequacy and instability, which constitutes the risk of violent behavior in a family relationship. This probation programme shall be implemented for persons who are serving their sentence in freedom, under the supervision of probation. in 2023, 18 persons were involved in the probation programme "Creating respectful relationships," while in 2022 four persons were involved. Probation programs involve persons whose risk of re-offending has been identified as medium, high or very high in the "risk and needs assessment". Attendance of probation programs shall be determined as an obligation by a decision of an official of the State Probation Service.

3. Resocialization programs implemented by the Prison Administration.

The Prison Administration shall implement resocialization programs (social rehabilitation programs, social behavior adjustment programme) in prisons, including resocialization programs aimed at reducing violence, t.sk against women. Convicted persons for whom participation in the specified programme has been recommended in accordance with the results of the evaluation of risks and needs shall be involved in resocialization programs. Participation in the programs shall be voluntary.

Social **rehabilitation** programs:

- "School of life IV" - intended for convicts who are scheduled to be released from prison within the next two years. Within the framework of the programme, convicted persons develop basic social skills (mutual communication, development of solution-oriented co-operation socially acceptable behavior), the ability to develop healthy interaction with the environment. The programme was implemented on 01.11.2022., 47 convicts were involved in 2023, 19 in 2024.
- "Health risk Management" - the program consists of five modules, one of them, "sexual relationships and sexual health," which aims to deepen understanding of sexual relationship building, sexual advancement, restrictions on sexual behavior and criminogenic sexual behavior to strengthen program participants "understanding of healthy sexual relationships. The programme was introduced on 24.04.2023, 43 convicted persons were involved in 2023, 71 in 2024.

Social behavior **adjustment** programs:

- “Thoughts. Accountability. The action.” is aimed at convicted people with difficulties with aggressive behavior and anger management skills; and the inability to predict the consequences of their behavior (developments). As part of the program, convicts learn to think and act with a sense of responsibility, stimulating the development of moral judgment by reducing aggression. The programme was introduced on 14.11.2022., 27 convicts were involved in 2023, 27 in 2024.
- “Rationality and resocialization 2” – for persons with anti-social behavior. Programme participants acquire skills and values that correct anti-social behavior and are necessary to promote prosocial competence (learning emotion control abilities, reducing aggressive behavior). The programme was introduced on 29.12.2023, with 51 convicts participating in 2024.

F. Social rehabilitation programs to deter persons from violent behavior, in particular sex offenders (Article 16, second paragraph)

The State Probation Service shall implement two probation programs involving persons who have been tried for criminal offences against the morals and sexual inviolability of another person. The “path of Change 1” programme shall be implemented for persons serving their sentence in freedom, under the supervision of probation. The “Path of change 2” programme shall be implemented for persons serving their sentence in places of deprivation of liberty. in 2023, 11 individuals were involved in the “Path of change 1” probation program. probation programs were not implemented in 2022 due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Probation programs involve persons whose risk of re-offending has been identified as medium, high or very high in the “risk and needs assessment”. Attendance of probation programs shall be determined as an obligation by a decision of an official of the State Probation Service. Programs shall be implemented during probation supervision and their effectiveness shall be measured in the context of relapse studies performed by the State Probation Service.

G. Participation of the private sector and the media (Article 17)

To promote participation of the private sector and media in 2023 and 2024, the “All good” project was supported within the framework of the Media support Fund, which aims to develop the creation of socially relevant, informative educational content on the topic of gender equality, as well as to promote critical thinking of the audience in the long term. To stimulate discussion on the role of women in Latvian society - to dispel myths and prejudices about women, their abilities, suitability for different positions and employment, to promote awareness of feminism and gender equality.

H. Self-regulatory standards such as codes of conduct for ICT and media for the coverage of violence against women

Latvia has a Latvian Media Ethics Council based on a comprehensive code of media ethics that protects media values such as freedom of expression, diversity of information and opinions, editorial independence, media trust, autonomy, rights of journalists, integrity (impartiality), human rights, especially rights of children and minors, equality and prohibition of discrimination, education of the audience, mutual trust between the media and the audience. As well as the [Latvian Code of Ethics for Advertising professionals](#) provides standards for creating advertising, which calls for avoiding harmful gender stereotypes and depiction of violence.

Section 4 of the¹⁵ Advertising Law prohibits advertising from discriminating against a person on the grounds of his race, color, sex, age, religion, political or other beliefs, national or social origin, property status or other circumstances. Misleading advertising is prohibited. Only statements or visuals that do not violate the norms of ethics, humanism, morality, virtue and decency are allowed to be included in the ad.

To raise questions about stereotypical representation of sexism and gender in advertisements, the Ombudsman's Office has held discussions in 2024 with advertising professionals, as well as other organizations and institutions involved in the matter, who said it was necessary to take educational measures for advertising representatives in order to better understand what types of content ads should be avoided.

I. Development of protocols and guidelines for sexual harassment in the workplace

According to a study conducted by the CSB in 2021 (see section **II. Agreed policies and data collection - G. inquiries - paragraph 1**) 11 % of women said they had faced some form of sexual harassment or humiliation at work. Although this experience is less common among men, 5.1% of men have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace, the proportion is high for both sexes. Among both women and men, the most common harasser who has committed sexual harassment in the workplace has been a colleague.

Article 7 of the Labour Law¹⁶ provides that everyone has equal rights to fair, safe and healthy working conditions. This right shall be ensured without any direct or indirect discrimination, irrespective of the race, color of the skin, sex, age, disability, religion, political or other belief, national or social origin, material or family status, sexual orientation or other circumstances. At the same time, Article 29 of the Labour Law provides that the offending of a person also constitutes discrimination. The harassment of a person within the meaning of this Section shall be the subjection of a person to such undesirable conduct from the perspective of such person, which is related to his or her belonging to a particular sex, including sexual behavior, if the purpose or result of such action is the harassment of the dignity of the person and the creation of an intimidating, hostile, degrading or abusive environment. The Labour Law provides that if the prohibition of differential treatment and prohibition of causing adverse consequences is violated, the employee has the right to claim compensation for damages and compensation for non-material harm in addition to other rights specified in this Law. In the case of a dispute, the amount of compensation for non-material damage shall be determined by the court at its discretion. In accordance with the general principles of labor protection, the employer has a duty to organize a labor protection system, which includes internal supervision of the work environment, including assessment of the risk of the work environment.

Similarly, in situations where an employee has experienced harassment and violence in the work environment, he or she may exercise the rights laid down in the Whistleblowing Law¹⁷. At the same time, on 10 December 2024 amendments to the Administrative punishment Law on violations in the field of administration, public order and use of the official language came into force¹⁸, providing for an administrative punishment for sexual harassment – “for sexual harassment, that is, physical, oral or written activity of a sexual nature undesirable to a person, which is directed towards harassment of the dignity of a person and which has placed him or her in intimidating, hostile, degrading or abusive circumstances, a fine of up to one hundred and forty fine units shall be imposed”. Competence to conduct administrative misconduct

¹⁵ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/163-reklamas-likums>

¹⁶ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/26019-darba-likums>

¹⁷ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/329680-trauksmes-celsanas-likums>

¹⁸ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/314808-administrativo-sodu-likums-par-parkapumiem-parvaldes-sabiedriskas-kartibas-un-valsts-valodas-lietosanas-joma>

proceedings for sexual harassment rests with the State Police, which is already investigating criminal proceedings for sexual crimes.

At the same time, a person shall be held criminally liable if significant harm has occurred with the violation of discrimination in accordance with the Criminal Law 149. Article 1¹⁹. In accordance with the first subparagraph, regarding discrimination on the grounds of racial, national, ethnic or religious origin or violation of another type of prohibition of discrimination, if serious harm has been caused thereby - punishment shall be punishable by deprivation of liberty for a period of up to one year or temporary deprivation of liberty, or by supervision of probation, or by public work, or by a fine. The relevant Paragraph two regarding the criminal offence provided for in Paragraph one of this Section, if it has been committed by a public official or a responsible employee of an undertaking (company) or organization, or a group of persons, or if it has been committed using an automated data processing system - shall be punished with deprivation of liberty for a period of up to three years or with temporary deprivation of liberty, or with probation supervision, or with public work, or with a fine.

IV. Protection and support

Information on measures taken to offer appropriate protection and support to women who have suffered any form of violence covered by the Convention. Including measures to ensure multi-institutional cooperation and timely transmission of the victim to general and specialized support services.

A. Access to information for victims (Article 19)

Social workers, police officers, doctors, education specialists and others shall provide information regarding the possibilities for assistance to victims of violence, if specialists have information or suspect that the person is suffering from violence. In case persons do not wish to turn to institutions and disclose information regarding the violence experienced, information regarding state-funded social rehabilitation services and access to legal aid shall be published on the websites of institutions, as well as the most up-to-date information regarding the possibilities of support shall be published in implementing informative measures. There are also a variety of informational materials available - booklets and infographics about how to receive a service.

Information can also be obtained from local government social services, non-governmental organizations such as “Skalbes”, “Centre MARTA”, “Dardedze” and others.

B. General support services (Article 20)

1. Social rehabilitation service for victims of violence.

Victims of violence since 1 January 2015 may receive a State-financed social rehabilitation service, which is provided in the form of individual (psychologist, social worker, lawyer) consultations. The procedures by which a social rehabilitation service is granted shall be determined by Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No.790 of December 23, 2014 “Procedures for the provision of Social rehabilitation services from persons of adult age who have suffered violence and performed violence”²⁰. The victim may receive the service in one of the following ways:

¹⁹ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/88966-kriminallikums>

²⁰ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/271251-socialas-rehabilitacijas-pakalpojumu-sniegšanas-kartiba-no-vardarbibas-cietusam-un-vardarbibu-veikusam-pilngadigam-personam>

- in the form of a social rehabilitation course up to 30 days in a social rehabilitation institution (with accommodation);
- up to ten 45 minutes of counselling by a psychologist, social worker and lawyer at home (no accommodation). Consultations may also be obtained in the form of online consultations or in a crisis center without accommodation;
- in the form of ensuring safe asylum by accommodating the recipient of the service in premises which conform to the requirements specified for the operation of residential premises (hereinafter - crisis apartment service) - for up to 30 days.

Upon application of the victim, the social rehabilitation services in institution for the victim may be extended up to 60 days, but the amount of the social rehabilitation service for the victim at the place of residence may be increased up to 20 consultations of a psychologist, social worker and lawyer.

Persons who received a social rehabilitation service in **2019** – 585 persons, in **2020** – 639 persons; in **2021** – 714 persons; in **2022** – 726 persons. According to available statistics, almost 90% - 95% of people receiving social rehabilitation services each year are women.

2. Social rehabilitation service for children who have suffered unlawful activities.

The service is intended for children who have suffered a criminal offence, exploitation, sexual exploitation or been subjected to violence or any other illegal, cruel or defamatory activity. Rehabilitation aims to ensure that the child can regain physical and mental health and integrate into society.

The procedures by which social rehabilitation services shall be ensured for children in this case for the resources of the State budget shall be determined by Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No.1613 of 22 December 2009 “Procedures by which the necessary assistance shall be provided to a child who has suffered unlawful acts”²¹.

Social rehabilitation services for children who have suffered from illegal activities shall be provided by the foundation “Latvian children's Fund” at the place of residence, place of imprisonment, social correction educational institution or childcare institution (not more than twenty 45 minutes of consultations) or social rehabilitation institution (social rehabilitation course up to 30 or up to 60 days).

3. To ensure adequate support of victims from medical practitioners, the Ministry of Health, in collaboration with children's clinical University hospital, the price of disease prevention and control and specialists from the World Health Organization, has developed “[Recommendations for medical practitioners to recognise cases of violence in which children suffer](#)” in 2018.

Only those data shall be available to the Ministry of Health which reflect the recorded cases of referral to emergency or reception departments and hospital treatment, and which have been submitted by the relevant medical treatment institution. The number of women affected by violence thus indicated is the number of women who have been assisted in a healthcare facility:

- **in 2022** 158 women victims of violence;
- **in 2023**, 174 women were victims of violence.

