

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Belarus**



The Most Resonant Human Rights Violations in Certain Countries

2021

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List of Acronyms of International Human Rights Instruments

ICCPR – International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

ICESCR – International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

CRC – Convention on the Rights of Child

ICERD – International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

CAT – Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

FOREWORD

This is the fourth report on Human Rights Violations in Certain Countries issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus. The three previous reports were released in 2012, 2013 and 2014, respectively. Like the previous reports, this document was prepared on the basis of various sources, like the results of Human Rights Council's UPRs, findings of the HRC's special procedures and international treaty bodies, information provided by international, regional, and national NGOs, as well as the reliable data collected from «Universal Human Rights Index» and open sources from mass media.

No one in today's world questions the importance of human rights. Indeed, we are all well aware that humanity paid a very dear price in its centuries-long struggle against injustice, oppression and other evils that since the time immemorial placed some societies in a position of «lesser breeds». Yet this march towards justice is certainly not over, because there is no end to perfecting the conditions of human life.

Unfortunately, the current discourse on human rights has been much more characterized by discord than cooperation, insofar as Western countries have been doing their best to «teach» the rest of the world on human rights, proceeding from their own interests and visions. With such short-sighted actions, Western countries managed to achieve the opposite effect, completely leveling the true meaning of human rights and turning them into a political weapon against other sovereign states, spreading chaos and instability.

One may wonder whether Western countries have a moral basis for this kind of mentoring? They might have if the «teachers» themselves had an impeccable record in what they «teach». This fourth report on *Human Rights Violations in Certain Countries* amply demonstrates that the countries representing a collective West are very far from owning a high moral ground on the issue of human rights.

Human rights are a universal concept, not the prerogative of a collective West. They do not have an exclusive license to interpret international human rights treaties and to censure those who do not follow their one-sided logic.

Belarus has never sought confrontation on human rights and does not seek it in the context of this report. We just want our Western partners to realize that while they interfere in the affairs of other states, the gap of inequality and discontent within their societies is growing rapidly

and requires urgent attention in their own homes. Addressing at least the challenges identified in this report will be a pledge of respect, a basis for trust and cooperation in the common interest for the encouragement and promotion of human rights around the world.

Vladimir Makei
Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Belarus

AUSTRIA

Standing invitation to special procedures since 2001.

4 visits for the mentioned period, the last one was held in 2018.

Freedom of opinion and expression, peaceful assembly – 34 recommendations

Arbitrary arrests and detentions – 14 recommendations

Prohibition of torture – 127 recommendations

On January 30, 2021, in Innsbruck police **dispersed a protest march** against the Austrian authorities' policy towards migrants with the use of force. According to the media reports up to 600 people attended the event. Police reported that about 60 participants of the protest march, presumably belonging to the left-wing radical group «Black Bloc», did not respond to police demands to comply with current anti-epidemiological requirements (keeping distance and wearing masks). Due to this the police stopped the march of the protesters.

There were clashes between police officers and protesters. The later used pyrotechnics. **The police, in their turn, sprayed the pepper gas.** One of the police officers was injured.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5wq0NIP2x4o>

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 7 (freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment)

art. 9 (the right to liberty and security of the person and freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention)

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

art. 21 (the right to peaceful assembly)

CAT

art. 2 (prevention of acts of torture)

art. 4 (criminal prosecution of any person which constitutes complicity or participation in torture)

15 protesters who refused to present their identity documents at the request of the police were detained. 45 reports were drawn up due to attempts of resistance to the police, 50 – in connection with non-compliance with the minimum distance requirement, 7 – due to absence of protective masks and 15 due to other administrative offenses. Against one of the protesters an examination of the alleged infliction of bodily harm to a police officer was initiated.

According to the Austrian branch of the international human rights organization *Amnesty International* environmental activists who held a picket in the center of Vienna on May 31, 2019 suffered from **police violence**.

Criminal cases in connection with “excessive and unjustified” use of force of the Austrian police have been brought forward **against eight police officers**.

Only on June 15, 2021, **one of the police officers was convicted** of abuse of office and perjury and sentenced to one year suspended imprisonment.

On February 13, 2021, the authorities of Vienna refused 8 applications for manifestation in the city center. Despite this according to the police more than 2,000 people took part in the protest action against government measures aimed to countering the spread of the COVID-19.

More than **1600 reports of administrative offenses** were drawn up (mainly for non-compliance with quarantine measures).

5 people were **detained** for resistance to police officers and gross violation of order.

On March 6, 2021 in Vienna, an unauthorized mass event took place, in which more than 30,000 people took part according to various sources.

Despite calls from the law-enforcement authorities for ending the rally, a significant number of protestors moved towards the city center. The police took measures to block the protest march.

One of the groups of protesters, surrounded by the police, attempted to break the cordon through the underground parking in the building of one of the insurance companies. During the assault of the building a **security guard was seriously injured**.



https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oom6J9YMqnvWoW1K6K_I5hr6BqRKmrHM/view



https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oom6J9YMqnvWoW1K6K_I5hr6BqRKmrHM/view

According to the police, more than **3 000 reports of administrative offences** were drawn up against the protesters, 60 criminal charges were brought forward, 42 people were arrested, including for non-compliance with measures against COVID-19 and violations of the Assembly Law.

While representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs accused the Austrian Freedom Party and its leader H.Kikl of provocations and incitement to violate the law, the Party brought forward accusations of unprofessional and unnecessarily harsh actions against the protesters.

On January 25, 2019, M. Unger (founder and self-proclaimed «President of the Confederation of Austria») was found guilty by the jury trial of high treason and sentenced to **14 years in prison**. Her deputy was sentenced to 10 years in prison.

Some of the most active participants in the movement received real or conditional prison sentences ranging from several months to 3 years.

*Equality and non-discrimination —
188 recommendations*

*Following international commitments
have been violated:*

ICCPR

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

BELGIUM

Standing invitation to special procedures since 2001.

10 visits for the mentioned period, the last one was held in 2019.

Equality and non-discrimination — 193 recommendations

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 8 (freedom from slavery and servitude)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

According to the Belgian Federal Migration Center much of the domestic work is **performed in secret by personnel of foreign origin**. The use of illegal labor in Belgium is punishable by high fines what provokes employers to **restrict the freedom of domestic workers** and pushes them to refrain from legalizing them, even if such an opportunity exists. **Mistreatment of domestic staff is a common practice**. However, victims often refuse to receive help.

Most victims are adults, but there are cases of exploitation of minors (for example, the case of a 15-year-old Congolese girl was handed over to the «owner» by her father). There are examples when domestic workers were forced to work 7 days a week

from 6 am to 11 pm for a meager salary while living in unacceptable sanitary conditions.

On January 9, 2021, a 23-year-old black man, Ibrahima Barrie, was detained in Brussels for allegedly filming police actions against a crowd of people and trying to escape when police noticed him.

Soon after arriving at the police station, the young man lost consciousness. An ambulance took him to the hospital, where **he died**. According to the autopsy results, the death occurred as a result of a heart attack, no traces

of drugs were found.

As the aftermath of the death of Ibrahima Barrie, a protest action was held with up to 500 participants. The protest escalated into riots. Stones were thrown at the police; the police station was set on fire. To disperse the protestors, the **police used water cannons; 116 people were detained**.

On March 12, 2021, in Beveren (the Belgian province of East Flanders) a mass rally took place in commemoration of a 42-year-old man who was killed the day before allegedly in a homophobic attack in a local park. Three teenagers, **16 and 17 years old, suspected of murder were detained**.

On March 13, 2021 in Liege a protest action within the Black Lives Matter movement was held, bringing together up to 200 participants. The rally was provoked by the brutal arrest of a black woman of the Congolese origin on 8 March. The action turned into a riot. The police **used water cannons** to disperse the protesters. Nine hospitalizations are reported, including five police officers.

This case confirms that in Belgium there is, on the one hand, the ground for further escalation of the situation from the BLM movement's supporters, and on the other hand, the problem of manifestation of racism, primarily amid the police.

In this context Annelies Verlinden, Minister of the Interior of Belgium even earlier – with regards to incidents of racist speech by the police officers – has initiated a reform of the «disciplinary procedure» in the police. Taking into account the incident in Liege, this reform has not yet led to tangible results.

Moreover, according to media reports five police officers from Brussels suspected of rape, assault and voyeurism were detained in Liege.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qHxd0UnWksI>

On March 20, a large-scale manifestation took place in Brussels (the police reported about 1000 participants) against the restrictive measures introduced by the government to curb the spread of COVID-19. According to the participants, the country's authorities took away their freedoms.

**Following international commitments
have been violated:**

ICCPR

art. 7 (freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment)

art. 9 (the right to liberty and security of the person and freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention)

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

art. 21 (the right to peaceful assembly)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

CAT

art. 2 (prevention of acts of torture)

art. 4 (criminal prosecution of any person which constitutes complicity or participation in torture)

*Freedom of opinion and expression,
peaceful assembly – 23 recommendations*
*Prohibition of torture –
146 recommendations*

On April 1, 2021 in Bois de la Cambre park in Brussels several thousand people gathered following an announcement in Facebook of «La Boum» music festival (which turned out to be an April Fool's joke).

According to the law enforcement forces people did not observe the anti-COVID-19 measures. Significant law enforcement forces were pulled into the park. After the arrival of the police, people began to shout «freedom» and throw stones and bottles at law enforcement officers and make fires. The crackdown took place, during which the police **used water cannons and tear gas.**

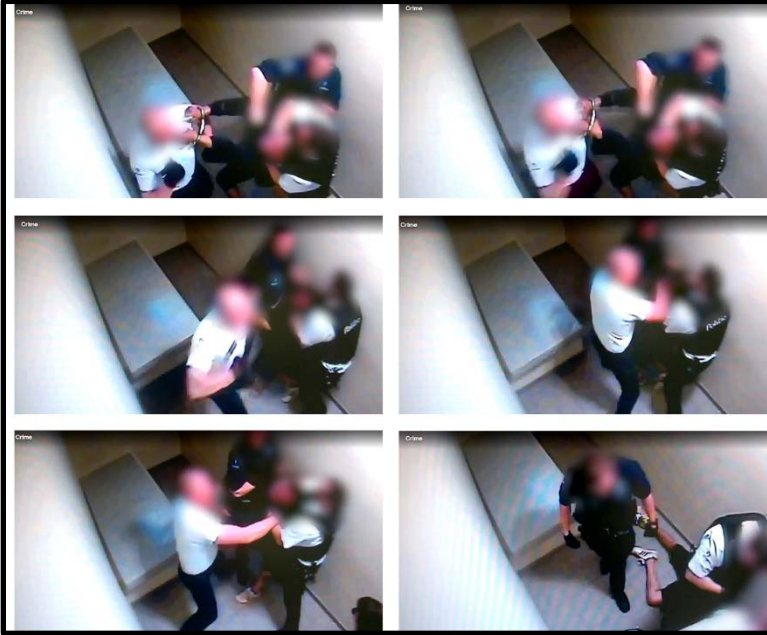
As a result of the clashes at least 26 police officers reportedly injured, seven police horses and eight park visitors. A girl was **knocked down by a policeman on a horse.** 22 people were detained.

