



Ombudsperson of the Republic of Latvia Annual Report 2025

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Ombudsperson's Address

Dear residents of Latvia, readers of this report!



The year 2025 was marked by change at the Ombudsman's Office, which, in addition to the usual rhythm of work, required the ability to focus on priorities, become more open, and be proactive in assessing where the risks of human rights violations were increasing. The Ombudsman's Office should point them out and encourage the authorities to tackle the causes of the problems in time, rather than fighting their consequences. Given the rapid evolution of the human rights landscape, the Ombudsman and her team must proactively anticipate emerging challenges and strengthen international cooperation.

Human dignity, justice, and trust remain the unwavering guiding principles of the ombudsman's work. The Ombudsman's Office is a reliable pillar to count on; it is there to answer questions, listen to concerns, help and provide the guidance necessary to reach a solution. The Ombudsman's Office must operate with the effectiveness required to earn the trust of both the public administration and the general public.

In accordance with the decision of the Parliament (Saeima), I assumed the duties of ombudsperson on 18 September 2025. In assuming these significant responsibilities, I have established the following as my core priorities: the protection of children's rights; the safeguarding of interests for socially vulnerable groups; ensuring equal access to healthcare; combating violence, particularly domestic violence; and reducing digital exclusion.

The ombudsman ensures that human rights are respected in Latvia and that central and local government bodies adhere to the principles of good governance. Every single application counts. It serves as a warning sign, allowing us to identify the bigger picture: systemic flaws in regulation or practice that are already infringing — or threaten to infringe — upon fundamental rights. This is an opportunity to address violations and drive significant change, ultimately building a more prosperous and law-abiding Latvia.

In reviewing submissions and listening to individual experiences, it becomes evident that the root cause of these issues often lies in prevailing attitudes. When the underlying issue is misunderstood or a citizen feels unheard, the result is a bureaucratic response that is unintelligible to the recipient.

I believe that it is the duty of every public authority and every individual employed therein to ensure good governance, which means prioritizing the good of our country and its people above all else.

I would like to address everyone who works for a government institution or municipal authority, emphasizing the vital role you play in ensuring public safety and well-being. This is our shared responsibility: to uphold empathy, tolerance, and accountability in both our work and our attitudes, for these are the very values that build public trust in our institutions. Circumstances can change rapidly, and any one of us may, at some point, find ourselves in a situation where we require the support, understanding, and timely involvement of others. It is therefore particularly important to be able to hear, understand, and respond responsibly to the needs of our fellow human beings.

While urging others to change, we must also commit to transforming ourselves. I have initiated a series of reforms at the Ombudsman's Office to streamline our work processes, enhance operational efficiency, and make the institution more open and available to the public. I deeply appreciate the efforts of every employee at the Ombudsman's Office and their commitment to being an active part of this transformation. I would like to thank the team at the Ombudsman's Office for their wealth of experience, their commitment to knowledge continuity, and their capacity to adapt and improve. Above all, I am grateful for their patient and professional approach, as they consistently take the time to truly understand each individual's situation

Citizens do not approach the state, specifically through the Ombudsman's Office, without a compelling reason. This happens when there is uncertainty, a sense of injustice, or when there are no other options. It is our duty to safeguard human rights and ensure that state power is exercised lawfully, effectively and in accordance with the principles of good governance.

To conclude my opening remarks, I would like to emphasize that the ombudsman remains independent in the performance of their duties, accountable solely to the law. Independence is an inherent quality and core value of the ombudsman, as established by the legislator. This independence is essential for the institution to function fairly and in full accordance with the principles of human rights and good governance.

May we succeed in truly hearing one another!

Yours sincerely

The Ombudsperson of the Republic of Latvia

Karina Palkova



Activities of the Ombudsman's Office in 2025



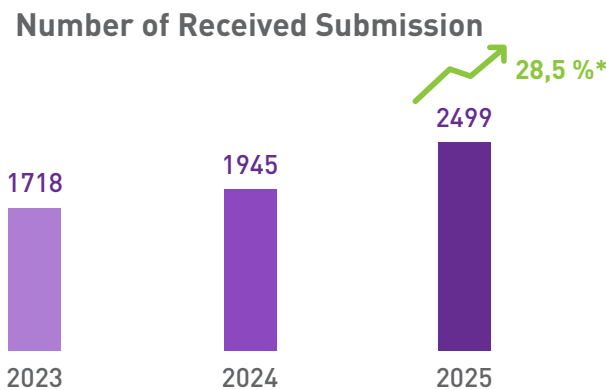
The Ombudsman's Office: the Year in Figures