C. Assistance in individual/collective complaints (Article 21)

1. Decisions of social services, by which a decision is made on the granting or refusal of social

²¹ <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=202912>

rehabilitation services, may be contested in the relevant local government council or an authority designated by it, while the decisions of the council or the authority designated by it may be contested in the administrative court.²²

2. In relation to criminal proceedings in accordance with the Criminal Procedure Law²³ (hereinafter - CPL) Article 369, the reason for commencing criminal proceedings shall be the submission of such information to the investigating institution, the Prosecutor's Office or the court (hereinafter - the authority responsible for the conduct of criminal proceedings), which indicates the committing of a possible criminal offence, or the acquisition of such information in the institution responsible for the conduct of criminal proceedings. The following information may be submitted:

1) a person injured as a result of a criminal offence - as an application; **2)** controlling and supervising institutions - in accordance with the procedures provided for in regulatory enactments regulating the operation thereof; **3)** medical practitioners or institutions - as a report regarding injuries, diseases or deaths, the cause of which may be a criminal offence; **4)** institutions for the protection of the rights of the child and non-governmental organizations - as an application regarding violations of the rights of minors, the cause of which may be a criminal offence; **5)** any natural or legal person - as information regarding possible criminal offences from which he or she has not directly suffered; **6)** any person for a criminal offence committed by himself or herself - as an application. Similarly, in accordance with Article 97.¹, Paragraph one, point 8 of the CPL, it is one of the fundamental rights of victims to submit a complaint regarding the actions of a procedural adjudication or an official authorized for the performance of criminal proceedings in the cases, time periods and procedures specified by the CPL. Under Article 336 of the CPL, where there is reason to believe that the decision or conduct of the prosecuting officer was unjustified or inappropriate, the person is entitled to lodge a complaint against the conduct or decision of the prosecuting officer. Based on the first paragraph of Article 337 of the CPL, the complaint shall be addressed and submitted to the official or institution which is entitled to decide it. A complaint may also be submitted to an official whose actions or decision are being appealed. In accordance with Article 337, Paragraph two of the CPL, regarding the actions or decisions of the investigator, the complaint shall be addressed to the supervising public prosecutor, while regarding the actions or decisions of the public prosecutor - to a higher public prosecutor, regarding the actions of the judge - to the President of the court, regarding the decision of the court or judge - to a higher level court.

3. Pursuant to Article 5, Paragraph one of the State ensured legal aid Law²⁴ the State shall provide legal assistance for solving a matter of legal nature outside the court and court for the protection of the rights of an injured or contested person or interests protected by law. Under the State ensured legal aid Act, victims of violence have access to state-provided legal aid to protect their individual rights, for example by applying to a court in civil law to protect their interests.

D. Specialized support services for women (Articles 22, 23, 25)

1. In crisis situations, including violence, **victims are supported by crisis centers**, family support centers, which also provide a social rehabilitation service financed from the State budget to victims of violence in the form of a social rehabilitation course. In 2023, 15 crisis centers provided support in cases of violence in Latvia for women with children.

²² <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/271251-socialas-rehabilitacijas-pakalpojumu-sniegšanas-kartiba-no-vardarbibas-cietusam-un-vardarbibu-veikusam-pilngadigam-personam> 44

²³ <https://m.likumi.lv/ta/id/107820-kriminalprocesa-likums>

²⁴ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/104831-valsts-nodrosinatas-juridiskas-palidzibas-likums>

The state-funded social rehabilitation service for victims of violence is provided by 5 crisis/family support centers, which are non-governmental organizations. A certain number of places in crisis centers, support centers cannot be determined as centers also provide services to other target groups in crisis situations. Latvia does not have crisis centers, support centers, which are intended only for women with children in cases of violence. Support in crisis centers may be obtained around the clock by approaching the service provider, it shall be provided to any person who needs assistance - both residents of Latvia and foreigners with and without a temporary residence permit. Social rehabilitation in **crisis centers has been ensured for 99 women and 1034 children in 2022, while in 2023 – 70 women and 538 children**. The service is provided in all cases where women with children have turned to crisis centers for help. Stays in crisis centers are financed from both state and local government budget resources by entering a contract with the local government regarding provision of this service to residents.

2. Since 1 July, 2023, a **crisis apartments** are financed from the resources of the State budget for victims of violence. The crisis apartment is a safe place of living in the event of a high risk of violence, which is provided for up to 180 days. The crisis apartment is provided to women who have been victims of violence with children and other persons with whom it has previously lived in the same household. Crisis apartment service in Latvia is provided in various ways:

- a. local government apartments, premises;
- b. premises owned by NGOs, apartments;
- c. with accommodation service – hotels, guesthouses, etc.;
- d. renting out an apartment from a natural or legal person.

From July 1, 2023, to December 31, 2024, the **crisis apartment was provided to 11 women with 15 children**. Crisis apartment shall be ensured throughout Latvia, because a victim of violence may, to receive assistance and support, apply to the social service office of any local government regardless of place of residence. The crisis apartment is free of charge and is financed from State budget resources, providing the service provider with such costs - for accommodation of one adult person not exceeding 39.67 EUR per day, but for one accommodation of the child of such person – 19.67 EUR per day. The crisis apartment service is provided by local government social services and NGOs. The decision to grant a crisis apartment shall be taken by the social service office of the local government, which also administers this service and co-operates with service providers to ensure not only safe shelter, but also social rehabilitation in the form of individual consultations or the support of a trusted representative in solving living issues. The crisis apartment shall be ensured around the clock, but it may be granted by the service provider or social service office of the local government during the working hours of the relevant institutions.

To strengthen general support measures (see Section B, paragraphs 1 and 2), adults whose health and life are at risk shall have the possibility to extend the assistance to:

- 1) a crisis apartment for up to 180 days, with the possibility of specialist advice or up to 50 hours of fiduciary support to solve problems related to everyday life;
- 2) a crisis center of up to 180 days;
- 3) up to 120 psychologist, social worker and lawyer counseling at the residence.

However, for children who have suffered from illegal activities, especially in severe and complex cases, the social rehabilitation may be increased to 120 specialist consultations.

3. **Inter-institutional Co-operation launched** in Latvia in December 2023 a “**Children's House**” program that provides specialized services to underage girls and boys who have been victims of violence. “Children's House” is the only model of cooperation of specialists of this type in Latvia, the purpose of which is to prevent re-traumatization of potentially violent children during investigation and litigation. One of the core tasks of “Children's House” is to

help prepare statements that are valid for legal proceedings by drawing up explanations from the child so that the child does not have to appear in court if criminal proceedings have been initiated in the case. The “Children's House” employs six paid staff and services are provided in accordance with Cabinet of Ministers regulations²⁵, which provide a gender perspective in dealing with incidents of violence and prioritize the safety of victims. The service was financed by the EEA-funded project “support for the introduction of Barnahus in Latvia” until 2024 and is free of charge (as of 2024, the service shall be financed from State budget resources). The “Children's House” operates on working days between 8:30 and 17:00 and is managed by the Ministry of Welfare. the service was provided to two girls in 2023 and 172 children in 2024. The programme shall include co-operation between specialized and general support services involving institutions such as the child Protection Centre, the State Police, the Prosecutor's Office, the State Forensic medical Expert-examination Centre, social services of local governments, Orphan's and Custody Courts, local government police, family doctors, medical treatment and social service providers, legal aid providers and non-governmental organizations. This cooperation enables effective assistance and a comprehensive response to violence.

4. Currently, there are no readily accessible assistance centers in Latvia for rape and victims of sexual violence, as provided for in Article 25 of the Convention. The “Plan for the Prevention and Combating of violence against Women and domestic violence 2024-2029” includes a measure for which the Ministry of Health is designated as the responsible authority: the establishment of the relevant support center and the organization of the pilot project.

The Ministry of Health has taken note of Estonia's valuable experience in supporting victims of sexual violence to find out how these types of support centers are set up, what principles are used to deal with victims, what equipment and resources are needed. Estonia has set up 4 support center's that operate continuously in 24 h mode and are set up directly outside the hospital, which is more cost-effective and increases victim confidence. Specialists were trained to deal with victims, guidelines were developed for gynecologists, a special form developed to carry out examinations and document them.

Identified needs for the establishment of a support center for victims of sexual violence in Latvia:

- admission: separation of patient flow;
- provision of the service: room furnishings, gynecological equipment, evidence collection kit, storage of materials (refrigerator, enclosed space), gynecologist training, protocol adaptation;
- monitoring process: preventive checks.

E. Telephone helplines (Article 24)

The following support telephone lines are available in Latvia:

1. Children and adolescent's hotline 116111, available free, running 24/7.

Hotline services are provided by specially trained personnel to provide psychological support. in 2022, the hotline provided 6,455 consultations for children in crisis situations – 5,720 telephone consultations, 571 chat and 164 e-consultations. Of the callers, 56 percent were girls. in 2023, the hotline has served a total of 12,771 calls, chats and e-consultations. In 2023, the hotline provided 8,581 crisis counseling to children - 7,613 telephone counseling, 820 chat and 148 e-counseling. Out of all callers, 54% were girls.

²⁵ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/346830-kartiba-kada-tiek-istenota-starpinstitucionalas-sadarbibas-programma-berna-maja>

2. Victim support phone **116006**, available free, daily operation from 12:00 – 22:00. Ensures confidentiality and anonymity. Staff providing telephone support to victims are trained annually, including topics of violence. Support phone statistics show 382 people were served in 2022, 423 in 2023 and 302 in 2024 (through October). However, these data cover all cases, including violence against women, but are not broken down by gender.
3. European Union single crisis phone **116123** providing 24/7 assistance and consultancy to provide immediate support to those in need.
4. The Ministry of Welfare has made a reservation 'for women affected by violence the helpline - **116016**, however no **additional funding from the state budget for the introduction of the phone has been granted** for 2025.

F. Child witnesses to violence (Article 26).

1. State-funded social is available in Latvia for children who have suffered violence rehabilitation.²⁶ Article 1, point 9.¹ of the Law on the Protection of the Children's Rights (hereinafter - LPCR)¹ states that violence is “*all forms of physical or emotional cruelty, sexual exploitation, neglect or other forms of behavior which endanger or may endanger the health, life, development or self-esteem of the child,*” while Article 1, point 12 states that “*emotional abuse - harassment or psychological influence of the child's self-esteem (threatening him, swearing, humiliating him, abusing his or her relative in the presence of the child or otherwise harming his or her emotional development)*”²⁷ such an offence qualifies as emotional violence, which qualifies as an administrative offence punishable under Article 81 of the LPCR. In the light of the foregoing, if the child has witnessed violence, the child can receive social rehabilitation services from children affected by unlawful acts.
2. Under Article 12 Paragraph 3¹ of the CPL, criminal proceedings involving a minor, shall be carried out considering the age, maturity and any special needs of the minor. Similarly, a minor shall automatically be recognized as a specially protected victim in criminal proceedings, which provides for additional procedural rights and more specific, gentle procedural procedures.
3. To ensure that institutions and professionals work to protect the rights of the child in ensuring, the Child Protection Centre has developed the following educational and explanatory materials:
 - a. “Methodic recommendations to Orphan's and Custody Courts for the Prevention of violence against children”, <https://www.bac.gov.lv/lv/rokasgramata-barintiesam>;
 - b. “Networking for the provision of advisory support to children with contact difficulties and behavioral disorders” in the <https://www.bac.gov.lv/lv/media/2334/download?attachment>;
 - c. “Methodology for reducing aggression and violence and promoting social inclusion in children with behavioral disorders and difficulties of contact” <https://www.bac.gov.lv/lv/media/2337/download?attachment>.

²⁶ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/202912-kartiba-kada-nepieciesamo-palidzibu-sniedz-bernam-kurs-cietis-no-prettiesiskam-darbibam>

²⁷ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/49096-bernu-tiesibu-aizsardzibas-likums>

G. Other mechanisms for reporting violence against women and domestic violence (Article 27, Article 28)

1. In Latvia, anyone can report violence against a woman and/or domestic violence by calling the single emergency call number 112 or the State Police helpline 110.
2. According to Section 73 of the Protection of the Rights of the child Law, each person has an obligation immediately notify the police, child protection center, Orphan's and Custody Court or social service regarding an offence directed against the child. However, employees of health care and educational institutions, social service providers, police employees, officials and employees of State and local governments, as well as other persons with whom the rights and legal interests of the child are or may be affected in the performance of work or service duties and who are aware of violation of the rights of the child and have not notified the responsible institutions thereof, shall be held liable for non-notification to disciplinary liability or other liability specified in the Law.

V. Substantive law

Information on the legal framework for violence against women, with particular emphasis on criminalization of acts of violence against women, unacceptable justifications for such acts (including crimes committed in the so-called "honor"), sanctions and measures, action taken to provide women victims with adequate remedies and ensure their right to seek compensation, and to prohibit mandatory alternative dispute resolution processes.