On May 1, 2021, in Bois de la Cambre park in Brussels clashes were repeated again during «La Boum 2», an unauthorized open-air event to protest against anti-COVID-19 restrictions. The event resulted in the park being evacuated and police deploying **water cannons and tear gas.**

Police reportedly arrested 132 people. Two dozen people got injured; fifteen people were given medical care by the Red Cross on the spot; 12 people were taken to hospital.



<https://twitter.com/DarkiFranky/status/1377732469743620099>



<https://www.vrt.be/vrtnws/en/2021/03/31/policeman-convicted-after-handcuffed-suspect-suffers-blows/>

In April 2021, the Antwerp Court of Appeal has found a police officer from Lommel (province of Limburg) guilty of **using excessive force**.

A Belgian police officer was charged with **beating a handcuffed restrained suspect in 2015**.

The court in Hasselt threw out the charges against the police officer.

The Court of Appeal has found him guilty, but the sentence was suspended. The officer will not have to serve any time and the conviction will not go on his record. In the same time the victim of this police violence was convicted of grievous bodily harm on a McDonald's worker and of resisting arrest.

CANADA

Standing invitation to special procedures since 1999.

16 visits for the mentioned period, the last one was held in 2019.

Rights of child – 242 recommendations

Following international commitments have been violated:

CRC

art. 3 (the best interests of the child)

Canadian Senator Yvonne Boyer has acknowledged that in Canada a **sterilization procedure** is not a relic of the past and discrimination in the health-care system is «widespread» in all the provinces and territories.

As an example, she used lawsuits initiated in Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia provinces by the women of indigenous people. They stated they had been forced to sterilization (in 2015 hundreds of indigenous women across the country stated forced sterilization).

In her interview Boyer mentioned that recently she had received an e-mail from a Canadian indigenous woman informing on her recent forced sterilization.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9crl-lcZOEK>

In January 2021 Brooks Fallis, the doctor in Toronto, **was demoted from his office** as a Head of Intensive Therapy Department of William Osler Hospital. He publicly criticized authorities' response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Brooks Fallis goes on working at hospital but as a doctor not a Head of Department.

After his demotion 23 doctors wrote an open letter addressed to the hospital administration.

According to a scientific study of McGill University, the rate of **child marriage** in Canada is 1.7% in the Northwest Territories and 0.2% nationwide.

The study reported that an increasing number of child marriages in recent years in Canada have been informal, common-law unions that neither imply the registration their partnership nor provide basic economic protection (alimony, separation of property, etc.).

According to the study, formal marriage accounted for more than half of all child unions in Canada. By 2016, the study reported that 98% of child unions were considered common-law with nearly 2,300 children between the ages of 15 and 17 married informally.

Racial discrimination – 239 recommendations

Equality and non-discrimination – 202 recommendations

Right to health – 188 recommendations

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

ICESCR

art. 12 (right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health)

On September 28, 2020 Ms Joyce Echaquan, a **37-year-old woman, died in the Centre hospitalier de Lanaudière** in Saint-Charles-Borromée, Quebec. She was an Atikamekw (**one of the indigenous peoples**). Despite she warned of possible allergy to morphine, medicine workers injected it. Furthermore, she was chained to the hospital bed.

Few minutes before her death via a Facebook seven minutes livestream it was possible to watch how Ms Joyce Echaquan was asking for help. She was in the critical condition but medicine workers, insulting her, ignored her call. She died from allergic reaction to morphine.

Right to work – 91 recommendations

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICESCR

art. 6 (right to work)

Prohibition of torture –
112 recommendations
Right to peaceful assembly –
115 recommendations
Freedom of opinion and expression –
127 recommendations

Following international commitments
have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 7 (freedom from torture, inhuman or
degrading treatment)

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

art. 21 (the right to peaceful assembly)



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nRzfzPscuDg&t=251s>

In December 2020, in Calgary, for quarantine measures violation **police officers used excessive physical force** against a young man who was skating.

In January 2021, in Montreal, **police dispersed peaceful protest** against province restrictive measures.

In January 2021, a video captured a **violation of religious freedom**: law enforcement forces in Montreal invaded a Jewish community where weekly prayer was taking place.

In February 2021, a skateboarder from Barry was **severely** detained for quarantine measures violation: a video captured that policemen **beat his head on the curb** despite he had not resisted.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfFy_pxn7YA



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRAEIZRtDh0>

**Following international commitments
have been violated:**

ICCPR

art. 6 (right to life)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

CAT

art. 4 (criminal prosecution of any person which constitutes complicity or participation in torture)



<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-57291530>

In May 2021, in western Canada a **mass grave of 215 indigenous children** was discovered on the territory of the former Kamloops Residential School. The discovery of the grave was announced by the chief of the Tk'emlups te Secwepemc First Nation.

At this time causes and circumstances of the children's death have not been established.

The Special Commission on Truth and Reconciliation, created in Canada in 2008, after intensive research has reached the conclusion that most of the indigenous children who were attending the residential schools did not come back to their home communities.

In 2015 the Commission published a summary version where the policy of forcibly removing aboriginal children from their families for schooling was described as cultural genocide.

In this regards the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights declared large-scale human rights violations.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Standing invitation to special procedures since 2000.

2 visits for the mentioned period, the last one was held in 1999.

Equality and non-discrimination –

193 recommendations

Racial discrimination –

200 recommendations

Prohibition of torture – 87 recommendations

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 20 (any advocacy of national, racial and religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

On May 13, 2021, the Court of the District of Prague 1 **sentenced six Czech citizens to 9 to 20 months of probation** for participating in an anti-government manifestation at the Old Town Square of Prague on October 18, 2020.

Public order charges were brought against 11 protesters. The conduct described in indictments was qualified as violence against a public official committed with a weapon.

In addition to a suspended sentence, perpetrators will be required to pay a fine in the amount of 20,000 to 25,000 CZK (950 – 1,200 USD).

On October 18, 2020, Czech police dispersed protesters against epidemiological restrictions imposed by the Czech government **using water cannons and tear gas** in Prague's Old Town Square.

About 2,000 people took part in the protest, including at least 400 radical football fans, which is significantly more than the allowed 500 people. In this regard, the representative of the Prague Mayor's Office decided to terminate it immediately. The action turned into a confrontation with the police: protesters began to throw stones, cans, firecrackers to the guards, to throw bins and toilet stalls; they burned flares.

As a result of clashes between protesters and law enforcement forces, **144 people were detained** and 25 policemen were injured.

As a result of the incident, nine protesters were injured. Five of them were treated on the spot and then released. They mostly had head injuries, cuts, or difficulty breathing due to tear gas.



<https://www.rt.com/news/503857-prague-covid-protest-clashes/>



<https://balkaninsight.com/2020/10/19/protest-in-prague-against-covid-measures-turns-violent/>

Another person was fined 50,000 CZK (2,400 USD) for repeatedly participating in riots and damaging other people's property.

Lukas Vesely, a 39-year-old electrician, received a one-year suspended sentence and a two-year ban on staying in the Czech capital for violence against an official and rioting. According to the indictment, he threw a wood log and hit a policeman in the head. Mr. Vesely claimed to have thrown a plastic bottle.

ESTONIA

Standing invitation to special procedures since 2001.

2 visits for the mentioned period, the last one was held in 2008.

Equality and non-discrimination –

142 recommendations

Minority rights –

191 recommendations

Freedom of opinion and expression –

26 recommendations

The number of non-citizens in Estonia remains high and amounts to 5.3% of the total population.

Systemic discrimination due to insufficient knowledge of the Estonian language does not cease and leads to a **high level of unemployment and poverty** among the non-Estonian-speaking population.

Following international commitments

have been violated:

ICESCR

art. 6 (right to work)

ICCPR

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

Following international commitments

have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

The arrest on 21 March 2021 of Sergei Seredenko, a lawyer and member of the Estonian United Left Party not represented in the Riigikogu, on suspicion of maintaining relations against the Republic of Estonia, has **signs of political prosecution**.

Mr. Seredenko was a Russian human rights activist in Estonia from 2004 to 2014. Since 2014, he has been involved in scientific activities. He is the author of the books «Prosecution of human rights ombudsmen in Baltic States», «Ukrainianization of Baltic States: Export of political practices», «Right-wing radicalism in the party-political systems of modern European states». He hosts the weekly human rights review on the Baltic States «Political Corrector» on the web portal Baltnews.ee. His area of interest is human rights, constitutional law, anti-fascist activities.

Due to his human rights' activities Mr. Seredenko could not get a job in Estonia in his specialty.

The recognition by the Estonian Internal Security Service of the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate as a «threat» to the security of the Estonian state has **signs of actions restricting religious freedoms** (Report of the Estonian Internal Security Service, 2021).

The actions of the Estonian police on May 9, 2021 reveal signs of political persecution:

- detention on May 9, 2021 by the Estonian police representatives of the public association «Descendants of the Great Patriotic War veterans», who were on their way to the monument to the fallen of World War II to organize a guard of honor;
- summons for interrogation to the police of the member of the board of the Estonian public association «Russian Compatriots of Europe» Sergei Tšaulin, the organizer of the Victory Day rally, on the eve of the rally in order to cancel the rally, which would have become illegal without the participation of the organizer;
- stop and search of the Tšaulin's car after his interrogation by the police at the same day. The police seized a poster with the symbols of the «Immortal Regiment» and bottles of liquid for lighting the fireplace. The police stated that Mr. Tšaulin was planning an unregistered public event.