Submissions

In accordance with Section 12, Paragraph 1 of the Ombudsman Law, the ombudsman accepts and examines submissions of private individuals. The work of the Ombudsman's Office in 2025, particularly during the second half of the year, was defined by a marked increase in public engagement and a heightened focus on the protection of individual rights. The number of submissions received increased by nearly 30% year-on-year (see Figure 1), demonstrating both public confidence in the Ombudsman's Office and a growing commitment among citizens to utilize available human rights protection mechanisms.

Statistics on submissions show a steady upward trend, with an increase of 13% observed as early as 2024 compared to 2023.

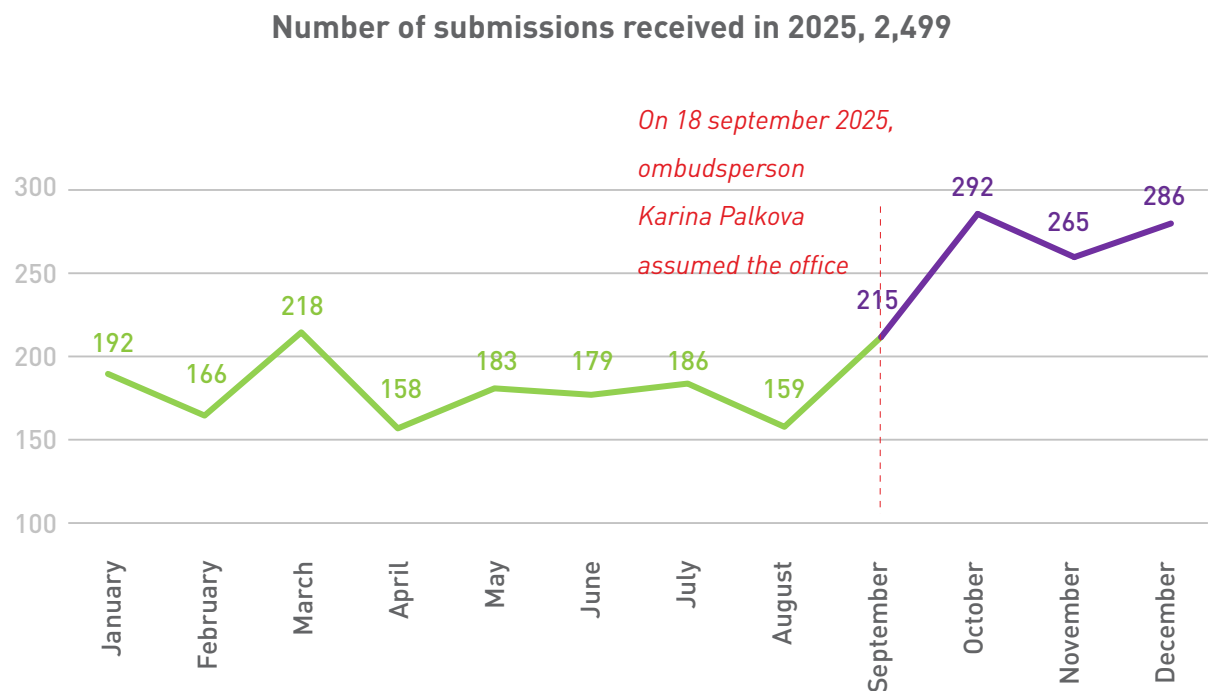
Figure 1



* Compared with 2024

The rise in submissions confirms a previously observed trend: periods following the appointment of a new ombudsman typically see an increase in public engagement with the institution (see Figure 2). During such periods, the public is more inclined both to seek clarification on human rights issues of concern and to request the review of previously examined cases. An additional factor is the heightened media attention accompanying the appointment of a new ombudsman, which encourages residents to utilize the available legal protection mechanisms.