A. Legal framework

1. The Civil Procedure Law (hereinafter - CPRL)²⁸ Chapter 30.⁵ "Temporary protection against violence" is determined by the particularities of dealing with this category of cases. In addition, the CPRL will provide that a court may not adjourn proceedings where the parties have lived apart for more than a year where the divorce relates to violence against the spouse seeking divorce or against his or her child or the spouse's common child (second paragraph of Article 240). In examining cases arising from rights of custody or access, the court shall, in addition to other circumstances, consider all cases when such person who wishes to exercise rights of custody or access has used violence against the child or the child's parent. When examining cases arising from rights of custody, the court shall, in addition to other circumstances, consider violations of the procedures for exercising the rights of access determined by it. (CPRL Article 244. 9).
2. The Civil Law²⁹ (hereinafter - CivL) lays down the rules applicable to violent persons, including the possibility of early divorce (Article 74, Paragraph one of the CivL), prohibited from being an adopter (Article 163, Paragraph four, point 1 of the CivL), the custody rights of the parent are terminated (Article 203, Paragraph one, point 5 of the CivL), cannot be a guardian (Article 242(5) of the CivL).
3. Criminal legal protection against violence and domestic violence in Latvia is regulated by the Criminal Law³⁰ (hereinafter - CL), the Criminal Procedure Law (hereinafter - CPL) and the Law on the procedures for the coming into force and application of the Criminal Law³¹. The CL includes responsibility for violence against a woman and domestic violence. Including criminal responsibility for both physical and sexual abuse, rape and emotional abuse.

²⁸ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/50500-civilprocesa-likums>

²⁹ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/225418-civillikums>

³⁰ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/88966-kriminallikums>

³¹ <https://m.likumi.lv/ta/id/107820-kriminalprocesa-likums>

The CL also provides responsibility for Female genital mutilation or loss of reproductive capacity, as well as for persecution. The CPL, on the other hand, regulates procedural procedures for the investigation of crimes against women and domestic violence, the prosecution of accused persons and the adjudication of cases, ensuring effective application of the provisions of the CL and fair settlement of criminal relations without unjustified interference in the life of a person. The CPL also regulates the rights and conditions of victims in the performance of their procedural activities.

4. As regards the specific legal framework for violence against women, it should be noted that in Latvia CL and CPL are gender neutral. At the same time, they highlight as an aggravating, qualifying circumstance the Commission of a criminal offence related to violence or threats of violence, or the Commission of a criminal offence against virtue and sexual inviolability against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence is in the first or second degree of kinship, or against a spouse or former spouse, or against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence is or has been in a permanent intimate relationship, or against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence shares a (undivided) holding.

5. Administrative penalties Law on violations Administration, public order and in the field of use of the official language³² Articles 11.¹, 11.² and Article 12 establish administrative responsibility for aggressive behaviour of statements of persons, including sexual harassment. The law is gender neutral.

B. Guidance on the implementation of the above-mentioned legal framework

Methodological material has been developed for police officers on various topics related to violence, such as "Sexual crime investigation, including Investigation of criminal offences and corroboration of evidence relating to the circulation of child pornographic material in the Internet environment", "Police Guide to dealing with victims".

State Police officials are regularly informed about current developments in the regulatory framework on the Internal Intranet website of the State Police.

C. Civil remedies (Article 29, Paragraph one)

1. The provisional means of protection against violence laid down by the CPrL are (first paragraph of Article 250. ⁴⁷ of the CPrL):
 - 1) the obligation for the defendant to leave the accommodation in which the claimant resides and the prohibition on returning and staying there;
 - 2) a prohibition on the defendant being in the habitual residence of the plaintiff closer to the distance mentioned in the judicial decision on temporary protection against violence;
 - 3) prohibition of the defendant staying in certain places;
 - 4) a prohibition on the defendant meeting the applicant and maintaining physical or visual contact with him;
 - 5) prohibit the defendant from contacting the applicant in any way;
 - 6) prohibiting the defendant from organizing, through other persons, a meeting or any form of contact with the applicant;
 - 7) prohibiting the defendant from using the applicant's personal data;

³² <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/314808-administrativo-sodu-likums-par-parkapumiem-parvaldes-sabiedriskas-kartibas-un-valsts-valodas-lietosanas-joma>

- 7¹⁾ duty of the defendant to take a social rehabilitation course voluntarily the procedures for the reduction of behavior the amount, receipt, payment, execution, suspension and termination of which shall be determined by the Cabinet of Ministers;
- 8) other prohibitions and obligations imposed by the court or judge on the defendant, the purpose of which is to ensure the applicant's temporary protection against harassment.

According to statistics available and provided by the Court Administration, 737 decisions have been taken in **2021** to grant the application for temporary protection against violence in whole or in part, in **2022** - 1150, in **2023** - 1367, in **2024** - 1467.

This data is not limited to women but is the total number of successful or partially successful applications. According to the information provided by the Court Administration, it is not possible to retrieve more detailed statistics from the judicial system at this time, as the criteria applicable to applications for temporary protection against violence have been added recently to the system and do not cooperate in the test regime.

2. No information is available on cases where - proceedings have been initiated against officials of the State institution who have had information regarding cases of violence against a person but have not performed their duties within the scope of their powers.

D. Procedures available to women victims:

The procedure as **victims of Latvia may receive compensation from the perpetrator:**

1. Under the first paragraph of Article 97 of the CPL, the victim must, in view of the moral hazard suffered by him the extent of the injuries, physical distress and material loss shall have the right to apply for such damage and to exercise his or her procedural rights for the obtaining of moral and material compensation. On the other hand, CPL 97. section ¹, Paragraph one, point 1 provides that the victim has the right to receive information regarding compensation, including State compensation, the conditions for application and receipt and to apply for compensation for the harm caused in accordance with the procedures specified by the CPL. The victim shall confirm that the information provided has been received and, if necessary, explained with his or her signature.

2. Under the first paragraph of Article 350 of the CPL, compensation is fixed in monetary terms. The payment which the person who caused the damage by the criminal offence pays to the victim as satisfaction for the moral prejudice, physical suffering and material loss. The procedures by which compensation shall be applied for are laid down in Article 351, Paragraph one of the CPL, which provides that the victim has the right to apply for compensation for the harm caused at any stage of criminal proceedings until the commencement of a judicial investigation in a court of first instance. The victim must justify in the application the amount of compensation claimed for the material damage, whereas the amount of compensation for the non-material damage and physical suffering must be indicated only.

3. CivL generally States that every infringement of rights, that is to say, each unauthorised in itself an act which has caused damage (including non-material damage) entitles the victim to claim satisfaction from the infringer in so far as he can be held liable for that act (Article 1635 of CivL).

4. Procedure as victims may receive State-funded compensation — State compensation shall

be paid in accordance with the Law on State compensation for victims, including women victims of³³ violence, if any of the consequences referred to in Article 3, Paragraph four of that Law have occurred, namely (1) death of an intervener; (2) serious or moderate bodily injuries have been caused to the victim; (3) the morality or sexual inviolability of the victim has been harmed; (4) the victim is a victim of trafficking in human beings; (5) the victim is infected with human immunodeficiency virus, hepatitis B or C. However, currently, victims are not accounted for by gender, so some data on state compensation paid to women affected by violence is not available.

5. Article 34 of the Law on Administrative liability provides³⁴ that a person who has harm has been caused to the conduct of a legal person governed by public law to be performed in the administrative violation proceedings, is entitled to compensation in accordance with the laws and regulations in the field of compensation for the harm caused in the administrative violation proceedings, as well as a person who has been harmed by the administrative violation has the right to request compensation for the harm from the perpetrator of the violation in accordance with the procedures laid down by the CPRL. When claiming compensation in civil law, the victim is exempted from the State fee.

E. Procedure on parental rights (Article 31)

The first paragraph of Article 238 of the CPRL provides that, in a divorce or non-divorce case, claims arising out of a family relationship are to be decided at the same time. Such claims shall contain disputes regarding determination of custody, utilization of the right of access, maintenance for the child, including maintenance in the minimum amount specified by the Cabinet of Ministers, means for ensuring the previous level of welfare of the spouse, joint family housing and household or personal use objects, division of the property of spouses (also if it affects third parties).

The first paragraph of Article 177 of the CivL provides that the child is under the care of the parents until reaching the age of majority. The first paragraph of Article 181 in CivL provides for the right of the child to maintain personal relationships and direct contact with any parent (right of access). On the other hand, the second paragraph of Article 181 in CivL provides for the obligation and right of the parent to maintain personal relationships and direct contact with the child even if the child is separated from the family or does not reside with one of the parents. In cases where parents are unable to agree on matters related to the custody of the child after the cessation of cohabitation (the place of residence of the child, individual custody of one parent, procedures for exercising the right of access), such matters shall be resolved by court – in a court of ordinary jurisdiction. In cases of domestic violence, when resolving a dispute regarding the future custody of a child and contact with a parent living separately, the court shall evaluate the evidence for the validity of claims by taking a final adjudication in a civil matter, as well as the Orphan's and Custody's Court, providing an opinion to the court³⁵. If a request for the taking of a provisional ruling has been submitted in a civil matter, the Orphan's and Custody's Court shall provide the information at its disposal which is essential for the examination of the matter³⁶. If the Orphan's and Custody's Court and the court have information regarding domestic violence, including mutual violence of parents, they shall be considered when taking a decision regarding issues related to the future custody of the child and contact with the divorced parent. However, a parent's mutually violent relationship cannot lead to a

³³ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/136683-par-valsts-kompensaciju-cietusajiem>

³⁴ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/303007-administrativas-atbildibas-likums>

³⁵ Article 50 of the <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/139369-barintiesu-likums>

³⁶ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/139369-barintiesu-likums> 50. Article ¹.

restriction of the child's contact with the violent parent unless the parent was violent towards the child. Such restrictions must be assessed in conjunction with the best interests of the child and the child's right to maintain personal relationships and direct contact with both parents. At the same time, if the parent has suffered violence from the other parent (partner, spouse) in solving issues related to the children of the two together, the parent is entitled to ask the person in contact during contact between the child and the violent parent.³⁷ The contact person may also be invited as a “mediator” between parents, who ensure, for example, that a child of a lower age is brought to the contact venue with the other parent, thereby ensuring that the victim parent does not meet the violent parent. The contact person may be a natural person, for example, a parent, adult siblings, a trusted representative of the child, as well as a specialist, psychologist, psychotherapist, social worker, an employee of the Orphan's and Custody's Court.

In cases where a child has suffered violence, the other parent has the right to apply to the court for legal protection and a denial of access to the child, places of residence, educational institution, etc. Similarly, the parent may request the court to withdraw the right of access on a temporary basis to ensure the child's right to be protected from being subjected to violent situations or to request that the contact between the child and the violent parent be carried out only in the presence of the contact person.

In family disputes, parents are entitled to use free state-provided mediation of 5 hours. Mediation in family disputes matters is aimed at ensuring that parents agree on the further realization of custody of the child without the involvement of the court, thus ensuring protection of the rights and interests of children and ensuring that the child is not involved in resolving the parental disputes. In cases of domestic violence, mediation in such cases could be achieved by the presence of legal aid providers from both parents. Mediation is voluntary, so the adult victim of violence is entitled to refuse the use of mediation.

F. Criminalization of forms of violence:

1. Psychological harassment (Article 33):

CL 174. Article ¹. Cruelty and violence against a loved one

For cruel or violent treatment of a person with whom the perpetrator of a criminal offence is in the first or second degree of kinship, or of a spouse or former spouse, or of a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence is or has been in a permanent intimate relationship, or of a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence shares a (undivided) holding, if physical or mental distress has been caused to that person thereby and if such acts have not been the subject of Article 125 of this Law, the consequences provided for in Article 126 or 130 - punishment with deprivation of liberty for a period of up to three years or with temporary deprivation of liberty, or with probation supervision.

More serious damage has been criminalized under Articles 125 (intentional serious bodily injury) and 126 (intentional moderate bodily injury) of the CL. In accordance with Annex 3, Paragraph 14, Clause 6 of the Law on the procedures for coming into force and application of the Criminal Law, mental disorders with chronic progress or mental trauma with permanent consequences, which significantly affect the social adaptation of a person, shall be recognized as serious injuries. Article 20 (11), on the other hand, recognizes as moderate bodily harm a mental disorder or mental injury which has a lasting impact on a person's social adaptability.

2. Stalking (Article 34):

CL 132. Article ¹. Persecution

(1) for repeatedly or continuously tracking, monitoring, making threats to such person or unwanted communication with such person, if he or she has had reason to fear for the safety of

³⁷ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/225418-civillikums> 182, Paragraph three.

himself or herself or his or her loved ones - punishment shall be imposed with deprivation of liberty for a period of up to one year or with temporary deprivation of liberty, or with probation supervision.

(2) for the same activities, if committed against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence is in the first or second degree of kinship, or against a spouse or former spouse, or against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence is or has been in a permanent intimate relationship, or against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence shares a (undivided) holding - punishment with deprivation of liberty for a period of up to three years or with temporary deprivation of liberty, or with probation supervision.