Following international commitments

have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 27 (right of national minorities to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, and to use their own language)

FINLAND

*Standing invitation to special procedures
since 2001.*

*2 visits for the mentioned period,
the last one was held in 2015.*

*Equality and non-discrimination –
68 recommendations
Minority rights –
172 recommendations*

On April 10, 2021 a manifestation (the so called «Great March») against coronavirus restrictions was held in the center of Helsinki, which ended in front of the city administration. About 300 people participated in the event.

According to media reports, given the restrictions imposed (gatherings of more than 6 people are prohibited), police surrounded and dispersed groups of protesters. 20 people were detained «for disobeying lawful orders». **About 10 motorists who honked in support of the protesters were fined.**

Similar mass rallies took place in Helsinki on March 20 and April 18, 2021.

On October 3, 2020 during the manifestation of eco-warriors calling for taking measures to fight climate change **Helsinki Police used pepper spray against the activists** and detained 51 participants of the protests.

During the action, the protesters sat in a coupling on the carriageway at the intersection of Kaisaniemenkatu and Unioninkatu streets.

According to the official statement of the Police «Protesters in the street did not obey several commands from police to stop blocking the street and preventing the movement of traffic. Because of this police said they resorted to use of force, deploying pepper spray to disperse the crowd. »



<https://img.vle.fi/uutiset/kotimaa/article11578009.ece/ALTERNATES/w580h326/p1044446-93315fcc-bb1e-4b9f-ad5d-64b68444be41.jpg>



<https://img.vle.fi/uutiset/uutisen-ims-kuvat/article11578387.ece/ALTERNATES/w960/39-7261475f78a491e42ab>

*Following international commitments
have been violated:*

ICCPR

art. 7 (freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment)

art. 9 (the right to liberty and security of the person and freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention)

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

art. 21 (the right to peaceful assembly)

FRANCE

Standing invitation to special procedures since 2001.

11 visits for the mentioned period, the last one was held in 2019.

*Freedom of opinion and expression –
24 recommendations*

*Right to peaceful assembly –
12 recommendations*

*Arbitrary arrests and detentions –
10 recommendations*



https://static.mediapart.fr/etmagine/default/files/2020/12/13/police.jpg?width=5597&height=3731&width_format=pixel&height_format=pixel

The practice of arbitrary detentions was widely used in relation to participants of numerous protests against adoption of the Draft Law on Global Security and against restrictions introduced by the government vis-à-vis cultural institutions and the restaurant industry during the coronavirus pandemic.

During the manifestation on December 12, 2019, **124 participants**, including **19 minors, were detained**.

According to the public prosecutor's office, out of the above 124 detainees, 41 received «notices».

On January 30, 2021, the streets of French cities saw over 33 thousand people who protested against Article 24 of the Draft Law on Global Security, which envisaged criminal responsibility for malicious use of images of police officers. In Paris, 35 protesters were detained, two police officers received minor injuries.

As a result of anti-COVID manifestations, which took place on March 21, 2021 in Marseille, Lyon, Annecy and which were not sanctioned by the authorities because of the pandemic, **tens of criminal cases were opened** in relation to facts of disorderly conduct and resistance to law enforcement forces.

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 7 (freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment)

art. 9 (the right to liberty and security of the person and freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention)

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

art. 21 (the right to peaceful assembly)



The practice of issuing «notices» («Rappel à la loi») is used by the authorities as a means to decrease the number of participants of protests, restricting their freedom of expression. On November 18, 2020, such a «notice» was also issued to a journalist of the France 3 TV channel for recording protests against adoption of the Draft Law on Global Security. At the moment of detention, the journalist had a media accreditation card and the «PRESS» identification sign, which proved no hindrance for her detention «in order to verify identity», her subsequent detention in a police precinct for 12 hours and issuance of a «notice».

<https://twitter.com/MerlinFerret/status/132879899659356166?s=20>

The Paris Police Prefecture at the request of the MIA of France banned the pro-Palestinian manifestation on May 15, 2021 due to the «risk of public disorder». The organizers of the manifestation tried to challenge the ban of the authorities, but the administrative court dismissed their complaint. Despite the ban, in Paris, several thousand people (according to the police, from 2,500 to 3,500, according to the organizers, up to 5,000) tried to demonstrate in support of the Palestinian population of the Gaza Strip amid the military conflict between Hamas and Israel. The manifestation escalated into clashes between its participants and the police with the use of **water cannons and tear gas** by law enforcement forces.



<https://francais.rt.com/france/86717-jets-projectiles-gendarme-blese-rassemblement-pro-palestinien-degenere-paris>



<https://www.siasat.com/massive-turnout-for-pro-palestinian-protest-in-paris-despite-ban-2137550/>

According to the MIA, the police **drew up 367 protocols** on breakers of order. As reported by the capital's prosecutor's office, **45 people were detained** on suspicion of committing offenses under the articles on «unauthorized gatherings» and «gathering» of people for the purpose of committing violent actions, on refusal to disperse after a warning, as well as on the use of violence or insulting law enforcement officers. Lawsuits were initiated against 6 people.

On the night of June 19, 2021, in Redon, the Brittany region, an illegal party with the participation of 1.5 thousand people ended in a **violent dispersal with explosions and tear gas**.

After curfew at 23:00, about four hundred police officers began to disperse the crowd. In response, young people began to throw Molotov cocktails and various objects at law enforcement officers. The police used tear gas. Five gendarmes and two festival participants were injured, **one of whom lost an arm**. The journalist, who was filming the incident, **was wounded by a shot from a traumatic weapon**.



<https://ria.ru/20210619/gaz-1737723259.html>

GERMANY

Standing invitation to special procedures since 2001.

11 visits for the mentioned period, the last one was held in 2018.

Racial discrimination – 198 recommendations

Prohibition of torture – 215 recommendations

A large-scale study by the «Death in Custody» campaign shows that at least 179 people have died in German prisons. The campaign claims that twelve deaths were held since the beginning of 2020. The circumstances of mortal cases usually remain unclear. At the same time, these incidents are increasingly associated with unlawful actions of prison's staff. For example, in July 2020, prisoner Ferhat Mayouf in Berlin's Moabit prison was knocking on the door of his burning cell and calling for help for several minutes. The guards did not respond in any way to his calls as well as to the calls of other prisoners though they were not far from his cell. When the cell door was opened, the 38-year-old Algerian was already dead.

On March 5, 2021, in a park in Delmenhorst (Lower Saxony) 19-year-old Qosay Khalaf was **detained** by the police, **dressed in civilian clothes**. During the arrest, he was thrown to the ground and handcuffed, a **gas was sprayed** into his eyes. At the police station Q. Khalaf lost consciousness and was taken to the hospital in Oldenburg, where he soon died. The Oldenburg police department declared an «accident» in its press release. However, a number of German media resources claimed that they have documents and statements that cast doubt on the official version of the tragic incident. Nevertheless, the prosecutor's office closed the investigation on this case. Cases of excessive use of force by the police in Germany are not sporadic. Only in Berlin, more than 50 complaints against local police officers were registered in 2021.

Extremist, racist and xenophobic views continue to spread in Germany. In particular, right-wing extremist groups appear in the police and the armed forces.

Anti-semitic abhorrence has increased, including attacks against rabbis, vandalism in synagogues and public insults.

According to statistics from the Council of Europe, **an average of 11.8 people dies in German prisons for every 10,000 inmates**. Compared to the other 46 member states of the Council of Europe, this figure is higher only in France (12.6) and Austria (12.3).

The average figure for all member countries is 5.5. More than a third of prisoners in Germany are of foreign origin.

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 6 (right to life)

art. 7 (freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

CAT

art. 2 (prevention of acts of torture)

art. 4 (criminal prosecution of any person which constitutes complicity or participation in torture)



https://static.euronews.com/articles/wires/744/13/7441350/1200x675_hlucec.jpg

*Following international commitments
have been violated:*

ICCPR

art. 20 (any advocacy of national, racial and religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground)

ICERD

art. 4 (commitment to adopt immediate and positive measures designed to eradicate all incitement to, or acts of, racial discrimination)

The ever-widening gap between rich and poor leads, in particular, to an increased susceptibility to right-wing, extremist, racist and xenophobic views among people with a low level of income and education. Neo-Nazi and anti-Semitic rhetoric is noted in protests against government measures on COVID-19.

On April 21, 2021, more than 8 thousand people took part in a protest in Berlin against the tightening of the law on protection against infectious diseases. **There were clashes** between the protesters and the police. Some 200 people were detained.



<https://twitter.com/welt/status/1384892454772658178>

Right to peaceful assembly – 2 recommendations

*Freedom of opinion and expression –
22 recommendations*

*Arbitrary arrests and detentions –
30 recommendations*



<https://twitter.com/Cityintel1/status/1383657897817563149?s=20>

*Following international commitments
have been violated:*

ICCPR

art. 9 (the right to liberty and security of the person and freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention)

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

art. 21 (the right to peaceful assembly)

On May 15, 2021, a wave of anti-Israeli manifestations «swept» through Germany as a response to the escalation of the situation in the Middle East. In some cities, the manifestations **turned into riots and clashes with the police**. In particular, it is noted by media that as part of the dispersal of the manifestation in Berlin, which was attended by more than 3,500 people, protesters threw stones, bottles and firecrackers at police officers.

In response, the **police fired tear gas**. 93 police officers received injuries of various degrees of severity. More than 60 protesters were detained.



<https://www.merkur.de/welt/berlin-demo-corona-notbremse-infektionsschutzgesetz-news-aktuell-polizei-bundestag-merkel-zr-90468747.html>

On the night of June 20, 2021, in Hamburg and Augsburg, **the police dispersed mass gatherings of people** that were held in violation of quarantine restrictions.

In Augsburg, in particular, when the police urged the participants of the event to disperse, clashes broke out, as a result of which **there were casualties on both sides**. The police said that about 200 objects were thrown at law enforcement officials, the windshield of an ambulance was damaged.



<https://www.dpa-international.com/topic/police-disperse-hundreds-revellers-north-south-germany-urn%3Anewsml%3Adpa.com%3A20090101%3A210620-99-70615>

The German authorities continue to put pressure on the freedom and independence of the media. The German Ministry of Justice, in particular, threatens **to block and fine „Telegram” if the company refuses to cooperate with the authorities on the removal of unlawful content.**

GREECE

*Standing invitation to special procedures
since 2001.*

*11 visits for the mentioned period,
the last one was held in 2019.*

*Prohibition of torture – 118 recommendations
Right to peaceful assembly – 4 recommendations*

For Greece the problem with migrants remains a pressing issue. To prevent them from entering the country the Greek authorities create **numerous physical and virtual barriers** at borders. One of them is acoustic device – non-lethal weapon designed by the American Technology Corporation to disperse manifestations.