Figure 2

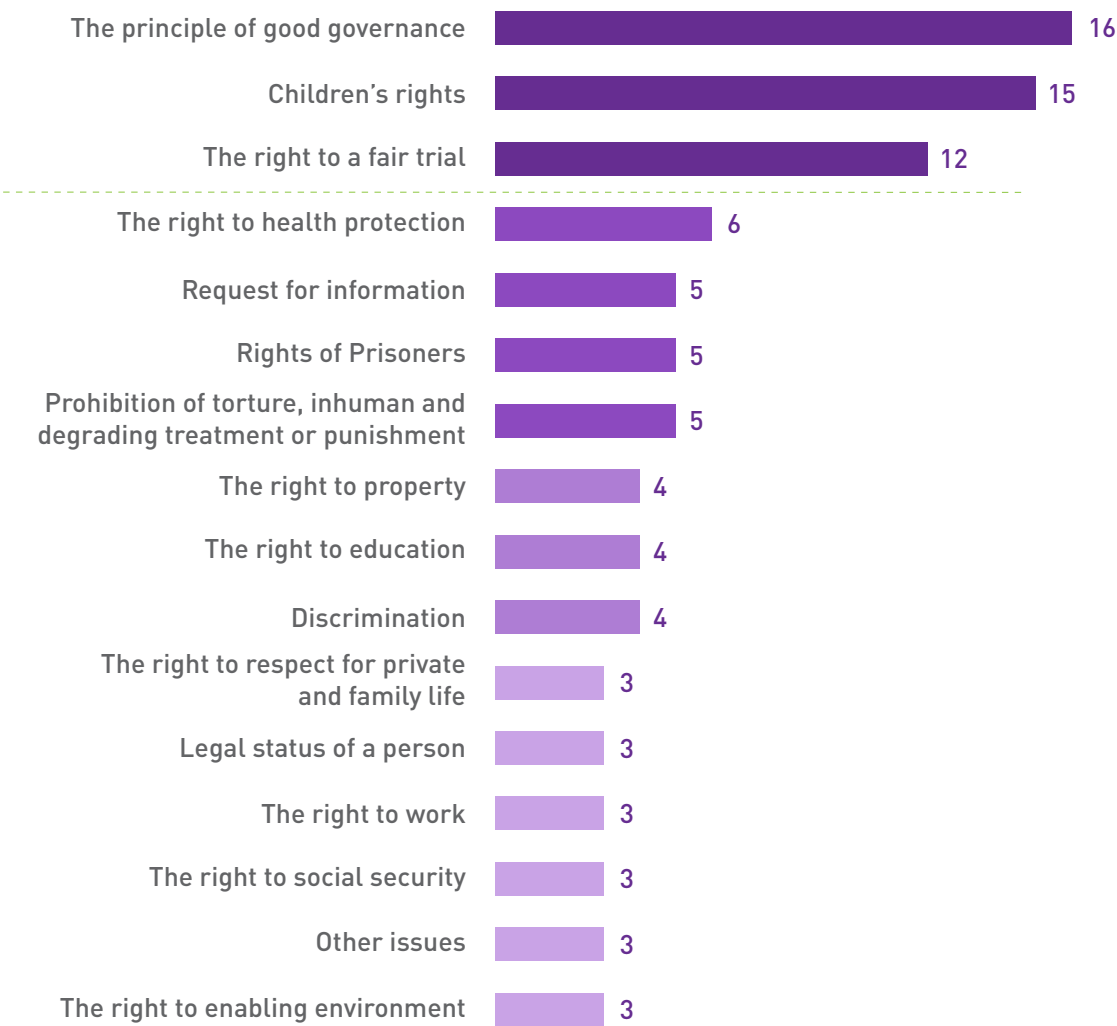


A thematic breakdown of submissions in 2025 (see Figure 3) indicates that issues of good governance predominate (16%), followed by children's rights (15%) and the right to a fair trial (12%). This breakdown indicates that a significant proportion of submissions concerns the quality of work by state and local government institutions and the fairness of their decision-making, while other areas of fundamental rights account for a relatively smaller share of the total. This indicates a relatively concentrated thematic structure.¹

¹ Please note that a single submission may be classified under multiple categories in accordance with the Ombudsman's Office's internal thematic classification.