3. Physical violence (Article 35):

Article 125 of the CL. Intentional serious bodily injury

(1) for intentional infliction of serious bodily injury - the punishment is deprivation of liberty for a period of up to seven years and with or without probation supervision for a period of up to three years.

(2) for the same activities if:

1) they have been committed due to the fact that the victim or his or her relative has performed his or her service or professional duties or has participated in the prevention or termination of a criminal or other illegal offence, or has given evidence in court or in pre-trial criminal proceedings;

2) they have been committed against two or more persons;

3) they have been committed in a manner dangerous to the life or health of several persons;

4) they have had the nature of torture or torture;

5) they have been committed by a group of persons;

6) -

7) they have been committed by a person who has been placed in a place of temporary detention or imprisonment;

8) they have been committed against a person in a state of helplessness;

9) they have been committed against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence is in the first or second degree of kinship, or against a spouse or former spouse, or against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence is or has been in a permanent intimate relationship, or against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence shares a (undivided) holding - punishment with deprivation of liberty for a period of time from two to ten years and with supervision of probation for a period of up to three years or without thereof.

(3) for causing intentional serious bodily harm, which due to negligence of the perpetrator has been the cause of death of the victim, or for causing intentional serious bodily harm, if it has been committed by an organised group - the punishment shall be deprivation of liberty for a period of three to fifteen years, confiscating the property or without confiscation of the property, and with or without probation supervision for a period of up to three years.

Article 126 of the CL. Intentional moderate bodily injury

(1) for intentional infliction of mid-severity bodily injury - punishable by deprivation of liberty for a period of up to three years or temporary deprivation of liberty, or by probation supervision, or by public work, or by a fine.

(2) for the same activities if:

1) they have been committed due to the fact that the victim or his or her relative has performed his or her service or professional duties or has participated in the prevention or termination of a criminal or other illegal offence, or has given evidence in court or in pre-trial criminal proceedings;

2) they have had the nature of torture or torture;

3) they have been committed by a group of persons;

4) (excluded by Law 13.12.2012);

- 5) they have been committed by a person who has been placed in a place of temporary detention or imprisonment;
- 6) they have been committed against a person in a state of helplessness;
- 7) they have been committed against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence is in the first or second degree of kinship, or against a spouse or former spouse, or against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence is or has been in a permanent intimate relationship, or against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence shares a (undivided) holding - punishment with deprivation of liberty for a period of up to five years or with temporary deprivation of liberty, or with supervision of probation.

Article 130 of the CL. Intentional slight bodily injury

(2) for intentional infliction of mild bodily harm - punishable by deprivation of liberty for a period of up to one year or temporary deprivation of liberty, or by probation supervision, or by public work, or by a fine.

(3) for the same activities if:

- 1) they have been committed due to the fact that the victim or his or her relative has performed his or her service or professional duties or has participated in the prevention or termination of a criminal or other illegal offence, or has given evidence in court or in pre-trial criminal proceedings;
- 2) they have had the nature of torture or torture;
- 3) they have been committed by a group of persons;
- 4) they have been committed by a person who has been placed in a place of temporary detention or imprisonment;
- 5) they have been committed against a person in a state of helplessness;
- 6) they have been committed against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence is in the first or second degree of kinship, or against a spouse or former spouse, or against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence is or has been in a permanent intimate relationship, or against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence shares a (undivided) holding - punishment with deprivation of liberty for a period of up to three years or with temporary deprivation of liberty, or with supervision of probation.

CL 174. Article ¹. Cruelty and violence against a loved one

For cruel or violent treatment of a person with whom the perpetrator of a criminal offence is in the first or second degree of kinship, or of a spouse or former spouse, or of a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence is or has been in a permanent intimate relationship, or of a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence shares a (undivided) holding, if physical or mental distress has been caused to that person thereby and if such acts have not been the subject of Article 125 of this Law, consequences provided for in Article 126 or 130 - punishment with deprivation of liberty for a period of up to three years or with temporary deprivation of liberty or with probation supervision.

4. Sexual violence, including rape (Article 36) –

Article 159 of the CL. Rape

(1) for sexual intercourse, using the victims state of helplessness or for sexual intercourse against the will of the victim, using violence, threats or using trust, authority or other influence on the victim (rape) - punishment with deprivation of liberty for a period of four to ten years and with probation supervision for a period of up to five years.

(2) for rape, if committed by a group of persons, or for rape of a minor - the punishment shall be life imprisonment or deprivation of liberty for a period of five to twenty years and with probation supervision for a period of up to five years.

(3) for rape, if it has caused serious consequences, or for rape of a person who has not reached the age of sixteen - punishment with a life sentence or deprivation of liberty for a period of ten to twenty years and with probation supervision for a period of up to five years.

Article 160 of the CL. Sexual assault

(1) for an activity of a sexual nature in order to satisfy his or her sexual desire in physical contact with the body of the victim, if it has been committed using the state of helplessness of the victim or against the will of the victim, using violence, threats or using trust, authority or other influence on the victim - punishment shall be imposed with deprivation of liberty for a period of up to nine years and with probation supervision for a period of up to five years.

(2) for the satisfaction of anal or oral acts or sexual urges in an unnatural manner, which is related to vaginal, anal or oral penetration into the body of the victim, if it has been committed using the victim's state of helplessness or against the will of the victim, using violence, threats or using trust, authority or other influence on the victim - punishment shall be imposed with deprivation of liberty for a period of time from four to ten years and with probation supervision for a period of up to five years.

(3) for the criminal offence provided for in Paragraph one of this Article, if it has been committed by a group of persons or if it has been committed with a minor - the punishment shall be deprivation of liberty for a period of time from three to twelve years and with probation supervision for a period of up to five years.

(4) for the criminal offence provided for in Paragraph one of this Article, if it has caused serious consequences or if it has been committed with a person who has not reached the age of sixteen - the punishment shall be deprivation of liberty for a period of time from five to fifteen years and with probation supervision for a period of up to five years.

(5) for the criminal offence provided for in Paragraph two of this Article, if it has been committed by a group of persons or if it has been committed with a minor - the punishment shall be life imprisonment or deprivation of liberty for a period of time from five to twenty years and with probation supervision for a period of up to five years.

(6) for the criminal offence provided for in Paragraph two of this Article, if it has caused serious consequences or if it has been committed with a person who has not reached the age of sixteen - punishment with a life sentence or deprivation of liberty for a period of ten to twenty years and with probation supervision for a period of up to five years.

The state of helplessness of a victim must be understood as a situation in which the victim, due to his or her physical or mental condition (physical deficiencies, juvenile age, dignified age, mental disorders, other illness or unconsciousness, as well as the presence of the victim in a state of heavy alcohol, narcotic, psychotropic or solid substance intoxication), has not been able to understand the nature and significance of the acts committed with him or her or has not been able to resist the perpetrator, and the perpetrator, when entering into sexual relations, has been aware (known or knowingly admitted) that the victim is in such a state of helplessness.³⁸ The Senate of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Latvia has indicated that helplessness is characterized by two criteria of physical and mental condition: the victim does not understand the nature and significance of the acts committed with him or her and cannot therefore show any resistance to violence or the victim understands the nature and significance of the acts committed with him or her, but cannot physically provide himself or herself with protection.³⁹

Sexual intercourse against the will of the victim:

³⁸ Krastina U., Liholai V. *Criminal Law comments. Part two (Chapters IX-XVII)*. Second edition of the supplement. Riga: Courthouse Agency, 2018, p. 444.

³⁹ Decision of the Senate Criminal Affairs Department of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Latvia in Case No. SKK-258/2012. Available at: <https://www.at.gov.lv/lv/judikaturas-nolemumu-arhivs-old/senata-kriminallietu-departaments/hronologiska-seciba/2012>

1) when using violence - the interpretation shall be understood as physical influence, which in accordance with the findings established in case-law may take the form of active actions with or without physical pain infliction. For example, isolating and locking the victim in a room, tying it, tying it to the bed, and applying physical force by beating, beating, strangling, resulting in physical pain, bodily injury of varying severity to the victim. Article 159 of the CL covers cases of minor or moderate injuries as a result of the violence used;

2) when using threats - interpretation should be understood as emotional violence. The CL does not define the content of the threat, so that its permissible interpretation of the content is broad. The threat shall be used as a means of overcoming the resistance of the victim and of achieving sexual relations with him or her, with the understanding of verbal or otherwise expressed intimidation of the victim to inevitably use violence against him or her or people close to him or her. The threat, by its nature and intensity, must be such that the victim perceives it as real and realistic immediately. Threats can be made orally, by gestures, by demonstrating a weapon, etc.;

3) using trust – the interpretation must be understood as trust and faith, trust in the person whose attitude, conduct the victim fully trusts. The perpetrator is aware that the victim sees him as a person who can be trusted and should not be feared, such as friendship, long-term acquaintance, etc. This fact is established in situations where the person has a friendship relationship, because trust indicates that the perpetrator and the victim are in a close personal relationship;

4) using authority - the interpretation must understand that the victim has a special psychological attitude towards such person, while the perpetrator of the crime is aware of his or her authority (great influence and trust) in the eyes of the victim. The use of authority points to a subordinate relationship between the victim and the perpetrator. A family Member, close relative, educator, coach can also use their authority. Trust could also be used in such cases;

5) using a different effect on the victim – interpretation must understand that the effect may result from some outstanding obligations – promised service, information or material at the disposal of the perpetrator.⁴⁰

The activities covered by the articles referred to shall also apply to former or existing spouses or partners. In accordance with Article 48, paragraph one, point 15 of the CL, it may be recognized as an aggravating circumstance that a criminal offence related to violence or threats of violence or a criminal offence against morality and sexual inviolability has been committed against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence is in the first or second degree of kinship, or against a spouse or former spouse, or against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence is or has been in a permanent intimate relationship, or against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence shares a (undivided) holding.

In Latvia, the age of sexual maturity is 16 years in accordance with Article 161 of the CL, which determines as a criminal activity the committing of sexual intercourse, an anal or oral act or the satisfaction of sexual propensity in an unnatural manner, or the committing of another sexual act in physical contact with the body of the victim, if it has been performed with a person who has not reached the age of sixteen years, and it has been performed by a person of legal age.

5. Forced marriages (Article 37) –

CL 154. Article ¹. Trafficking in human beings

(1) for trafficking in human beings - punishable by deprivation of liberty for a period of up to eight years, confiscating property or without confiscation of property.

(2) for trafficking in human beings, if it has been committed against a minor or if it has been committed by a group of persons after prior agreement - the punishment shall be deprivation of

⁴⁰ Krastina U., Liholai V. *Criminal Law comments. Part two (Chapters IX-XVII)*. Second edition of the supplement. Riga: Courthouse Agency, 2018, 447.-448 pp.

liberty for a period of three to twelve years, confiscating the property or without confiscation of the property, and with or without supervision of probation for a period of up to three years. (3) for trafficking in human beings, if it has endangered the life of the victim or caused serious consequences, or if it has been committed with special cruelty or against a minor, or if it has been committed by an organised group - the punishment shall be deprivation of liberty for a period of five to fifteen years, confiscating the property or without confiscation of the property, and with or without supervision of probation for a period of up to three years.

CL 154. Article 2. Concept of trafficking in human beings

(1) trafficking in human beings means the recruitment, transport, transfer, concealment, accommodation or receipt of persons for the purpose of exploitation, using violence or threats or removal by deception or by relying on a person's dependence on the perpetrator or his vulnerability or state of helplessness, or by giving or receiving material or other benefits in order to obtain the consent of the person to trade on whom the victim depends.

(2) recruitment, transport, transfer, concealment, accommodation or receipt of a minor for the purpose of exploitation shall be recognised as trafficking in human beings even if it is not related to the use of any of the means referred to in Paragraph one of this Section.

(3) exploitation within the meaning of this Article means the involvement of a person in prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation, compulsion to perform work, provide services or commit criminal offences, being held in slavery or other forms similar thereto (debt slavery, birth or other forms of forced surrender of a person to another person depending on the person), being held in servitude or unlawful removal of the tissues or organs of a person.

(4) the state of vulnerability within the meaning of this Article means that circumstances are used where a person has no real or acceptable choice other than to submit to exploitation.

6. Female genital mutilation (Article 38) -

Criminalised under Article 125 of the CL. In accordance with Paragraph 16(3)(c) of Annex 3 to the Law on the procedures for the coming into force and application of the Criminal Law,⁴¹ loss of organs or functions thereof is as serious bodily injury, namely loss of reproductive capacity (lost capacity for sexual intercourse, fertilisation and fertilisation, ability to give birth), as well as total or partial removal of external genitals, including complete or partial removal of the clitoris, large or small pubic lips, or infibulation, except for manipulation carried out after medical indications.