Greece was hit by a wave of national protests in the first half of 2021.

In January, 2021, thousands of people took to the streets of Athens to protest against the labour bill. The protesters carried banners reading «We demand the right to work and life!». According to trade unionists, the Greek authorities actually want to renounce the eight-hour working day, the five-day working week, and collective agreements, thereby taking away the remaining rights of workers.

In January, 2021, the meeting against restrictive measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic took place. Protestors gathered at Syntagma Square and song the national anthem. Many of the protesters carried the national Greek flag. **Police used tear gas to disperse the crowd. Several people were detained.**

*Following international commitments
have been violated:*

ICCPR

art. 7 (freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment)

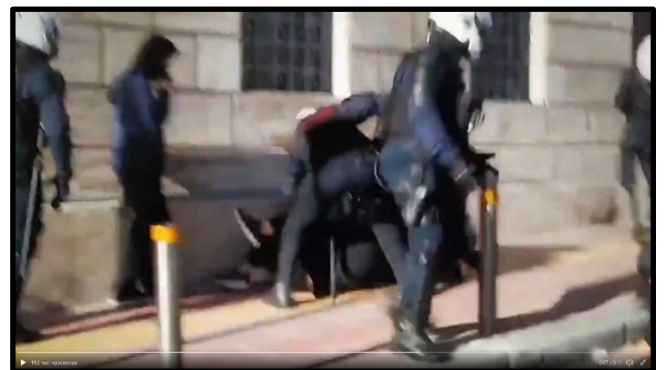
art. 21 (the right to peaceful assembly)



<https://rg.ru/2021/02/15/v-grecii-protestuiushchie-zakidali-policejskih-apelsinami.html>

It was reported that the police used **excessive force against the detained students, who were already in handcuffs**. Dozens of protesters were arrested.

On February 10, 2021, in Athens, police again **used tear gas and stun grenades** against protesters who took to the streets to express their opinion on the new education bill.



<https://twitter.com/kinimatini/status/1359511839302893568>

On March 7, 2021, in Athens, special police unit toughly detained a young man under the pretext of threatening them, **beating him with batons**.

The incident sparked protests against police violence with more than 5 thousand participants in total. To disperse the protesters police used **tear gas, water cannons and stun grenades**.

On March 9, 2021, the protest escalated into a clash with law enforcement officers, when a group of about 200 protesters in masks went to the police station in Nea Smyrni (suburb of Athens). As a result, several police officers were injured, some of the protesters were detained.



<https://twitter.com/ThePressProject/status/1368569669431554051>

ITALY

Standing invitation to special procedures since 2001.

15 visits for the mentioned period, the last one was held in 2020.

*Equality and non-discrimination –
311 recommendations*

Right to health – 92 recommendations

Right to work – 99 recommendations

Right to a fair trial –

122 recommendations

Since the beginning of 2021, about a hundred (accurate figures have not been announced in open sources) Italian doctors, nurses and other workers **have been fired or removed from their professional activities due to their refusal to be vaccinated** against the Covid-19. On March 23, 2021, a court in Belluno (Veneto region) declined to satisfy ten hospital attendants in their claim for illegal dismissal because of their unwillingness to be vaccinated.

On April 6 – 7, 2021, protests took place across Italy against the COVID-19 lockdown. Over 300 participants protested in Rome. **The action turned into clashes** between the activists and the police. As a result, two law enforcement officers were wounded and **seven protesters were arrested**. In Taranto entrepreneurs organised a sit-in protest.

*Right to peaceful assembly – 2
recommendations*

*Freedom of opinion and expression –
36 recommendations*

*Arbitrary arrests and detentions –
22 recommendations*

*Following international commitments
have been violated:*

ICCPR

art. 9 (the right to liberty and security of the person and freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention)

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

art. 21 (the right to peaceful assembly)

Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, **thousands of elderly people have died in Italy's social facilities and nursing homes**. These cases took place in institutions at the national, regional and municipal levels, as it was illustrated in the *Amnesty International's* report «Abandoned».

*Following international commitments
have been violated:*

ICCPR

art. 14 (right to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

ICESCR

art. 6 (right to work)

art. 12 (right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health)



<https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/rus/news/2021/04/7/7121860/>

On April 12, 2021, an unauthorized meeting in Rome with the participation of over 500 people resulted in **the arrest of six protesters** and the **injury of one protestor**. 120 participants were identified by law enforcement agencies.

On the same day **tear gas was used by law enforcers** to disperse protesters in the Val di Susa area.

LATVIA

Standing invitation to special procedures since 2001.

4 visits for the mentioned period, the last one was held in 2012.

Minority rights –

128 recommendations

Freedom of opinion and expression –

16 recommendations

Equality and non-discrimination –

82 recommendations

The rights of linguistic minorities continue to be violated in the country. Thus, the Latvian government has banned the delivery of printed materials on vaccination against COVID-19 in **Russian** to residents.

The scope of teaching in minority languages is decreasing.

A «**requirement of loyalty**» (loyalty to the state) is being imposed on teachers and school principals, which «creates a climate of suspicion and anxiety, which does not contribute to building trust between different segments of society».

In order to indicate ethnicity in the passport it is necessary to provide documents confirming the relationship with the direct ancestor of the certain ethnicity. To change ethnicity to «Latvian» you need to prove the highest level of proficiency in the state language. Such a complicated procedure for changing the ethnicity record can be considered as an exclusion mechanism.

On December 20, 2020, the police dispersed a **peaceful assembly** in Riga near the Freedom Monument, three people were detained, and several administrative cases were initiated.

The Riga authorities banned the peaceful assembly under the pretext of observing epidemiological safety measures. The assembled people were **dispersed by force**.



<https://rus.iauns.lv/article/novosti/419451-policija-zaderzala-trex-ucastnikov-mitinga-vozle-pamyatnika-svobody>



<https://rus.iauns.lv/foto/novosti/40457-nezakonnyi-protest-vozle-pamyatnika-svobody-20-dekabrya-2020-goda#&qid=40457&pid=73>

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

art. 21 (the right to peaceful assembly)

On 3 December, 2020 officers of the Latvian State Security Service **arrested six Latvian journalists** who had collaborated with the Russian editions Sputnik and Baltnews (both are part of the holding international news agency «Russia Today»), against which criminal cases were initiated on charges of violating the EU sanctions regime.

Among the detained are journalist and former editor-in-chief of the Internet portal «Baltnews.lv» Andrei Yakovlev, publicist, public figure and human rights activist Vladimir Linderman, journalists Andrei Solopenko and Alla Berezovskaya. The journalists were searched, their equipment and communication facilities were confiscated. Human rights activist Mr. Linderman, in addition to the confiscation of his phone, had his Facebook and personal e-mail hacked.

On 17 December, 2020 the Riga Vidzeme suburb court sentenced Alexander Gaponenko, who was found guilty of «inciting ethnic hatred using electronic media», as well as inciting to hostility or hatred on the basis of race, ethnicity and nationality (punishment – a year of conditional imprisonment and two years of probation control).

Human rights activist Mr. Gaponenko is a doctor of economics, headed the United Congress of Russian Communities in Latvia, the «Russian Communal Latvia», as well as the «Congress of Non-Citizens», actively opposes the militarization of Latvia and the glorification of Nazism.

Closing access in 2021 to the Monument to the Liberators in Riga, at the foot of which people annually laying flowers on May 9 is a **violation of freedom of expression and the right to peaceful assembly.**

*Following international commitments
have been violated:*

ICCPR

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

Yuri Alekseev, a Latvian journalist, publicist, deputy of the Riga City Council from 2005 to 2009, editor and public figure, has been **under investigation** since December 2017. The reason for the accusation of Mr. Alekseev was his activity on the Internet discussion portal «IMHOclub», which the Security Police of Latvia (SPL) considered an anti-Latvian resource.

During 2017-2018 Mr. Alekseev and his colleague, the moderator of IMHOclub comments Dmitry Sumarokov, were repeatedly detained, **their homes and offices were searched**. And although the court rejected the SPL's petition to arrest them and transfer them to the Riga Central Prison, computers and telephones were confiscated from both of them (repeatedly since the beginning of the criminal prosecution), and a written undertaking not to leave was taken as a measure of restriction. Against Mr. Alekseev the investigator additionally established a full set of restrictive measures, including police supervision (he is obliged to register three times a week at the police station that is 8 km from his home and stay at home from 23.00 to 6.00, which is regularly checked by the police when they come to him at night). In addition to the above, without explaining the reasons, the Latvian bank "Citadele" canceled Mr. Alekseev's current account, which he had for 25 years. After 22 months of investigation, according to the legislation, the above-mentioned preventive measures were automatically removed, while the criminal case against Mr. Alekseev was not terminated.

In October 2020, a Russian citizen, chairman of the Republican Society of Military Veterans, Vladimir Norvind, was deported from Latvia. After 40 years of living in the country with his family, the Latvian authorities canceled his residence permit, placed him in a camp for illegal migrants, where he suffered a heart attack. After that, he ended up in one of the Riga hospitals under the protection of border guards. However, health problems did not interfere with the transportation process – Mr. Norvind was taken out of Latvia and handed over to Russian doctors at the border. **Such a forced and hasty deportation has a sign of political persecution for the professional activities of Mr. Norvind.**

LITHUANIA

Standing invitation to special procedures since 2001.

1 visit for the mentioned period was held in 2007.

Freedom of opinion and expression – 11 recommendations

Right to peaceful assembly – 8 recommendations

Prohibition of torture – 103 recommendations

The protest action "I am Free" against massive human rights violations and social injustice in Lithuania took place in Vilnius on December 5, 2020 and **was violently suppressed by the police** under the pretext of the ban on visiting public places for groups of more than 2 people.

The reason for the protest action was the introduction of severe restrictions due to the threat of the spread of COVID-19. Some protesters were detained.

The protest organizer, Mr. Pranas Valickas, a 67-year-old publicist and human rights activist, was detained by the police and accused of organizing mass disorder, but was soon released under a pledge not to leave.