Figure 3

Breakdown of submission topics, 2025 (%)

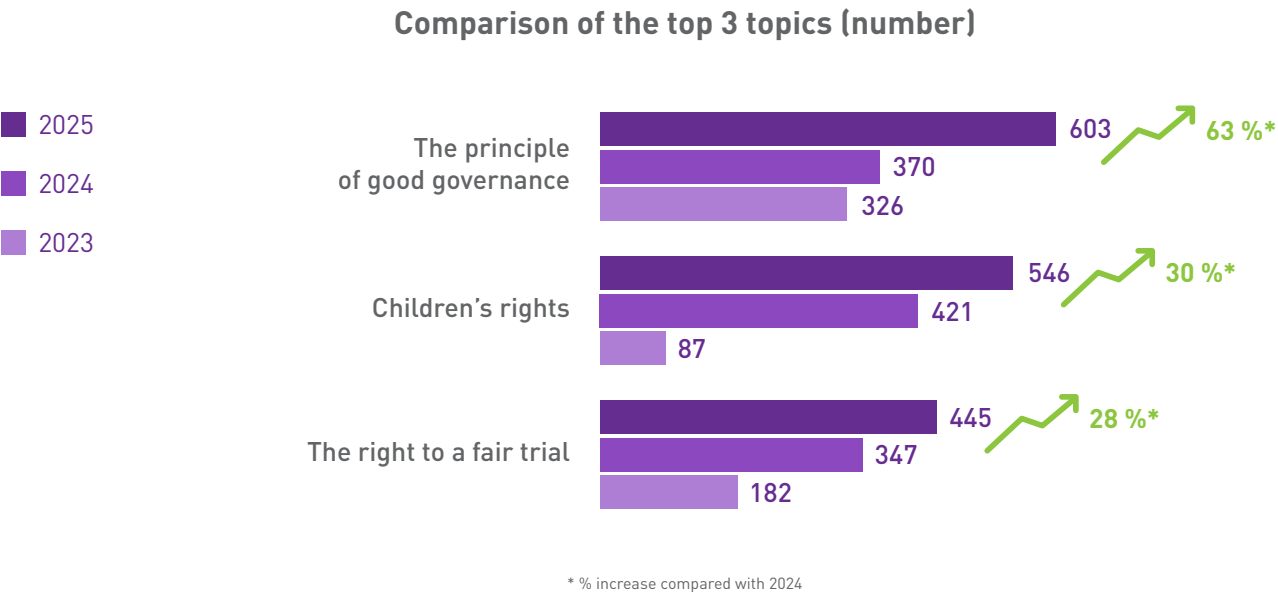


The following topics account for less than 3% of the group:

- The right to housing;
- The right to liberty and security;
- Not subject to the Ombudsman's jurisdiction;
- Rights of people with disabilities;
- Freedom of expression;
- Submissions with unclear content;
- The right to effective protection;
- The right to freely leave and return to country;
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion;
- Eligibility for public service;
- The right to vote and stand for election;
- The right to life;
- Freedom of scientific, artistic and other creative expression;
- Freedom of assembly.

Total number of topics across all submissions: 3,744

Figure 4



The trends in the three dominant topics demonstrate a particularly marked increase (see Figure 4) in the respective areas. The number of submissions regarding good governance grew from 370 cases in 2024 to 603 in 2025. That is an increase of 63%.

Submissions in cases relating to children’s rights increased by 30%, while cases concerning the right to a fair trial saw a 28% increase. This trend reflects not only an increase in the total number of submissions, but also the relevance of specific topics.

A three-year comparison (see Table 1) highlights changes in the most frequently raised issues in submissions. The principles of good governance and the right to a fair trial have remained central over the past three years. Notably, issues concerning the right to a fair trial are gradually gaining prominence, appearing with increasing frequency among the dominant themes of submissions.

Furthermore, in 2024 and 2025, children’s rights gained significant prominence, emerging as one of the primary issues of the year. Consequently, there is a perceptible shift in the landscape of the most frequently raised issues.

Conversely, property rights — a common subject in 2023 — no longer occupy a similarly prominent position at the end of 2025. The overall trend reflects not a fundamental change in the thematic structure, but rather a shift in the relative prominence of issues that have dominated the public discourse in specific years.