7. Forced abortion (Article 39a) -

Article 136 of the CL. Forcing an abortion

In the case of forcing a pregnant woman to perform an abortion, if as a result an abortion has been performed - the punishment shall be temporary deprivation of liberty or with probation supervision, or with public work, or with a fine.

8. Forced sterilization (Article 39b) -

Criminalised under Article 125 CL (intentional serious bodily injury)

In accordance with Paragraph 16(3)(c) of Annex 3 to the Law on the procedures for the coming into force and application of the Criminal Law, loss of organs or functions thereof, namely loss of reproductive capacity (loss of capacity for sexual intercourse, fertilisation and fertilisation, ability to give birth), as well as total or partial removal of external genitals, including complete or partial removal of the clitoris, large or small pubic lips, or infibulation, other than manipulation carried out after medical indications, constitute serious injury.

⁴¹ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/50539-par-kriminallikuma-speka-stasanas-un-piemerosanas-kartibu>

G. Sexual harassment legal framework (Article 40)

In accordance with the Law on Administrative Penalties for Offences in the Field of Administration, Public Order, and Use of the Official Language⁴² an Article 11.2 relating to sexual harassment, that is to say, a physical, oral or written act of a sexual nature unwanted for a person, which is intended to infringe the dignity of a person and which has placed him in intimidating, hostile, degrading or abusive circumstances, shall be subject to a fine of up to one hundred and forty fine.

H. Assistance or support and attempted violence (Article 41)

Article 20 of the CL. Participation

(1) a deliberate act or omission with which a person (an accomplice) has participated jointly with another person (perpetrator) in committing an intentional criminal offence, but has not been the direct perpetrator thereof, shall be regarded as participation. The offense's accomplices include organizers, instigators, supporters.

(2) a person who organized or directed the Commission of a criminal offence shall be regarded as an organizer.

(3) a person who has induced another person to commit a criminal offence shall be regarded as an instigator.

(4) a person who has knowingly facilitated the Commission of a criminal offence by giving advice, instructions, means or eliminating obstacles to the Commission thereof, as well as a person who has previously promised to conceal the perpetrator or accomplice of a criminal offence, tools and means for committing a criminal offence, traces of a criminal offence or objects obtained from a criminal offence, or has previously promised to purchase or sell such objects, shall be regarded as a supporter.

(5) an accomplice in criminal offences shall be held liable in accordance with the same Section of this Law, which provides for the liability of the perpetrator.

I. Attempted violence (Article 41, Paragraph two)

Article 15 of the CL. Complete and uncompleted criminal offence

(2) Preparation for a crime and attempted crime constitute an unfinished criminal offence.

(4) a deliberate act (inaction) directly aimed at intentionally committing it, if the crime has not been committed to the end due to reasons beyond the control of the perpetrator, shall be recognised as an attempt to commit a crime.

(5) liability for preparing for a crime or attempted crime shall arise in accordance with the same Section of this Law, which provides for liability for the specific offence.

J. Unacceptable justification for crimes, including those committed in defense of so-called “honor” (Article 42)

The CL contains Chapter III “Circumstances excluding criminal liability”. Under Article 28, circumstances which exclude criminal liability, even though the acts committed in those circumstances correspond to the characteristics of the composition of the offence provided for by that law, include the necessary defense, detention to the detriment of the person, extreme necessity, justified professional risk and the execution of a criminal order or a criminal order. Article 47 of the CL also lists mitigating circumstances: 1) the perpetrator of the criminal offence has pleaded guilty, confessed frankly and regretted what has been committed; 2) the perpetrator has actively facilitated the detection and investigation of the criminal offence; 3) the perpetrator voluntarily compensated the victim for the harm caused by the criminal offence or eliminated the harm caused; 4) the perpetrator has facilitated the detection of the crime of another person; 5) the criminal offence has been committed under the influence of unlawful or

⁴² <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/314808-administrativo-sodu-likums-par-parkapumiem-parvaldes-sabiedriskas-kartibas-un-valsts-valodas-lietosanas-joma>

immoral behavior of the victim; 6) the criminal offence has been committed in violation of the necessary conditions of defense, extreme necessity, detention of the person committing the criminal offence, justifiable professional risk, order and the lawfulness of execution of the order; 7) the criminal offence has been committed by a person in a state of restricted membership. None of the alleged circumstances relate to any aspects of culture, custom, religion or honor.

K. Relationship between the perpetrator and victim (Article 43)

In the context of the CL, such a relationship is regarded as an additional qualifying characteristic (for example, point 9 of the second Paragraph of Article 125 of the CL) or as an aggravating circumstance which States that it is more harmful and provides for the imposition of a more severe penalty (point 15 of the first Paragraph of Article 48 of the CL).

L. Punitive measures and prosecution of a person (Article 45)

1. The penalties to be applied in Latvia and the amounts thereof are indicated for each type of violence.
2. In respect of other means which may be applicable to the perpetrator of the violence, the articles in question also indicate the possible type of penalty to be imposed - **probation supervision**.

The State Probation Service shall perform supervision of criminally punished persons, including persons who have committed violence within the meaning of the Convention. All persons shall be monitored in the same way according to a common methodology, irrespective of the nature of the offence committed or the violence committed. For example, if a person has committed a robbery, the monitoring methodology of that person shall be the same as that of a person who has committed psychological, physical or other forms of violence to which the Convention applies. In accordance with Section 1 of the Latvian sentence execution Code (hereinafter - Code), the task of executing criminal sentences is to execute a criminal punishment in accordance with the basic principles for the execution of criminal sentences laid down in this Code, applying the resocialisation measures specified in this Code to the convicted person, as well as to ensure that the convicted person and other persons comply with laws and refrain from committing criminal offences. On the other hand, Article 1 of the Law on procedures for detention provides that the purpose of the Law is to ensure that the interests of human rights and criminal proceedings are reasonably observed in the execution of a security measure – detention. In accordance with Article 4 of the Prison Administration Law, the administrative staff shall consist of officials with special service ranks (hereinafter - officials), general civil servants and employees of the State civil service. In addition, this Article provides that management personnel shall have appropriate education, qualifications and staff duties. In particular, the supervision of prisoners is ensured by specially trained officials, supervisors of the Supervisory Division. It is the duty of supervisors to control the behaviour of prisoners and to ensure order in the territory of prisons. Officials of the Security Division and investigation Division of Prisons, on the other hand, perform operational activities and investigation processes.

Cases of violence in prisons are recorded in the electronic register (event log). Each case known to officials shall be documented by drawing up a report containing a description of what has been established and, if any, accompanied by evidence. In a situation where a prisoner is facing violence by others, the prisoner has the right to report any violence or threat the prisoner faces. This option shall be provided by: 1) direct communication with supervisors of the place of imprisonment or other officials, employees; 2) submission of written complaints (submission) to the head of prisons or management of the board; 3) written submission of complaints (submission) to other State institutions (for example, Ombudsman of the Republic of Latvia, Ministry of Justice, State Police, Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Latvia, etc.).

M. Aggravating circumstances (Article 46)

As regards aggravating circumstances, the articles in question indicate above the parts where certain circumstances are intended to constitute qualifying circumstances. At the same time, the following circumstances may be regarded as aggravating under the *first paragraph of Article 48 of the CL*:

- 1) the criminal offence constitutes repeated infringement of criminal offences;
- 2) the criminal offence has been committed in a group of persons;
- 3) the criminal offence has been committed by abusing the state of service or the trust of another person;
- 4) the criminal offence has caused serious consequences;
- 5) the criminal offence has been committed against a woman, knowing that she is pregnant;
- 6) the criminal offence has been committed against a person who has not reached the age of eighteen years or against a person, using his or her state of helplessness or disability of age;
- 7) the criminal offence has been committed against a person, using his or her service, material or other dependence on the perpetrator;
- 8) the criminal offence has been committed with special cruelty or mocking the victim;
- 9) the criminal offence has been committed using circumstances of public scourge or during an emergency situation or state of exception;
- 10) the criminal offence has been committed using weapons or explosive substances or in other generally dangerous ways;
- 11) the criminal offence has been committed due to treasured aspirations;
- 12) the criminal offence has been committed under the influence of alcohol, narcotic, psychotropic, toxic or other intoxicating substances;
- 13) the person who committed the criminal offence has provided knowingly false information regarding the criminal offence committed by another person in order to achieve reduction of the punishment;
- 14) a criminal offence has been committed due to racist, national, ethnic or religious motives or social hatred;
- 15) a criminal offence related to violence or threats of violence, or a criminal offence against morality and sexual inviolability has been committed against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence is in the first or second degree of kinship, or against a spouse or former spouse, or against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence is or has been in a permanent intimate relationship, or against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence shares a (undivided) holding;
- 16) a criminal offence related to violence or threat of violence, or an intentional criminal offence against the health or morals and sexual inviolability of a person has been committed in the presence of a minor;
- 17) the person who committed the criminal offence has provided a deliberately false statement;
- 18) a criminal offence against morals and sexual inviolability has endangered the life of a minor.

N. Compulsory alternative dispute resolution process or prohibition of sentencing methods (Article 48)

1. Laws and regulations of Latvia do not prescribe mandatory alternative dispute resolution process, including mediation, in civil proceedings. However, under the CPrL Article 148 Paragraph 1.³, Article 149, Paragraph two and Article 151, Paragraph three a court shall propose mediation in several stages – upon initiation of the case, preparing the case for trial and also during the course of the trial. Mediation in Latvia is a voluntary process of cooperation in which the parties seek to reach a mutually acceptable agreement to resolve their differences through a mediator. Thus, given that mediation and other alternative methods of dispute

resolution are not mandatory in Latvia, no one can compel such methods to be used in cases of violence. In addition, the mediator is competent to assess professionally whether there is a necessary personal balance between the parties for the possibility of mediation and the mediator also assesses whether mediation is possible in a particular dispute. Given that mediation and other alternative methods of dispute resolution are not mandatory in Latvia, it is not possible to impose these processes also in cases of violence against a woman, for example in divorce proceedings. The victim shall not be compelled to participate in such procedures if it could endanger the safety or well-being of the person.

2. The CPL does not provide for settlement as a mandatory alternative dispute settlement. According to by the seventh paragraph of Article 97 of the CPL, the victim exercises his rights voluntarily and to the extent he chooses. According to the CPL Article 97.¹ (fundamental rights of the victim in criminal proceedings), Paragraph one, point 4, the victim has the right to settle with the person who caused harm to him or her, as well as to receive information regarding the implementation of the settlement and the consequences thereof. CPL Article 97.¹, Paragraph three provides that once a person has been recognized as a victim, he or she shall be issued without delay in writing and, if necessary, information regarding the basic rights of the victim shall be explained. The victim shall certify that the information has been issued and, if necessary, the rights have been clarified with his or her signature. Only if the person directing the proceedings determines that a settlement is possible in criminal proceedings (the victim and the accused have expressed such a wish) and it is appropriate to involve the intermediary, the State Probation Service may be informed thereof, but if the criminal offence has been committed by a minor, the State Probation Service shall be informed in all cases

There is no reference in the cm or any condition that the settlement should be offered to the victim, or a settlement should be imposed on the victim. The right to enter into a settlement shall be the right of the victim, if the victim so wishes.

O. Annual administrative and judicial data

1. In the case of cases resulting in the death of a woman:

a) The State Police has registered:

in 2022, 19 murdered women;

in 2023, 13 murdered women;

5 women in **9 months of 2024**.

The data has been collected manually in connection with the homicides recorded by the State Police (CL Article 116.-118., Article 120, Article 121). This data is for all women murdered and is not limited to cases involving domestic violence.

b) The number of cases in which authorities had prior knowledge of a woman's exposure to violence is not information.

c) Number of convicted persons in these cases –

in 2022 - 12 convicted persons, in addition to 8 convicted persons in which the victims are a “relative” within the framework of criminal proceedings;

in 2023 – 4 convicted persons, in addition to 3 convicted persons in which the victims are a “relative” within the framework of criminal proceedings.

d) Number and type of sanctions and further measures imposed as a result of criminal proceedings (including deprivation of liberty) –

in 2022 – deprivation of liberty from 5 to 10 years – 2 persons; from 10 to 20 years – 8 persons; more than 20 years – 1 person;

in **2023** – imprisonment from 10 to 20 years – 4 persons.

2. Cases of violence against women linked to attempted murder:

- a) State police have recorded attempted murders and preparations for the killing:
in 2022, against 9 women;
in 2023, against 11 women;
 in 9 months of **2024**, **against** 7 women.

This data is about attempted murder and preparation for women and is not limited to cases involving domestic violence.