<https://www.tv3.lt/naujiena/lietuva/sujudimas-vilniaus-centre-skanduotes-fasistai-ir-protesto-dalyviu-sulaikymas-n1071235#88706-1843389>



https://baltnews.lt/freedom_of_speech/20201211/1020438195/U-kozo-grazhdanskaya-pozitsiya--te-pod-katok-repressiy-O-narushenii-svobody-slova-v-Litve.html

On February 17, 2021 **police officers, using special means, brutally detained a protester** in Daukantas square in Vilnius. According to the law-enforcement authorities' information, protesters did not keep social distance, and the detainee refused to introduce himself. When detained, the protester suffered from pain, physical violence, including handcuffs, were used.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCwx0gSKKWE>



Following international commitments have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 7 (freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment)

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

art. 21 (the right to peaceful assembly)

Equality and non-discrimination – 137 recommendations

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status))

Algirdas Paleckis – is a lithuanian journalist, former leader of the Socialist People's Front and the Vice-Mayor of Vilnius, is accused of spying for Russia as part of an organized group. He was imprisoned from October 2018 to April 2020. Since April 2020 Mr. Paleckis has been under intensive supervision on 50,000-euro bail, the identity documents have been confiscated. The Paleckis case is considered to be the most resonant case of human rights violations in Lithuania. Rallies in support of the detained politician have been repeatedly organized in several countries near the embassies of Lithuania.

Aleksey Greichus, a social activist, leader of Russian-speaking youth organization «Yuvenus», coordinator of «Immortal Regiment» march in Klaipeda city, was detained on March 4, 2020. His place of residence was searched. According to the information of the Prosecutor-General's Office of Lithuania, Aleksey Greichus is accused of spying for Russia. Russian-speaking political parties and public organizations of Lithuania consider the detention

of Mr. Greichus as **an activists hunting and as an attempt to suppress dissent.**

In the beginning of December, 2020 Eva Jonauskienė, the member of the Socialist People's Front, was subjected to the criminal proceedings under article 170 of the Criminal Code of Lithuania («incitement to hatred»). Ms. Jonauskienė in her articles criticized state's leaders for a tough policy of juvenile justice: the removal of children from their families and sending them to orphanages. Ms. Jonauskienė stated that she was being threatened, including by special services officers.

On March 31, 2021 the Court of Appeal of Lithuania imposed a politically motivated additional sentence of 3 years' imprisonment for Russian citizen Yury Mel. The execution of imprisonment on the previous conviction (seven-year prison term) expired on March 11, 2021.

Administration of justice and fair trial – 43 recommendations

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 14 (right to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

NETHERLANDS

*Standing invitation to special procedures
since 2001.*

*8 visits for the mentioned period,
the last one was held in 2019.*

*Freedom of opinion and expression –
11 recommendations*

*Right to peaceful assembly – 8 recommendations
Prohibition of torture – 103 recommendations*

On January 17, 2021 about 2,000 people gathered on Museumplein in Amsterdam for an unauthorized rally to protest against the government's COVID-19 response policy, and against the scandal with the repayment of child welfare benefits. To disperse the protesters, **the police used special equipment, batons and water cannons.** The protesters were removed from the square to the nearest streets by the mounted police. Some of the protesters were injured, 143 people were detained.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GX01wmC5ACI>



<https://www.euronews.com/2021/03/14/dutch-police-break-up-anti-government-protest-ahead-of-election>

On March 20 and 21, 2021 unauthorized manifestations of anti-lockdown protesters took place in Amsterdam. The rallies were prompted by information that in connection with the third wave of the pandemic restrictive measures will not be relaxed anytime soon. On March 20, 1,400 **protesters were driven out of the Museumplein with water cannons**, and 58 protesters were detained. When the rest moved to another site, the police surrounded the group and did not allow them to disperse for several hours

«for security reasons», after which **the protesters were relocated on buses.** The police commented that this was not a detention. The unauthorized action on March 21, 2021 took place at the same site was dispersed again.

On January 25, 2021, after the introduction of a curfew and toughening of restrictions on entry to the Netherlands, protests were held in ten cities, resulting in about 250 people arrested. To disperse the protestors, **the Dutch police used special equipment, batons and water cannons**, some of the protesters were injured.

During clashes in Eindhoven **police used water cannons, batons and tear gas against protesters** who were throwing stones at them. In Amsterdam, more than 100 people were detained by law enforcement officers for participating in the protests. **Police used water cannons and batons** to disperse protesters.

*Following international commitments
have been violated:*

ICCPR

*art. 7 (freedom from torture, inhuman
or degrading treatment)*

*art. 19 (freedom of opinion and
expression)*

art. 21 (the right to peaceful assembly)



<https://twitter.com/operationthewig/status/1353895085675524097?s=20>

On May 8, an unauthorized manifestation by opponents of the lockdown, initiated by the «Police or Freedom», took place in Barneveld. More than 800 people took part in the march. The protesters tried to throw stones at the police after which they were dispersed. During the event **a man on a crosswalk was hit by a police bus.**

About 100 people were arrested during the pro-Palestine protest in Utrecht on May 14, 2021, most were released on May 15, with the exception of one person who remained in custody for throwing stones at a police officer. All detainees received fines for failure to adhere to coronavirus measures and non-compliance with police orders to disperse.

The National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Violence against Children has published a study that concludes that the Netherlands is making less efforts to combat sexual, labor and criminal exploitation, despite the increase in such crimes. In 2019, only 60% of cases went to court, the main reason for which is the lack of evidence, which is associated with the reduction of the police and prosecutorial service. According to the study, the annual number of victims in the Netherlands is between 5 to 7.5 thousand people.

In recent years, the Netherlands has seen **a significant increase in anti-Semitic incidents** such as verbal abuse, intimidation and, at times, violence, according to the Netherlands-based Center for Information and Documentation Israel (CIDI).

*Equality and non-discrimination –
247 recommendations*

*Following international commitments
have been violated:*

ICCPR

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

NORWAY

Standing invitation to special procedures since 1999.

6 visits for the mentioned period, the last one was held in 2019.

*Administration of justice and fair trial –
77 recommendations*

*Freedom of opinion and expression –
23 recommendations*

*Arbitrary arrests and detentions –
17 recommendations*

Right to peaceful assembly – 10 recommendations

The period of lockdown in Norway was characterized by numerous restrictions on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of movement. Further restrictions on movement were imposed by many municipalities, which prohibited the crossing of municipal boundaries.

In a joint article by Professor Malcolm Langford and Professor Kristin Bergtora Sandvik, «Norway and the COVID-19 Lockdown», it is noted that lockdown influenced **the exercise of rights in court**.

Social distancing has resulted in the physical closure of courts, and the introduction of digital legal procedures has been slow. In practice, this meant «legal distancing»: a great regulatory rush to pass numerous emergency laws on the one hand and an institutional slowdown in the mechanisms of due process and bureaucratic decision-making on the other.

On September 21, 2020, 54 activists of Extinction Rebellion were arrested in Oslo during a «civil disobedience action» in the city center. Many protesters received fines for blocking traffic on the road. 53 of them did not agree paying the fine to the police. In December 2020, four people **were convicted** by the Oslo District Court and received a fine of 13,000 NOK (about 1,300 euros).

*Equality and non-discrimination –
247 recommendations*

Racial discrimination – 182 recommendations

Indigenous peoples' rights – 117 recommendations

Right to education – 96 recommendations

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICESCR

art. 13 (right to education)

ICCPR

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 14 (right to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal)

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

art. 21 (the right to peaceful assembly)

Among the Sami, especially male population, the percentage of people with higher education is lower than the national average. The same tendencies are monitored in the secondary education sector (not all Sami complete their studies). According to human rights reports, the level of violence in the Sami society is rather high. Up to 45% of the Sami have ever been subjected to violence (compared to 29% in the rest of Norway). The indicators characterizing the level of discrimination against the Sami in various spheres look even worse – the Sami sources point to a 10-fold increase in comparison with discrimination among the Norwegian population (35% versus 3.5%). Cases are being reported of a **negative attitude towards the Sami** in social networks and the media.

In July 2020, the director of public prosecutions declined to bring a case to the Supreme Court after a court of appeals in March acquitted three men of hate speech charges arising from a 2018 incident when they raised a Nazi flag outside the site of a World War II Gestapo headquarters.

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICERD

art. 4 (commitment to adopt immediate and positive measures designed to eradicate all incitement to, or acts of, racial discrimination; commitment to declare illegal and prohibit organizations, which promote and incite racial discrimination)

POLAND

Standing invitation to special procedures since 2001.

9 visits for the mentioned period, the last one was held in 2018.

Freedom of opinion and expression – 71 recommendations

Right to peaceful assembly – 10 recommendations

Prohibition of torture – 298 recommendations

Arbitrary arrests and detentions – 20 recommendations



<https://twitter.com/ODFoundation/status/1351998152430260227>



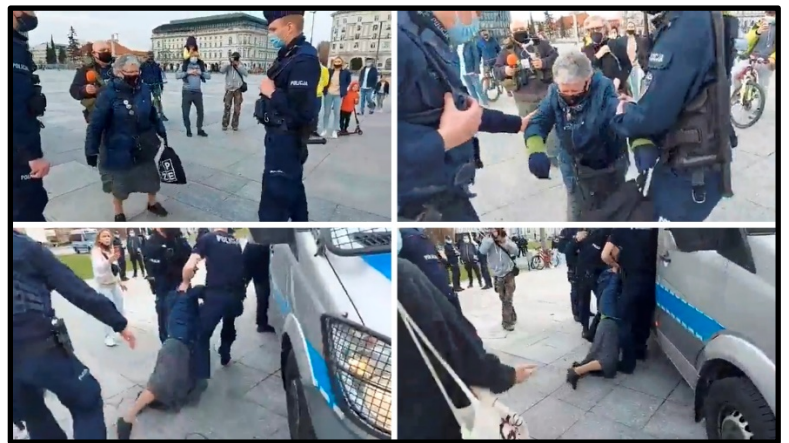
<https://twitter.com/ObywateleRP/status/1352013986561224708>

On November 28, 2020, a number of manifestations took place in Warsaw with the participation of several thousand people, against whom **the police used gas and physical force**. An identification procedure was carried out «on the spot» towards more than 900 people. Information on violations of sanitary and epidemiological measures in relation to 450 people was sent to the Sanitary Inspectorate. 11 people were detained.

An activist Katarzyna Augustynek who is broadly known as «Babcia Kasia» («Granny Kasia»), has been regularly detained during protests by law enforcement officers with the use of force.