- b) The number of cases for which authorities had information regarding alleged violence against a woman – no such data can be obtained.
- c) Number of convicted perpetrators in these cases -
in 2022, no person;
in 2023 - 1 person.
- d) Number and type of sanctions and further measures imposed as a result of criminal proceedings (including deprivation of liberty) –
in 2022 – imprisonment of up to 5 years – 1 person; from 5 to 10 years – 2 persons;
in 2023 - imprisonment from 10 to 20 years - for 1 person.

3. For other data related to violence against women:

Together, administrative violation proceedings have been registered in the state after [Law on Administrative Penalties for Offences in the Field of Administration, Public Order, and Use of the Official Language](#) Articles 11.¹ and Article 12

		2022	2023
Total:		4724	6345
11.-1.1.1. For aggressive behavior against another person, which disturbs its peace and takes the form of: threat of harm to the health or sexual inviolability of a person or his or her relatives where there is reason to fear that that threat may be carried out in fines of between fourteen and one hundred fines		557	1375
11.-1.1.2. For aggressive behavior against another person, which disturbs its peace and takes the form of: threat to the financial interests where there is reason to fear that that threat may be implemented by a fine of between fourteen and one hundred fines		48	121
11.-1.1.3. For aggressive behavior against another person, which disturbs its peace and takes the form of: harassment of a person in the form of tracking, monitoring or unwanted, intrusive and obstructive contact with a person is punishable by a fine of between fourteen and a hundred fines		151	347
12.1. A fine of forty-two to one hundred units of the fine shall be imposed for causing minor bodily injury, that is to say, personal injury, which has caused temporary minor consequences but has not caused a loss of health or general ability to work.		3234	3639

12.2. For the violation referred to in Paragraph one of this Article, if it has been committed against a person with whom the infringer is in the first or second degree of kinship, or against a spouse or former spouse, or against a person with whom the infringer is or has been in a permanent intimate relationship, or against a person with whom the infringer shares a (undivided) holding, a fine of eighty-six to one hundred and forty fine units shall be imposed	734	863
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4. **The number of cases that have resulted in the deaths of children or women** - no such data can be obtained.

VI. Investigations, prosecutions, procedural rights and safeguards

Information on actions taken to ensure that investigations and legal proceedings are conducted without undue delay, taking into account the rights of female victims at all stages of criminal proceedings and cases of violence against women are effectively investigated and perpetrators are prosecuted. Victims are also provided with support throughout the criminal proceedings.

A. Information on rapid and appropriate response to incidents of violence:

1. on 31 March 2014 amendments to the CPRL, Law on Police⁴³, the Law on the Protection of the Children's Rights,⁴⁴ the Orphan's and Custody Courts Law and⁴⁵ the CL, as well as Cabinet of Minister Regulation No.161, March 25, 2014 "Procedures for the Prevention of Threats of Violence and Ensuring of Temporary Protection against Violence"⁴⁶. The purpose of these laws and regulations is to introduce a system in which protection against violence is ensured for a person also in cases where law enforcement authorities have no grounds for commencing criminal or administrative infringement proceedings.

In order to achieve this objective, the Law on Police shall:

- the Article imposed an obligation on police officers to prevent immediate threats where a person in or near a dwelling is likely to harm the life, liberty or health of a person permanently resident in that dwelling until the court considers the issue of temporary protection against violence as an obligation to monitor the enforcement of judicial or judicial decisions on temporary protection against violence;
- Article 12 established the right for police officers to take a police decision on separation, including without the submission of the victim, as well as to keep records of persons for whom a police decision on separation has been taken, and to keep records of persons for whom temporary means of protection against violence have been determined by a court or judge decision;
- Article 12.¹ content and general provisions of the police separation decision;
- in Article 19, the competence of the municipal police to take a decision on police separation.

In accordance with Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No.20, March 20, 2012 "Regulations regarding event response procedures and Police response time"⁴⁷ to events related to violence, the State Police shall respond in priority order - in State Capitals within 15 minutes, in counties within 25 minutes after receipt of information.

⁴³ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/67957-par-policiju>

⁴⁴ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/49096-bernu-tiesibu-aizsardzibas-likums>

⁴⁵ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/139369-barintiesu-likums>

⁴⁶ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/265314-kartiba-kada-novers-vardarbibas-draudus-un-nodrosina-pagaidu-aizsardzibu-pret-vardarbibu>

⁴⁷ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/245629-noteikumi-par-notikumu-registresanas-kartibu-un-polijas-reagesanas-laiku>

Cabinet of Minister Regulation No.161, March 25, 2014 “Procedures for the Prevention of Threats of Violence and Ensuring of Temporary Protection against Violence”⁴⁸ were defined as follows:

- procedures for taking, notifying and executing a police decision imposing an obligation on a person who poses a threat to a person permanently residing in a dwelling (hereinafter - protected person) to leave the dwelling where the protected person permanently resides, not to return and stay in the referred to dwelling and in the vicinity thereof (hereinafter - police decision on separation), as well as a sample form of the police decision on separation;
- procedures for accepting and forwarding to the court an application for temporary protection against violence submitted through the police;
- procedures by which enforcement of a decision of a court or judge regarding temporary Protection against violence (hereinafter - court adjudication) and enforcement of a ruling of foreign institutions pursuant to which Regulation (EU) No. of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 June 2013 has been issued shall be controlled 606/2013 on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters the certificate referred to in Article 5 (hereinafter - foreign certificate);
- procedures by which the accounting of such persons in relation to whom a police decision regarding separation has been taken and the accounting of such persons for whom temporary means of protection against violence have been determined by a court adjudication or in relation to which a foreign certificate has been issued, as well as information regarding the referred to persons, which shall be entered into the Integrated Interior information system.

2. According to the State Police -

In 2022, 8229 events were registered as “family conflicts” in the State information system “Electronic event Log” (Single event Register), and 8243 events in 2023.

in **2022**, the State Police completed and sent 3,597 reports of the event to the Social Service, and in 2023 3,705 reports of the event (information collected manually).

According to the Information Centre of the Ministry of the Interior, the police (State Police and local Government Police) have adopted:

- **in 2022** - 706 police decisions on separation, including in 674 cases - female protected person, number of unique protected persons (women) - 628;
- **in 2023**, 1,028 police separation decisions, including 955 cases, female protected person, number of unique protected persons (women) - 901.

By 1 January 2025, the municipalities police was not obliged to register information regarding events in the Single Register of events in regulatory enactments and such statistics regarding the previous period are not available.

The laws and regulations do not currently provide for a Police report on the recording of events in the State information systems. Aggregated statistics, including reports of the event completed by local government police, are not available.

B. Lethality assessment

⁴⁸ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/265314-kartiba-kada-novers-vardarbibas-draudus-un-nodrosina-pagaidu-aizsardzibu-pret-vardarbibu>

In cases when domestic violence has occurred (at the place of residence) and the State Police or local government police have left for the scene, in accordance with Cabinet of Minister Regulation No.161, March 25, 2014 “Procedures for the Prevention of Threats of Violence and Ensuring of Temporary Protection against Violence”⁴⁹. Police officers shall ascertain the circumstances of the event, identify the person to be protected and the person causing the threat and complete a report regarding the event, which includes questions regarding the circumstances of the event and the risks of repeated violence. If a firearm or high energy pneumatic weapon has been registered at the address of the dwelling to the person causing the threat in order to prevent the risks of repeated violence, the State Police shall withdraw the weapon in accordance with the procedures specified in regulatory enactments. A police report regarding the event shall be sent to the social service office of the local government in order to evaluate a person's need for social services and social assistance and to inform the relevant person or his or her legal representative regarding the rights and possibilities to receive social services and social assistance.

C. Emergency barring order on approaching immediately following a case of violence (Article 52)

1. In accordance with the Law on Police and Cabinet of Minister Regulation No.161, March 25, 2014 “Procedures for the Prevention of Threats of Violence and Ensuring of Temporary Protection against Violence”. Police decision on separation may be taken by State Police and local Government Police officers.

2. More specific:

a) The time it takes to issue an emergency barring order:

if a police officer determines, when assessing the risk of threats of violence, that there is an immediate threat, he or she shall immediately take a police decision regarding separation. A police decision on separation is an administrative act which takes effect at the time of its adoption and is enforceable immediately. The duty laid down in the police decision on separation shall be valid until the time indicated in the decision.

On the other hand, an application for interim protection against harassment shall be decided by the court or judge no later than the day following receipt of the application, if it is not necessary to require further evidence or the delay is likely to seriously infringe the applicant's rights. That application shall be decided by the court or judge without prior notification to the parties (Article 250.⁵⁸, Paragraph one of the CPrL).

b) The maximum length of time for which the emergency barring order are in force:

pursuant to Article 12 point 10.¹ of the Law on Police, a police decision on separation may be taken for a period of up to eight days from the time of the decision.

Upon satisfaction of the claim, provisional protection against violence shall be in effect until the day when the judgment enters into lawful effect (except for the exit obligation in force up to its completion. After amendment, there will be an addendum “or until the criminal proceedings for failure to comply with an abusive decision on protection against violence are concluded on a non-exonerating basis”) (CPrL Article 250. ⁵⁸, Paragraph eight).

In certain cases, the court may provide in the judgment that temporary protection against violence is still in force after the judgment has entered into force, but not more than one year after the judgment has entered into force (CPrL Article 250. ⁵⁸, Paragraph ninth).

⁴⁹ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/265314-kartiba-kada-novers-vardarbibas-draudus-un-nodrosina-pagaidu-aizsardzibu-pret-vardarbibu>

c) As regards the extension of the period until the issue of an emergency barring order:

The police decision regarding separation cannot be extended, however, if a police decision regarding separation has been taken and the person to be protected or his or her legal representative wishes the court to examine the issue regarding temporary protection against violence, the police shall send a true copy of the decision to the court without delay, but not later than the next working day, a written application of the person to the court, as well as other information which is at the disposal of the police and may be useful to the court in examining the issue regarding temporary protection against violence. On the other hand, under Article 250.⁵⁸ Point 1 of the CPriL, the court is to rule on an application for interim protection against harassment no later than the day following receipt of the application, where it is not necessary to require further evidence, or the delay is likely to seriously undermine the applicant's rights.

d) If the emergency barring order can apply to all women who have suffered domestic violence; if not, please specify all exceptions:

In Latvia, the Police decision on separation may be taken to prevent domestic violence against any woman. In cases where there is an immediate danger that a person in or near a dwelling may harm the life, liberty or health of a person permanently resident in that dwelling, except where the person causing the danger is not of the age of majority.

e) What means are used to enforce emergency barring order and to ensure the safety of the injured woman:

The obligation imposed by the police decision on separation on the person causing the threat not to stay near the dwelling means that the person causing the threat may not be closer to the dwelling than the distance referred to in the police decision on separation. When determining the abovementioned distance, the police shall take into account as far as possible that the person causing the threat has an obligation to attend the address of the workplace and other duties. At the request of the protected person or his or her legal representative, a prohibition on contact with the protected person may be imposed in a police decision regarding separation. That prohibition means that the person causing the threat may not meet the protected person, maintain physical or visual contact with him or her, use means of communication (including electronic means of communication) or any other means of conveying information to contact the protected person directly or through third parties.

f) What sanctions can be imposed in case of a breach of such an emergency barring order:

In cases where the person causing the threat fails to comply with the duties and prohibitions laid down in the police decision regarding separation, he or she shall comply with the Law on Police Article 12.¹ and Chapter 42 of the Administrative Procedure Law may apply enforcement measures, including the imposition of coercive damages (between EUR 50 and EUR 5000) whenever an offence has been committed.

g) The support and advice made available to women seeking such protection:

Women who have been victims of violence are handed a copy of the incident report in cases where police have intervened, which provides advice and extensive information on opportunities to seek help and protection. Booklets have been developed for Police "*Stop! Recognize violence! Call for help!*", available to the general public in police and local authorities, detailing information on how to recognize violence, where to seek help.

3. Administrative and judicial data —

A year	2022	2023
Police separation decisions taken	647	894
Violations of Police separation Decision detected	70	117
Enforcement orders have been issued for coercive money	68	102

According to statistics available and provided by the Court Administration, 737 decisions have been taken in 2021 regarding the full or partial satisfaction of the application for temporary protection against violence, in **2022** - 1150, in **2023** - 1367, in **2024** - 1467. This data is not limited to women but is the total number of successful or partially successful applications. According to the information provided by the Court Administration, it is not possible to retrieve more detailed statistics from the Judicial information system at this time, as the criteria applicable to applications for temporary protection against violence have been added recently to the system and do not cooperate in the test regime.