<https://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/7,114883,26559769,polska-babcia-zatrzymana-w-czasie-protestu-otrzymala-zarzut.html>



<https://twitter.com/lotnabrygada/status/1381275598031585280>

On January 20, 2021, in Warsaw, as part of the Women's Strike campaign against restriction of abortion, manifestations were held with the participation of, according to media reports, about a hundred people. A number of central streets were blocked. **Police officers used tear gas and physical force** to quell the riots. According to information from the Warsaw police, several people were detained.

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 7 (freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment)

art. 9 (the right to liberty and security of the person and freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention)

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

art. 21 (the right to peaceful assembly)



<https://news-front.info/2021/04/13/v-polshe-policziya-izbila-zhenshinu-zanarushenie-masochnogo-rezhima/>

On February 19, 2021, in the central part of Warsaw, as part of the continued Women's Strike campaign, an action «Silence is not consent» was held with the participation of about 80 people. Activists blocked traffic at a busy intersection. Clashes took place with police officers who tried to push the protesters onto the sidewalk. One of the activists M.Dombrowska was detained and taken to the police station.

On February 20, 2021 in large Polish cities, mass protest actions of the Corona-deniers took place (the so-called «Marches of freedom»). The largest number of participants in the marches was noted in cities such as Wroclaw, Poznan, Zielona Gora (about 80 people in each case). The police carried out video recording and identification of the participants in the actions on the grounds of the violation of epidemiological restrictions.

On March 20, 2021, a protest action «Freedom March» was held in Warsaw against the quarantine measures imposed by the Polish government in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic. About 400 people, a significant part of whom were without protective masks, attended the rally. Clashes broke out between protesters and police officers. The police used direct coercive measures, such as **physical force, truncheons, stun grenades and tear-gas**. About 15 protesters were detained for insulting and encroaching on the physical integrity of police officers, as well as for possession of drugs. Amid confrontations, two female police officers were seriously injured and taken to hospital.

During the action, police officers **interfered with the work of a journalist** of «OKO.press» Internet portal Mr. Piasecki, who covered the event.

On May 31, 2021 Janusz Niedzwiecki, a **Polish journalist, civic activist and human rights defender was detained with the use of force** on a trumped-up charge of «espionage». Relatives and lawyers are not allowed to see the journalist. Relatives suspect that Janusz is being tortured to extract confessions and incriminate himself. The official wording of the Polish investigation [that he was] «establishing contacts» actually means a simple journalistic request for an interview and comment. Janusz Niedzwiecki faces up to 10 years in prison.



<https://eadaaily.com/ru/news/2021/06/10/izvestnyy-politolog-zaderzhan-v-polshe-po-podozreniyu-v-shpionazhe-v-polzu-rossii>

***Following international commitments
have been violated:***

ICCPR

art. 7 (freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment)

art. 9 (the right to liberty and security of the person and freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention)

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

ROMANIA

Standing invitation to special procedures since 2001.

12 visits for the mentioned period, the last one was held in 2020.

Prohibition of torture – 50 recommendations

Equality and non-discrimination – 129 recommendations

Minority rights –

230 recommendations



<https://media.alephnews.ro/2021/03/jandarmi-protest-bucuresti-1024x683.jpg>

On March 26, 2021, members of the metro workers' trade union (USLM) held a spontaneous protest, blocking the Bucharest metro and thus disrupting public transport in the city. Protesters occupied the tracks at Piata Unirii metro station in central Bucharest, blocking trains' traffic. The protest broke out after the management of the metro operator Metrorex established a deadline for closure of the underground commercial premises operated by the trade union's company.

Transport Minister Cătălin Drulă said the protest was illegal, and noted: «Illegal actions are disrupting the life of an entire city. When the interests of the mafia are threatened, a handful of people take action to preserve the privileges and sinecures. »

On March 29, 2021, in Bucharest and a number of other large cities (Timisoara, Braila, Galati, Constanta, Sibiu, Tirgu Jiu, Bacau, Cluj-Napoca, Ploiesti, Brasov), protests were held against further tightening of anti-COVID-19 restrictive measures. Protesters in Bucharest sounded a horn and chanted slogans «Down with the government!». In the capital, the manifestations resulted in clashes with representatives of law-enforcement forces. **The police responded with tear gas.**

As a result, in Bucharest, 188 people were taken to police stations for investigations, 12 gendarmes were injured (three of them went to hospitals, but without serious problems). There were 222 administrative penalties imposed including against 8 organizers of protest actions, amounting more than 200 thousand lei (about 40 thousand Euros).

Clashes between protesters and the police were also registered in Timisoara, Braila, Galati.



<https://www.agerpres.ro/foto/watermark/14095258?author=SILVIU+MATEI+%2F+AGERPRES>

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

art. 21 (the right to peaceful assembly)

SLOVAKIA

Standing invitation to special procedures since 2001.

12 visits for the mentioned period, the last one was held in 2020.

Freedom of opinion and expression – 28 recommendations

Prohibition of torture – 127 recommendations

Arbitrary arrests and detentions – 8 recommendations

On October 17, 2020, over a thousand people took part in a protest in front of the building of the Government of the Slovak Republic. During this protest, **police officers used tear gas and a water cannon** to disperse the protesters. There have been reports of detentions and injuries, **including children**, during the dispersal of protesters. Some protesters claim to have been **hit by rubber bullets**. There are also reports of injured police officers.

On 17 November 2020, some 15,000 people took part in an anti-government rally in Bratislava. There were reports of protesters being detained and **tear gas being used by the police**. One police officer was injured during the protests and two protesters were taken to hospital with head injuries.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hpgPvy5Ex-4>

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 7 (freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment)

art. 9 (the right to liberty and security of the person and freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention)

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

art. 21 (the right to peaceful assembly)

On 12 December 2020, on the anniversary of the Velvet Revolution, several hundred people protested in Hodžovo Square in front of the residence of the President of the Slovak Republic. During the protest, **the police detained 12 people**, three of whom were previously suspected of drug trafficking and manifestations of extremism. Other individuals violated the Law on the Right of Assembly (a ban on organising meetings of more than six people was in force).

According to *Amnesty International's* report «COVID-19: Pandemic and Police Abuse», Slovak state security authorities cordoned off the entire territory of the most marginalised Roma communities and placed their residents under forced quarantine. It further increased social tensions and prejudice that these communities already face from the majority of the population.

In Slovakia, **military personnel were involved** in quarantining Roma informal settlements to ensure that populations subjected to mandatory collective quarantine did not leave the designated area. Soldiers were also called upon to assist in nationwide coronavirus testing in Roma settlements, and **were armed with weapons**, which should only be used in the most dangerous cases and have no place in civilian oversight.

Racial discrimination – 252 recommendations

Equality and non-discrimination – 252 recommendations

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 7 (freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

ICESCR

art. 12 (right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health)

SPAIN

Standing invitation to special procedures since 2001.

11 visits for the mentioned period, the last one was held in 2020.

Prohibition of torture – 270 recommendations

Right to peaceful assembly –

23 recommendations

Freedom of opinion and expression –

56 recommendations

Following international commitments have been violated:

CAT

art. 2 (prevention of acts of torture)

art. 4 (criminal prosecution of any person which constitutes complicity or participation in torture)

According to independent evaluations about 4 thousands of people staged a manifestation next to the doors of the Parliament in Palma de Mallorca (Balearic Islands) on January 12, 2021, as a protest against the new restrictive measures of the authorities in response to the spread of coronavirus infection, which had led to the closure of bars, restaurants and gyms and posed further deterioration of the social and economic situation of the local population.

As a result of clashes with the police, **a young woman was injured**. The protesters said **she was hit with a police baton**. According to the police, their officers intervened in the conflict between the driver and the protesters, the scuffle followed in the course of which the woman fell and bumped. The manifestation was dispersed by the police.



https://s0.rbk.ru/v6_top_pics/resized/590xH/media/img/6/51/756137184220516.jpg

In February 2021 at least 80 people were arrested and more than 100 were injured during protests which escalated into violence in several Spanish cities. The protests began peacefully late Wednesday, February 17, in several Spanish provincial capitals and other towns in the northeastern of Catalonia region, home to the rapper Pablo Hasél. Later they turned violent with riots, impromptu barricades made from trash containers, fires, and damage to shops.



https://s0.rbk.ru/v6_top_pics/resized/590xH/media/img/2/81/756137180763812.jpg

In Madrid, Barcelona and other cities, anti-riot police **fired rubber or foam bullets at protesters**, who threw things at officers and fired trash containers. In Barcelona, as a result of the use of rubber bullets when dispersing

a crowd, one person suffered severe injury – he **lost an eye**. In the Spanish capital alone, police detained 19 people, including six minors. In Barcelona, 29 people were arrested and at least eight were injured and taken to hospitals.

*Equality and non-discrimination –
311 recommendations
Right to a fair trial –
161 recommendations*

***Following international commitments
have been violated:***

ICCPR

art. 14 (right to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

Spanish courts imposed criminal sanctions on political grounds. For example, in October 2019 the Spanish Supreme Court imposed a sentence on 12 Catalan politicians for the organization of a referendum on the independence of Catalonia.

Former Deputy Prime Minister of Catalonia Oriol Junqueras received the longest term of imprisonment – 13 years in prison and that much he cannot hold elective and public office. Former advisers to the Catalan government, Raul Romeva, Jordi Turul and Dolors Bassa, were sentenced to 12 years in prison, and they are also banned from holding certain positions.

All four were convicted for organizing of seditious and embezzlement of public funds.

SWEDEN

Standing invitation to special procedures since 2001.

7 visits for the mentioned period, the last one was held in 2018.

Freedom of opinion and expression –

61 recommendations

Prohibition of torture – 151 recommendations

Arbitrary arrests and detentions –

18 recommendations

On March 6, 2021, according to the leading Swedish media «Sveriges Television», «Dagens Nyheter», «Aftonbladet», about 600 people took part in a manifestation in central Stockholm against “restrictive anti-epidemic measures”. The police forcibly removed 50 people by police buses from the place of the manifestation to remote metro stations, 2 persons were detained. The administration of the Stockholm region requested the imposition of a fine on the organizer of the event in the amount of 20,000 Swedish kronor (approximately 2,000 euros).