Provisional means of protection against violence which may be determined by the court (Article 250.⁴⁷, Paragraph one of the CPrL):

- 1) an obligation for the defendant to leave the dwelling in which the plaintiff resides permanently and a prohibition to return and reside therein;
- 2) a prohibition on the defendant being in the accommodation in which the plaintiff resides closer than the distance referred to in the court decision on temporary protection against violence;
- 3) a prohibition for the defendant to stay in certain places;
- 4) a prohibition on the defendant meeting the plaintiff and maintaining physical or visual contact with the plaintiff;
- 5) prohibition of the defendant from contacting the plaintiff in any way;
- 6) a prohibition for the defendant, through other persons, to organize a meeting or contact with the plaintiff in any form;
- 7) prohibition of the defendant from using the personal data of the plaintiff;
- 7¹) the duty of the defendant to acquire a social rehabilitation course for the reduction of violent behavior, the amount of which, the procedures for receipt, payment, execution, suspension and termination of which shall be determined by the Cabinet of Ministers;
- 8) other prohibitions and obligations which the court or judge has imposed on the defendant and the purpose of which is to ensure temporary protection of the plaintiff against violence.

An application for interim protection against harassment shall be decided by the court or judge not later than the day following receipt of the application, if it is not necessary to require further evidence or the delay could seriously prejudice the rights of the plaintiff. That application shall be decided by the court or judge without prior notification to the parties (Article 250.⁵⁸, Paragraph one of the CPrL).

A court or judge in a decision on temporary protection against violence shall warn the defendant that the police will exercise control over the enforcement of the decision and, if the decision is not complied with voluntarily, the defendant will be liable in accordance with the CL (Article 250.⁵⁹, Paragraph three of the CPrL). Failure to comply with a court decision may result in

liability under CL Article 168.¹ "Failure to comply with a ruling on Protection against violence. For failure to comply with an abusive ruling on protection against violence - punishable by deprivation of liberty for a period of up to three years or with temporary deprivation of liberty, or with supervision of probation, or with public work, or with a fine.

An application for temporary protection against violence may be made by the police (Article 250.⁵⁶ CPRL). The application submitted by the victim shall be drawn up in accordance with the model approved by the Cabinet of Ministers: Cabinet Regulation No.161 of 25 March 2014 "Procedures for the prevention of threats of violence and ensuring of temporary protection against violence" Annex 3 "application for temporary protection against violence".

D. Restraining orders and provision of protection orders (Article 53, Paragraph one)

1. The procedures in place to apply for a restraining or protection order -

When deciding an application for temporary protection against violence, the court or judge shall consider the proportionality between the impairment or potential impairment of rights and the applicable means of temporary protection against violence. The court or judge may, at his or her discretion, also prescribe a means of provisional protection against harassment other than that specified in the application. (CPRL 250. ⁵⁸, fourth Paragraph).

2. Whether restraining or protection orders may apply to all victims of violence covered by the Convention:

The CPRL provides that temporary protection against violence may be applied where a person is subjected to any physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence between former or existing spouses or other related persons, whether the abuser lives in the same household as the abused person, so that restraining or protection orders apply to all victims of violence.

3. The State fee for an application for temporary protection against harassment shall not be collected from the applicant.

4. The delay between the issue of such an order and the date of its entry into force –

If a legal remedy has been specified in the court decision regarding temporary protection against violence - an obligation for the defendant (the person who poses a threat) to leave the dwelling in which the plaintiff (the protected person) permanently resides, not to return and not reside therein, a police employee shall acquaint the defendant (the person who poses a threat) with the court decision, but the defendant (the person who poses a threat) certifies with a signature that he or she has become acquainted with the court decision. If the defendant (the person causing the threat) refuses to certify with a signature that he or she has become acquainted with the court adjudication, the State Police employee shall certify the refusal with his or her signature. Enforcement of the decision may be delayed if the defendant (the person causing the threat) deliberately avoids becoming acquainted with the decision, conceals his or her location or goes outside the country.

5. Maximum duration of limitation or protection orders:

The court decision on temporary protection against violence shall be open-ended, the court decision shall terminate if:

- 1) the defendant has died or been declared dead;
- 2) if a temporary means of protection against violence has been determined for a person by a court adjudication - an obligation for the defendant (a person who poses a threat) to take a social rehabilitation course for the reduction of violent behaviour - when the person has acquired the referred to course;

- 3) the moment when the judicial decision annulling the provisional means of protection against violence takes effect.

6. Whether such orders are available independently of other proceedings or in addition for them, a decision of the Court of Justice on temporary protection against harassment as a decision taken pending the examination of the main action shall end with the lawful entry into force of the judgment of the court ruling on the main action relating to temporary protection against harassment, where the judgment of the court does not provide that temporary protection against harassment shall continue to apply after the judgment has entered into force.

7. Whether restrictive or protective orders can be enforced in future litigation

- a decision of the Court of Justice on temporary protection against harassment, as a decision taken pending the examination of the main action, may be extended after the proceedings, provided that a judgment of the court ruling on the main action relating to temporary protection against harassment enters into force, provides that temporary protection against harassment shall continue to apply after the judgment has entered into force, at the time specified in that judgment.

8. Applicable in the event of a breach of a restraining or protective order

sanctions - according to Criminal Law Article 168.¹ on the violation of an abusive ruling on protection against violence - punishable by deprivation of liberty for a period of up to three years or temporary deprivation of liberty, or by probation supervision, or by public work, or by a fine.

9. Information on support opportunities for women is available through social rehabilitation service, in addition to the answer given above (see reply in section **C.2.g** of this chapter). Booklets have been developed for Police "Stop! Recognize violence! Call for help!", available to the general public in police and local authorities, detailing information on how to recognise violence, where to seek help.

E. Annual administrative and judicial data:

1. According to statistics available and provided by the Court Administration in **2021, 737 decisions have been taken** to grant the application for temporary protection against violence in whole or in part, in **2022 - 1150, in 2023 - 1367, in 2024 - 1467**. This data is not limited to women but is the total number of successful or partially successful applications. According to the information provided by the Court Administration, it is not possible to retrieve more detailed statistics from the Judicial information system at this time, as the criteria applicable to applications for temporary protection against violence have been added recently to the system and do not cooperate in the test regime.

2. According to the information provided by the State Police in **2022 at the State Police 1124 decisions on temporary protection** against violence have been received, and 1342 decisions have been received in 2023. 567 violations of court decisions have been detected in 2022, 484 criminal proceedings have been initiated after CL Article 168.¹ in 2023, 894 violations of court decisions have been detected, 750 criminal proceedings have been initiated after CL Article 168.¹.

F. Ex officio proceedings (Article 55, first paragraph)

According to Article 6 of the CPL, an official authorised to carry out criminal proceedings is required, in any case where the reason and basis for commencing criminal proceedings have become known, to initiate criminal proceedings within the scope of his or her competence and to bring them to a fair settlement of the criminal relations provided for in the CL. Under Article 7, unless otherwise provided for in that law, criminal proceedings are to be carried out in the public interest irrespective of the will of the person harmed. The function of prosecution in criminal proceedings shall be exercised on behalf of the State by a public prosecutor. About the CL in Article 130, Paragraph two, Article 131, Article 132, Paragraph one, Article 132.¹ first Paragraph, Article 145, first Paragraph, Articles 157, 168, 169 and 180, Article 185 first Paragraph, Article 197 and the first Paragraph of Article 200 shall be initiated upon receipt of an application from the person to whom the damage has been caused. Criminal proceedings may also be commenced if an application has not been received from the person who has been harmed, if such person is unable to exercise his or her rights due to physical or mental deficiencies. Criminal proceedings regarding criminal offences related to violence or threats of violence have been committed against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence is in the first or second degree of kinship, or against a spouse or former spouse, or against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence is or has been in a permanent intimate relationship, or against a person with whom the perpetrator of the criminal offence shares a (undivided) holding, commence and continue in the name of public interests and does not require the submission of the victim. Similarly, all offences against morality and sexual inviolability and the perpetration of medium and serious bodily harm are in the name of the public interest and do not require the submission of the victim.

In accordance with Article 369 of the CPL, the reason for commencing criminal proceedings is the submission of such information to the investigating institution (in such criminal offences the State Police have jurisdiction), the Prosecutor's Office or the court (hereinafter - the authority responsible for the conduct of criminal proceedings), which indicates the committing of a possible criminal offence, or the acquisition of such information in the institution responsible for the conduct of criminal proceedings.

G. Ex parte proceedings (Article 55, first paragraph)

Under the first paragraph of Article 377 of the CPL, only criminal proceedings the initiation of which requires a mandatory application by the victim must be closed in such cases. Information in which cases a person's application is required and in which there is no need to initiate proceedings is given in **Section F**.

H. Support opportunities for victims during litigation from NGOs

Representatives of NGOs may participate as special protection within the framework of criminal proceedings trusted representatives of the victim (Article 96.¹ of the CPL) in all proceedings. Also, may participate as a representative of the victim, if the victim delegates the relevant person as such or as a provider of legal aid of the person, if the relevant representative of the NGO by profession is a sworn advocate.

I. Remedies available during investigations and proceedings (Article 56, Paragraph one)

1. Under Article 24 of the CPL, a **person who is threatened** by reason of the fulfilment of the criminal procedural obligation, **has the right to request that the person directing the proceedings take the measures provided for in the Law** for the protection of such person and his or her property, as well as for the protection of the person's loved ones. According to Article 299 of the CPL, special procedural protection is the protection of the life, health and other lawful interests of victims, witnesses and other persons who testify or have testified in

criminal proceedings about serious or especially serious crimes, crimes provided for in Article 132 or 132¹ of the CPL, as well as minors who testify about crimes provided for in Articles 161, 162 and 174 of the CL, and persons whose threat may affect the aforementioned persons (hereinafter in this chapter - the endangered person). The second paragraph of Article 241 of the CPL provides that a security measure as a procedural coercive measure is to be applied to a suspect or accused person if there are grounds for believing that the person concerned will continue criminal activities, obstruct pre-trial criminal proceedings or court or avoid such proceedings or court. Article 243 of the CPL provides that the following safeguards are in place: 1¹) notification of the change of place of residence; 1²) to apply at a specified time to a police institution; 2) a prohibition to approach a particular person or place; 3) prohibition of specific occupation; 4) prohibition to leave the State; 5) stay in a specific place; 6) personal guarantee; 7) bail; 8) surrender under police supervision; 9) house arrest; 10) arrest. In order to control compliance with the restrictions provided for in the security measure referred to in paragraphs 2, 5, 8 or 9 in cases where it is reasonable to believe that the suspect or accused person poses a high risk of violence to another person (the person at risk of violence), such suspect or accused person may be subject to continuous electronic supervision by means of an electronic device (electronic monitoring of the execution of the security measure). According to CPL 246. ¹ an investigating judge shall decide on the application of electronic supervision of the enforcement of a security measure, examining the proposal of the person directing the proceedings and hearing the opinion of the relevant suspect or accused person. The proposal of the person directing the proceedings shall include: 1) an assessment of the risks of violence; 2) an assessment regarding the technical possibilities for the application of electronic supervision of the execution of the security measure; 3) if electronic supervision of the execution of a security measure is related to interference in the private life of a person at risk of violence - information regarding the consent of such person to electronic supervision of the execution of a security measure.

2. **According to the CPL Article 96. ¹ for women** who have suffered sexual offences, trafficking in human beings and violence from a loved one, suffering from mental or other health disorders which prevent the exercise of their rights, serious injuries or mental disorders which have suffered a crime allegedly committed on racist, national, ethnic or religious grounds shall **be recognised as victims of special protection**. To ensure the safety of women and their family members, in accordance with CPL Article 96.¹, Paragraph six a specially protected victim has the right to request and receive information regarding the release or escape of such arrested or convicted person from the place of imprisonment or temporary place of detention, which has caused harm to him or her, if there is a threat to the victim and there is no risk of harm to the arrested or convicted person. In accordance with Article 247, Paragraph four of the CPL, if an application of a specially protected victim has been received, in which information is requested regarding the release or escape of such arrested person from the place of imprisonment or temporary place of detention, which has caused harm to him or her, the person directing the proceedings shall send the relevant information to the victim as soon as he or she has become aware of the release or escape.

- a. In order to ensure the hearing of the victim's opinion, in accordance with the CPL 97.¹ Paragraph one, point 8-11 the victim has the right to submit a complaint regarding the actions of a procedural adjudication or an official authorised for the performance of criminal proceedings in the cases, time periods and procedures specified in this Law; receive contact information for communication on the criminal proceedings in question; receive information on available support and medical assistance; request information regarding the progress of criminal proceedings, regarding officials who perform or have performed criminal proceedings. Similarly, Article 98 of the CPL lays down a number of rights of the victim which may be exercised during criminal proceedings.