On March 20, 2021, manifestations against the restrictions were held in three major Swedish cities: Stockholm (approximately 300 participants), Gothenburg (approximately 300 participants), and Malmo (approximately 200 participants). The police prevented all three of them. 30 persons were «removed from the manifestation place». In Gothenburg, 5 persons were detained. In Malmo, law enforcement **used mounted police and protective equipment** to disperse the protesters, 4 persons were detained. Regional administration imposed a fine on the organizer of the manifestation in the amount of 50,000 Swedish kronor (approximately 5,000 euros).

On May 1, 2021 the TT News Agency estimated hundreds of people at Norra Bantorget in the central Stockholm during manifestations against the COVID-19 restrictions. Eleven minutes after the start of the manifestation, the police announced that they have decided to dissolve it, as there are more participants than allowed. Four people were fined 30,000 Swedish kronor (approximately 3,000 euros) because they were identified as the organizers of the manifestation.

In January-February 2021, the Swedish press reported cases of police conducting **body searches of minors** in public places, without explaining the reasons and informing parents.

Earlier, in November 2020, a proposal was submitted to the Government that would give police officers more opportunities to, among other things, frisk children under the age of 15.

Equality and non-discrimination –

236 recommendations

Racial discrimination – 297 recommendations

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 20 (any advocacy of national, racial and religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

Report on anti-Semitism and the Jewish minority in schools, gymnasiums, and evening education institutions published by Malmo City Council caused a wide response in the Swedish media. It was noted that «in principle, all interviewed Jewish students reported hate crimes in the form of physical and verbal attacks, and teachers have insufficient knowledge about the life of Jews in Malmo, as well as about how conspiracy theories are related to anti-Semitism».

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 9 (the right to liberty and security of the person and freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention)

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

art. 21 (the right to peaceful assembly)

Following international commitments have been violated:

CRC

art. 3 (the best interests of the child)

On February 7, 2021, the leading Swedish newspaper Dagens Nyheter published an appeal of the Swedish Association of Judges entitled «The independence of judges must be strengthened by the Judicial Council». The article notes that «there is no Judicial Council in Sweden. Instead, there is a government agency – the Swedish National Courts Administration. This body is responsible for the judicial administration and accountable to the Government. This is a risky construction. The protection of the rule of law, and the independence of judges is weak. The Swedish National Courts Administration determines the salaries of newly appointed judges and heads of courts and can thereby influence the salaries of individual judges. The Administration can indirectly control the ability of judges to make decisions through its authority to form the data systems used in the courts. »

*Administration of justice and fair trial –
91 recommendations*

*Following international commitments
have been violated:*

ICCPR

art. 14 (right to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal)

On February 9, 2021, Dagens Nyheter published a critical article «Swedish democracy is threatened with allegations of electoral irregularities». It points out that «according to the data of the Swedish Election Authority, the number of complaints registered after the general elections (Riksdag, regional and municipal) in 2018 was the highest ever. The Authority received 723 complaints».

On April 26, 2021, the leading Swedish media Sveriges Radio published the critical article «Convicted without understanding». The article notes that «the Swedish legal system differs from almost all other countries because in the 1960s the concept of imputability was removed. This means that people are not excluded from responsibility for crimes because they have not had the ability to understand what they have done, due, for example, a mental illness or mental retardation». The National Quality Registry for Forensic Psychiatry has produced figures that show that by 2020 there were around 30 persons with moderate intellectual disability who were enrolled in forensic psychiatry. «Swedish law focuses more on the sanction to which the person should be sentenced. But your mental illness or disability is not in itself an obstacle to judging you for the crime».

On May 17, 2021, Dagens Nyheter published the article «Unknown and unrepresentative candidates threaten democracy». It is noted that «in Sweden, the elected representatives – both in the parliament and in the regional and municipal councils – are often fairly unknown to the voters. A study by political scientist Henrik Oscarsson on the importance of personal contacts for democracy revealed that approximately 3 and 16 percent of Swedes, respectively, say they are familiar with a member of Parliament or a municipal politician». «In the Riksdag, party discipline governs when the MPs are to vote. It is unique that members vote individually in a way that differs from the party's decision. Members of the Riksdag perceive themselves as mechanisms for pushing the buttons, not as independent representatives of the electorate. <...> Another problem is that in today's Parliament only two members are older than 75. They make up 0.5 per cent of the members of the Riksdag, which means that about 15 per cent of the voters are unrepresented in terms of age. In addition, individuals with disabilities are virtually unrepresented in the elected bodies».

UNITED KINGDOM

*Standing invitation
to special procedures since 2001.
21 visits for the mentioned period,
the last one was held in 2019.*

Over 75% of Black people do not believe their human rights are equally protected compared to white people. The death rate for Black women in childbirth is five times higher than for white women. Over 60% of Black people do not believe their health

is as equally protected by the NHS compared to white people. In 2019/20, 105,090 **hate crimes** were recorded by the police. This is 8% more than in 2018/19.

In May 2020, **police used of force on a black female student**. The woman was arrested on suspicion of obstructing a drug search and was subjected to a strip-search in the presence of male officers. She was punched repeatedly in the face while on the floor during the arrest and a male officer buried his knee on her neck. The charges against the woman were later dropped. 8 police officers were reported to be under investigation after the incident. The video with the beating became widespread on the Internet.

*Following international commitments
have been violated:*

ICCPR

art. 7 (freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

In March 2020, travellers and people who live in vans set up a camp in Bristol to protest against a new Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, which on their opinion criminalizes a nomadic lifestyle. People joined the protest to defend the rights of Travellers and Roma. **The police destroyed the camp**, ripping down banners and tents. Peaceful protesters were **violently dispersed with the use of dogs, horses and drones**.

On 5 November 2020, during anti-lockdown manifestation, **police restricted the freedom of the media**. Journalists and photographers covering the rally in Trafalgar Square were told by the police officers to leave the place of the manifestation and threatened with arrest. Officers told to reporters that they have to present special permissions from the Metropolitan police.



<https://www.reuters.com/news/picture/thousands-protest-against-uk-policing-bi-idUSRTXAXCKS>

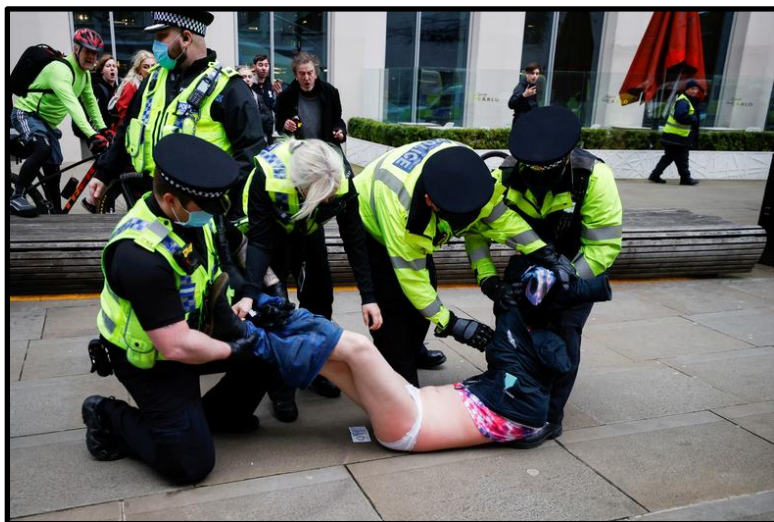
Police also told the journalists that they were part of the protest because the rally is not unlawful. Photographers reported showing accredited press cards but these had been ignored. The Society of Editors said police showed an alarming disregard of the principles of a free media.

Police arrested 190 anti-lockdown protesters, with one potentially facing a £10,000 fine, which can be given to organizers of large gatherings. The other 189 are being investigated for breaching the new COVID-19 regulations which can be punished with a £200 fixed penalty notice, reduced to £100 if paid within 14 days, which doubles on every offence up to a maximum of £6,400.

In March 2021, **police used batons and shields** to disperse demonstrators protesting against the Police, Crime, Sentences and Courts Bill.

A journalist for The Daily Mirror Mr. Dresch suffered from police actions. In his Twitter account, the journalist posted a video filming a police officer hitting him as he shouted «What are you doing? I'm press».

In case of its adoption the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill will enhance the powers of police in the sphere of maintaining order during manifestations and introduce additional restrictions for their participants.



<https://www.reuters.com/news/picture/thousands-protest-against-uk-policing-bi-idUSRTXAXCKS>

Right to peaceful assembly – 78 recommendations

Prohibition of torture – 150 recommendations

Following international commitments have been violated:

ICCPR

art. 7 (freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment)

art. 9 (the right to liberty and security of the person and freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention)

art. 19 (freedom of opinion and expression)

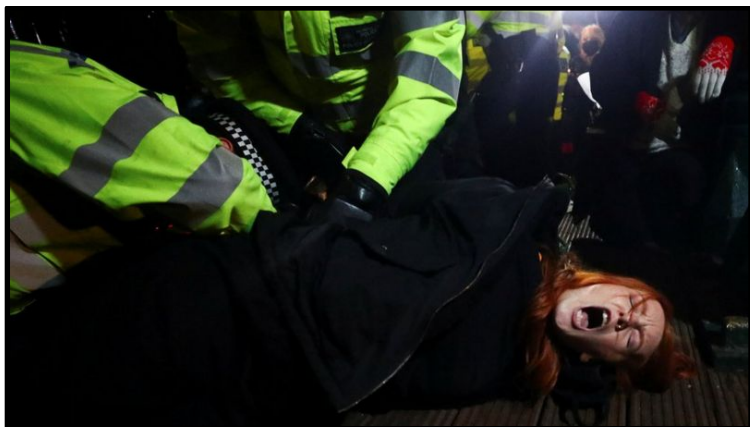
art. 21 (the right to peaceful assembly)

CAT

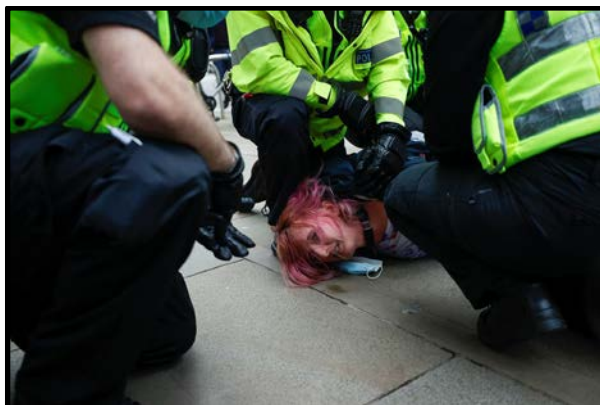
art. 2 (prevention of acts of torture)

art. 4 (criminal prosecution of any person which constitutes complicity or participation in torture)

In March 2021, in London, police used force to disperse a peaceful rally in memory of Sarah Everard. The rally was cancelled by the authorities due to COVID-19 restrictions. The police **forcefully took out the women** who had taken part in the rally. Some of them were handcuffed. After the footage of the dispersal of the manifestation began to circulate on social media the British police were harshly criticized by users, human rights defenders and politicians. The footage of the detention of activist Patsy Stevenson, who was pinned to the ground, provoked a particular resonance.