- b. Victims of violence may receive social rehabilitation services and support within the framework thereof at any stage of the process.
- c. In order to ensure that the victim avoids the person who committed the violence within the framework of criminal proceedings, in accordance with Article 99, Paragraph two of the CPL, the victim specially protected has the right to request that his or her participation or hearing at a court hearing be conducted by technical means. According to Article 140 of the CPL, the person directing the proceedings may perform the procedural action by technical means (telephone conference, videoconference) if the interests of the criminal proceedings so require. During the course of the proceedings, it shall be ensured by technical means that the person directing the proceedings and persons participating in the proceedings present in different premises or buildings can hear each other during a telephone conference, as well as hear and see - during a video conference. Under Article 382 of the CPL, where necessary and where the interests of criminal proceedings so require, the procedural action may be carried out by technical means (telephone conference, videoconference). On the other hand, according to CrPL Article 250.⁵⁸ the thirteenth paragraph, may be heard by a court at the request of one of the parties at a separate hearing. Against this background, there are no obstacles to the separation of the person seeking temporary protection against violence and the perpetrator of the violence in the courtroom, and this is done in practice at the request of the person.

In addition, in accordance with Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No.161 of 25 March 2014 “Procedures by which threats of violence shall be eliminated and ensuring of temporary protection against violence shall be ensured” in the poll of persons to be protected and persons causing threats separately.

3. Special protective equipment for a child who has suffered or witnessed for violence – according to CPL Article 96.¹ *all minors shall be recognized as victims of special protection.* Specially protected victims have additional more lenient arrangements, for which information has already been provided to answer other questions.

In accordance with Article 1, Paragraph one of the Law on the Protection of the Children's Rights (hereinafter - LPCR) regarding violence or negligence against a child, for inciting or coercing a child to participate in sexual activities, persons guilty of the use or involvement of a child in prostitution shall be held liable as laid down in the Law. In accordance with Article 73 of the LPCR, each person has a duty to immediately notify the police, Child Protection Centre, Orphan's and Custody's Court or Social Service regarding an offence directed against the child. Persons guilty of failure to notify shall be held liable in accordance with the law.

To provide support to children victims of violence and their non-violent relatives, as well as to ensure the possibility to perform criminal procedural activities, an inter-institutional co-operation programme “Children's House” shall be implemented, which shall be ensured by the Child Protection Centre.

Work on equipping juvenile examination rooms is continued in the State Police, considering internationally recognized standards of juvenile victims and witness examination rooms, as well as to ensure training of employees in the use of the technique in the examination room.

J. Provision of free legal aid to women victims of violence (Article 57) - in accordance with the State ensured legal aid Law Article 3, Paragraph two, point 2, has the right to request legal aid for persons who are suddenly in a situation and material condition which prevents them from ensuring the protection of their rights (special situation). Violence against a person may be one of the foundations of the special situation. Consequently, women who have suffered violence may receive State-provided legal aid for the protection of the rights of the person

harmed or challenged by a civil dispute or of the interests protected by law, for example, to deal with domestic violence, disputes on the substance of family law, such as divorced marriage, sorted matters relating to the child, etc. Legal consultations, preparation of procedural documents, as well as representation in court shall be ensured for persons if legal proceedings have been initiated. Similarly, victims may receive legal aid within the framework of the social rehabilitation service.

In accordance with Article 108, Paragraph 5.¹ of the CPL, if protection of rights and interests is not ensured in criminal proceedings or the victim or his or her representative makes a request to the person directing the proceedings, the person directing the proceedings shall take a decision that a lawyer as a provider of legal aid participates in criminal proceedings:

- 1) an adult person who is deprived or needy, or a person who has suddenly found himself in such a situation and material condition that prevents him or her from ensuring the protection of his or her rights;
- 2) a specially protected victim (information has been previously provided which victims are to be recognised as such).

In such cases the payment to a lawyer for the provision of State ensured legal aid and the reimbursable expenses related to the provision thereof shall be covered from the State budget.

K. Other remedies within the framework of investigations, prosecutions, procedural rights.

According to the ninth Paragraph of Article 96 of the CPL, without the consent of the victim, a still image of him or her may not be made public in the media during procedural acts by photo, video or other technical means, unless this is necessary for the detection of the offence. The CPL also provides additional such remedies - interrogation of a witness, victim, representative and owner of property injured in criminal proceedings (Article 151), special features of interrogation of a specially protected victim in pre-trial criminal proceedings (Article 151.¹), openness of the trial of a criminal case (Article 450).

VII. Migration and asylum

Information on measures taken in relation to migrant victims covered by the Convention whose status makes them particularly vulnerable.

A. Information on how authorities in Latvia ensure that the injured migrant can be granted an autonomous residence permit in cases of violence

1. In the case referred to in Article 59 Paragraph 3b of the Convention, persons shall be granted:

A temporary residence permit in accordance with Article 23, Paragraph one, point 21 of the Immigration Law – if it is necessary for pre-trial investigation institutions or a court to reside in the Republic of Latvia until completion of the investigation of a criminal matter or examination in court, while in the cases referred to in Article 59, Paragraph one, Paragraph two, Paragraph 3a and Paragraph four of the Convention it is possible to grant an autonomous temporary residence permit to a person in accordance with Article 23, Paragraph three of the Immigration Law in relation to humanitarian considerations, evaluating the circumstances of the case.

2. No applications have been received in 2024 requiring examine the criteria set out in Article 59 of the Convention.

B. Applications for asylum on grounds of gender-based violence (Article 60, first paragraph)

1. When assessing applications for international protection, violence against women are taken into account as acts of persecution in conjunction with a person's ability to obtain protection in the country of origin. Individual circumstances are considered in each case. It should be noted that gender-based violence in very rare cases (except where persons are persecuted on grounds of sexual orientation) has been the sole reason for persecution, often overlapping with criteria for refugee status such as nationality, religious affiliation or imputed political beliefs.

2. Concerning the *Convention of 28 July 1951 on the status of Refugees*, Article 1 Paragraph A the interpretation of the forms of persecution laid down in paragraph 3 in the light of gender equality, in Latvia, the relevant issue is implemented in the evaluation of a person's case taking into account individual circumstances in each case. In addition, it is ensured that such sensitive issues are handled by interviewers/decision-makers who have the necessary knowledge to work with representatives of the least protected groups.

3. As regards data on the number of women who have been granted refugee status, on the basis of one or more of the grounds of the Convention, as referred to in the first paragraph of Article 60, we note that no data are currently collected broken down according to each of the criteria for refugee status. Instead, it is possible to indicate the number of women claiming asylum in a given year, as well as the number of women claiming refugee status:

124 women have applied for asylum in **2022**, 58 have received refugee status;
294 women have claimed asylum in **2023**, 25 have received refugee status.

4. Data on the number of women affected or at risk who received additional protection for the following reason:

3 women have received subsidiary status (subsidiary protection) in **2022**;
in **2023**, **0** women received alternative status (subsidiary protection).

C. Actions taken to accommodate asylum seekers and support services based on gender equality, social gender guidelines in accordance with the third paragraph of Article 60

Accommodation commensurate with the requirements shall be provided to asylum seekers in Latvia, taking into account as far as possible the special needs of those who have experienced violence related to sex belonging (Women, sexual minorities are housed in separate premises/apartments). Asylum seekers shall be provided with the possibility to receive the support of a social worker and mentor, as well as - if necessary - consultations of a psychologist. As regards guidelines for workers dealing with sexual violence cases, no national framework has been developed: asylum workers use the European Union Agency for Asylum guidelines, practical tools as well as the knowledge and skills acquired in ESPA training modules in their day-to-day work.

To ensure that procedural guarantees are respected in the asylum procedure:

- personal interviews are conducted with each individual individually, without the presence of other family members;
- in organising personal interviews with asylum seekers, an interviewer of the same sex and an interpreter are appointed as far as possible (as well as asylum seekers are given the opportunity to express their views if they want another interpreter);
- the interviewer shall consult the available country of origin information prior to the interview;

- at the beginning of the interview, the asylum seeker shall be introduced to the participants of the interview, he/she shall be explained the meaning of the interview, the conditions for confidentiality of information, the rights and obligations during the interview;
- interviewers are trained to conduct interviews;
- the assessment of refugee status shall take into account current country of origin information, ESPA and UNHCR guidelines on the country of origin concerned.

D. Non-refoulement (Article 61)

The principle of non-refoulement is included in Article 47 of the Immigration Law⁵⁰, which provides that a foreigner shall not be expelled if expulsion is in contradiction with the international obligations of the Republic of Latvia.

⁵⁰ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/68522-imigracijas-likums>

ANNEX

Table 1: Initial training (education or professional training)

	PREVENTION AND DETECTION OF VIOLENCE	STANDARDS OF INTERVENTION	EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMAN AND MEN	NEEDS AND RIGHTS OF VICTIMS	PREVENTION OF SECONDARY VICTIMISATION	MULTI-AGENCY COOPERATION	KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED FOR QUALIFICATION TO PRACTICE THE PROFESSION	LENGTH OF CURRICULUM
Police and other law enforcement Officials	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	Duration depends on the type of education programme
Prosecutors								To become a prosecutor in Latvia, person must obtain a Master's degree in Law, have at least two years of legal work experience, and successfully

								pass the prosecutor's qualification exam.
Judges								To become a judge in Latvia, person must obtain a Master's degree in Law, have at least five years of legal work experience, and successfully pass the judge's qualification exam.
Social workers	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	4 years
Medical doctors	+		+	+			+	6 years
Nurses and midwives	+		+	+			+	4 years
Psychologists, in Particular counsellors/psychotherapists	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	Depends on the curriculum and its content

Immigration/Asylum Officials	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No specific education/training programme
Educational staff and school administrator	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	Depends on the curriculum and its content
Journalists and other Media professionals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Servicemen and Women	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Any other relevant category	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 2: In-service training

	NUM BER OF PROF ESSIO NS TRAI NED	MANDANTO RY NATURE	AVERAGE LENGTH OF CURRICULUM	PERIODIC ITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BODY MANDAT ED TO CARRY OUT/CER TIFY IN- SERVICE TRAININ G	TRAINING EFFORTS SUPPORTED BY GUIDELINES AND PROTOCOLS
Police and other law enforcement Officials	254	-	-	2022./2023.	State funding	State Police College	Actions of a Police Officer in cases involving domestic violence
	98	-	-	2021./2022.	State funding	State Police College	Psychological and legal aspects of police officers' conduct in cases of sexual violence.
	22	-	-	2023.	State funding	State Police College	Practical and psychological aspects of communicating with the person (including the victim) who reports the violence (and/or reports it).

	54	-	-	2022./2023.	State funding	State Police College	Dealing with victims (levels one and two).
Prosecutors	30 *	A voluntary basis.	9 weeks	2023./2024.	The Recovery and Resilience Facility	Court Administration project "Academy of Justice"	"Victim-centered access to justice". * Both prosecutors and judges were participants in the project.
Judges	41	-	8 h	-	State funding	-	-
Social workers	100	Training is not mandatory but desirable for social workers dealing with victims of violence and violence.	92 h	As necessary, but not less than every 2 years.	ESF	A contract has been entered into with the service provider because of the procurement.	Project No. implemented by the Ministry of Welfare during the planning period 2014-2020 of European Union Funds 9.2.1.1/15/I/001 "Development of Professional Social work in local Governments", the methodological material developed in 2020 for social work with persons who have suffered violence and who have committed violence.
Medical doctors	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Nurses and midwives	107	Optional	4 academic hours	1	European Social Fund Plus project	Ministry of Health	-
Psychologists, in Particular counsellors/psychotherapists	No information collected	Mandatory need for a specialist to continue the profession of psychologist	At least 700 hours during the period of validity of the psychologist's certificate and professional competence and professional skills shall be improved during the period of validity of the psychologist's certificate for at least 100 academic hours, as well as co-operation with the psychologist-supervisor for at least 35 academic hours individually or 70 academic hours, if supervision of the person takes place within a group, during the period	-	-	-	The requirement for the re-certification and further training of a psychologist is laid down in Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 01.06.2028.301 "Rules of the psychologist".

			of validity of the psychologist's certificate				
Immigration/Asylum Officials	2022 - 34 2023-13	-	-	-	-	ESPA learning Module	The training relates to the following issues: information to vulnerability, Interviewing Vulnerable persons, Asylum Interview method, Gender, Gender identity and sexual orientation, the assessment of receipt Tools in practice inclusion.
Educational staff and school administrator	Not aggregated	Within three years	36 h	-	Educational institutions	-	The educator of general, vocational and interest education shall be responsible for the improvement of his or her professional competence. The programme for improvement of professional competence shall include one of the following topics: general competencies of the educator, content of education and didactics, management of education

							(Cabinet Regulation No.569 11.09.2018. 569)
Journalists and other Media professionals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Servicemen and Women	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Any other relevant category							