<https://www.businessinsider.com/boris-johnson-outlaw-protests-that-are-noisy-or-cause-annoyance-2021-3?amp;r=US&IR=T>



<https://www.reuters.com/news/picture/thousands-protest-against-uk-policing-bi-idUSRTXAXCKS>

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No standing invitation to special procedures.

*30 visits for the mentioned period,
the last one was held in 2017.*

Racial discrimination –

340 recommendations

Administration of justice and fair trial –

227 recommendations

Prohibition of torture –

179 recommendations

*Extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary
executions –*

41 recommendations

Arbitrary arrests and detentions –

40 recommendations

Right to peaceful assembly –

24 recommendations

The U.S. military prison at Guantánamo Bay was 19 in January 2021. During this time, 780 prisoners passed through its notorious dungeons. Only eight of them have been pleaded guilty. At the same time, nine of the imprisoned died in this jail facility.

The U.S. **criminal justice system is rife with racial discrimination at every step**, from policing and arrests to bail, sentencing, and incarceration. The United States currently imprisons over two million people, who make up a shocking 22 % of the global prison population, and 60 % are people of colour and ethnic minorities.

Racialized police violence, unequal opportunity, voter suppression, and the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on minority and disadvantaged communities represent **its own serious human rights crisis**.

On 25 May 2020, George Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man, was detained in Minneapolis, tortured and extra judicially executed by Minneapolis Police Department officers who **restrained and suffocated him by holding him on the ground and kneeling on his neck** for almost nine minutes. His treatment by officers of the Minneapolis Police Department constituted torture resulting in his extrajudicial execution.

The officer informed George Floyd that he was being arrested for passing counterfeit currency. When the officers made several attempts to place George Floyd in the back of the police vehicle. During this time, George Floyd stated repeatedly that he could not breathe and that he was in distress. Following the last attempt, he was pulled out of the police vehicle and fell to the ground face first, with his hands still restrained behind his back.

Two officers held George Floyd down by his back and legs respectively, while the third officer kneeled on his neck and head.

George Floyd stated several times: «I can't breathe». In total, 8:46 minutes passed before the officers released their hold when an ambulance arrived, nearly three minutes after George Floyd was last responsive. George Floyd was pronounced dead at the Hennepin County Medical Center.



<https://www.the-sun.com/news/901781/george-floyd-death-cop-derek-chauvin-shoot-another-man-twice/>

Since May 2020, a series of mass manifestations and clashes with the police were held across the country. They began with protests against the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis and were focused on racism and inequality in American society.

In July 2020, in Los Angeles (USA), a protest against growing racism and police violence, which began peacefully in front of the city hall, soon turned into a violent clash between protesters and police officers. Many protesters were detained.



<https://www.ankaramasasi.com/haber/49397/abdde-protestocu-polisin-uzerine-uctu>



<https://www.ankaramasasi.com/haber/49397/abdde-protestocu-polisin-uzerine-uctu>

On March 13, 2020 Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old Black woman who worked as an Emergency Medical Technician **was shot and killed in her own home** by officers of the Louisville Metropolitan Police Department (LMPD). Breonna Taylor and her boyfriend, Kenneth Walker, were asleep in their apartment, when three plainclothes LMPD officers arrived, executing a narcotics search warrant which included a «no knock» provision. Kenneth Walker has stated that the officers never identified themselves before breaching the front door; his statement has been supported by witness. Without knowing who was breaking into their apartment, Kenneth Walker,

a licensed firearm owner, fired a shot in self-defense and struck an officer in the leg.

In response, police opened fire. Breonna Taylor was struck eight times. According to her family, she was alive for several minutes following the shooting, but officers failed to administer first aid and she died from her injuries. Kenneth Walker was arrested and charged with attempted murder and assaulting an officer. The charges were eventually dropped after the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) announced on 21 May that it had opened an investigation into the incident. The officers involved in the shooting were placed on administrative reassignment during the FBI investigation. None of the officers was wearing a body camera during the incident.

On May 30, 2020 Ed Ou, a photojournalist with NBC News, was in a group of about 20 press and photojournalists covering the Minneapolis manifestations. As they stood apart from protesters, **police fired tear gas, pepper spray and percussion grenades** at them and **used batons** while corralling them.

The group was wearing press badges. Ed Ou was wearing a press badge with NBC and its logo visibly marked.



<https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2020/6/16/blinded-arrested-police-attack-journalists-covering-us-protests>

Officers approached the group specifically and escalated the situation by firing percussion grenades. One **exploded directly in front of his face**. As they got closer, they sprayed pepper spray at Ed Ou's face and camera despite the journalists were shouting, «Press, press».

Ed Ou was treated at a nearby hospital, requiring four stitches for his head injury. Ed Ou told *Amnesty International* – «When American security forces can act with this kind of impunity targeting journalists, it sets a very dangerous precedent for press freedoms around the world».

**Following international commitments
have been violated:**

ICCPR

art. 6 (right to life)

art. 7 (freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment)

art. 9 (the right to liberty and security of the person and freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention)

art. 14 (right to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

On June 7, 2020, Aubreanna Inda, a 26-year-old student, **was struck in the chest by a flash grenade** as she and her friends had been distributing food that evening to protesters. Danielle Meehan, an intensive care nurse who was standing at the aid station behind the protesters, said she could smell pepper spray and hear what sounded like bombs exploding everywhere as people started rushing toward the aid station. She was treating four different people – flushing chemical irritants from their eyes and treating welts on their arms and legs from being hit with flash grenades. As Danielle and another medic rushed Aubreanna Inda on a makeshift stretcher out of the aid station, Danielle's medic partner **was hit on his calf with a flash grenade**. They transported Aubreanna Inda in a private car to the hospital because no ambulance would come to them.

On April 14, 2021, The Department of Justice said it **will not pursue criminal charges against the police officer who fatally shot a woman** participating in the January 6 invasion of the U.S. Capitol.

The woman, 35-year-old Ashli Babbitt, was one of five people who died as a result of the invasion of the Capitol by a mob of former President Donald Trump's supporters on January 6, 2021. Babbitt was part of the crowd that gained access to a hallway outside the Speaker's Lobby, which leads to the House chamber. She was shot once by an officer as she tried to climb through the broken glass window of a door to the lobby, which had been barricaded from the inside with furniture. Babbitt was shot in the left shoulder and fell backward onto the floor. She was transported to Washington Hospital Center, where she died.

**Following international commitments
have been violated:**

ICCPR

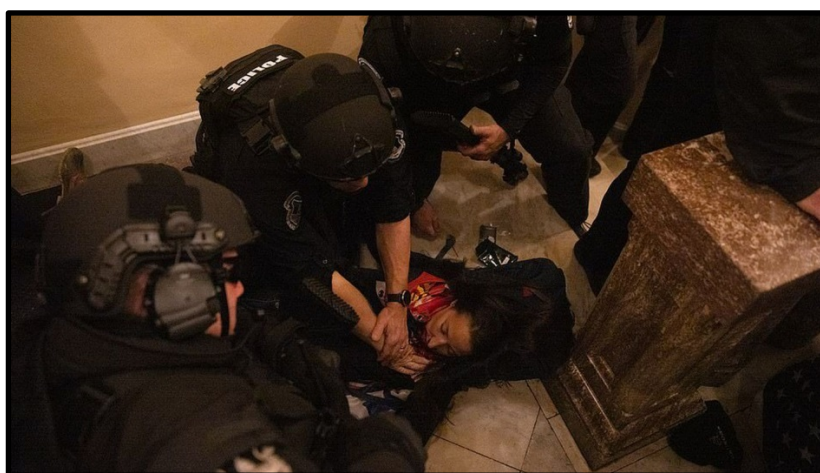
art. 6 (right to life)

art. 9 (the right to liberty and security of the person and freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention)

art. 14 (right to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal)

art. 21 (the right to peaceful assembly)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)



<https://worldtruthvideos.org/embed/hXAFHVR4hEugwb6>

Officials with the Metropolitan Police Department's Internal Affairs Division declared that no criminal charges would be brought against the officer. The Department of Justice's press release said that «the investigation revealed no evidence to establish that, at the time the officer fired a single shot at Ms. Babbitt, the officer did not reasonably believe that it was necessary to do so in self-defense or in defense of the Members of Congress and others evacuating the House Chamber». The U.S. Attorney's Office and U.S. Department of Justice have therefore closed the investigation into this matter.

As of June 11, 2021, the number of charged participants during the attack against the U.S. Capitol has already reached 500. The police and special services actively brought the cases to the courts pertaining to the so-called public enemies. The hearings in the U.S. Congress, where the events held on January 6, in Washington, were immediately described as a national threat and all participants declared as «enemies of the American state» and «domestic terrorists», demonstrated the political motivation for the persecution of the protesters.

According to the Washington Post, a man accused of assaulting a police officer in the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, claims that during last month two guards at the D.C. jail beat him, breaking his nose, **dislocating his jaw and causing him to convulse.**

Other prisoners complained via lawyers about conditions at the D.C. Central Detention Center. Another suspected rioter, Ronald Sandlin, told Justice of the Peace Dabney L. Friedrich that he «was afraid to stay in jail after what happened to Samzel». He said that he had been «threatened with violence there» and that «even that he said about it can lead to violence and revenge».

*Following international commitments
have been violated:*

ICCPR

art. 7 (freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment)

art. 26 (right to equality before the law and equal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status)

CAT

art. 2 (prevention of acts of torture)

According to the Daily Mail, in a Washington, D.C. prison, the Capitol rioters were «treated like domestic terrorists», they were attacked, bullied, and locked «in cells with the size of a closet for up to 24 hours a day». A lawyer for one of the convicted said that the guards had told his client and others involved in the Capitol assault that «the world hates them» and «they will be forgotten», and «they will spend the rest of their lives here».