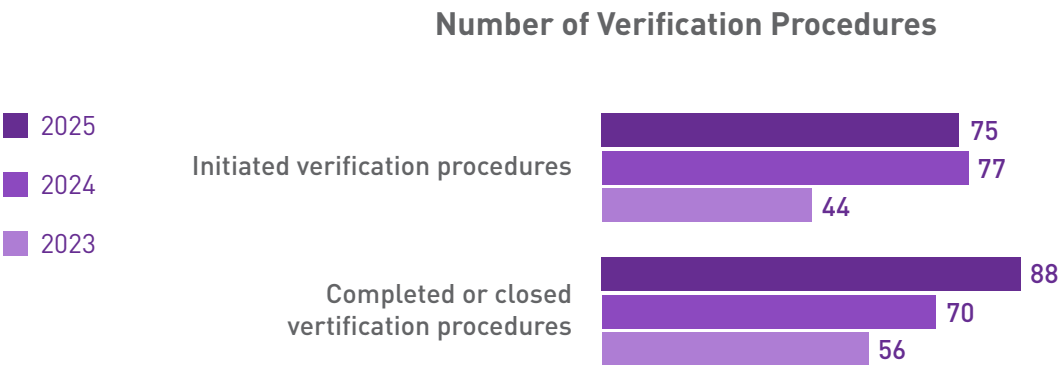
Table 1

2025	Number	% of the total
The principle of good governance	603	16,1
Children's rights	546	14,5
The right to a fair trial	445	11,8
2024		
Children's rights	421	15,1
The principle of good governance	370	13,2
The right to a fair trial	347	12,4
2023		
The principle of good governance	326	16,1
The right to a fair trial	182	9
The right to property	133	6,6

Verification procedures

In accordance with section 12, Paragraph 2 of the Ombudsman Law, the ombudsman has the right to initiate a verification procedure for the clarification of circumstances. Verification procedures are initiated both on the basis of received submissions and on the ombudsman’s own initiative. The purpose of the verification procedure is to assess the specific situation in greater detail.

Figure 6



In 2025, 14 verification procedures were initiated on the ombudsman's own initiative and 61 verification procedures were initiated on the basis of submissions. Statistics regarding verification procedures indicate a significant increase in activity over the last three years. The number of initiated verification procedures rose from 44 in 2023 to 77 in 2024, an increase of approximately 75%. In 2025, the number of initiated procedures remained steady at 75 cases (see Figure 6).

At the same time, there has been a significant increase in the number of verification procedures that have been concluded or closed. While 56 procedures were concluded in 2023, this figure rose to 70 in 2024 and reached 88 by the end of 2025. Over the past two years, the number of concluded procedures has risen by more than 57%, indicating a growing pace in case processing.

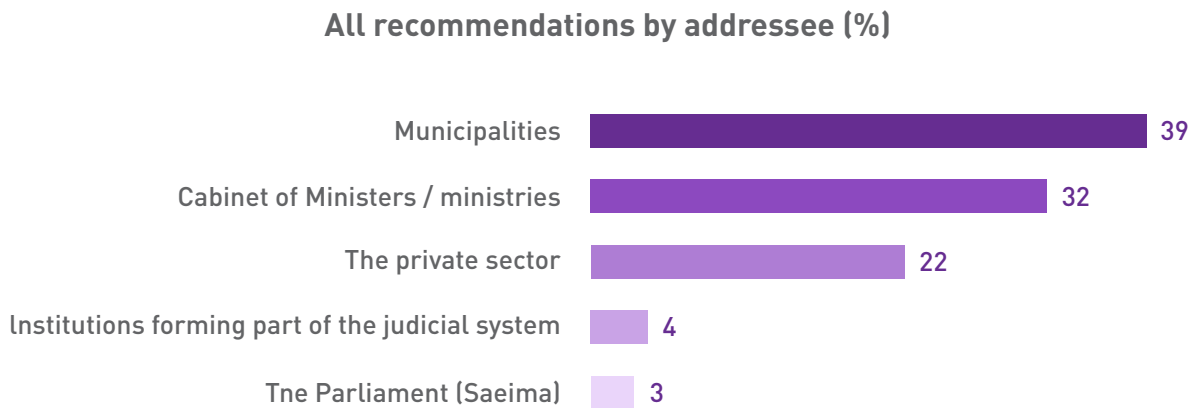
It is noteworthy that in 2025, the number of concluded verification procedures exceeded the number of those initiated. This reflects a focused and systematic approach to addressing procedures initiated in previous periods, as well as a commitment to ensuring their timely completion. This trend indicates a gradual reduction in the backlog of overdue cases and a steady improvement in the efficiency of proceedings. This also reflects the ability of the Ombudsman's Office to effectively plan and balance its resources, ensuring both the examination of new submissions and the drive of previously initiated verification procedures towards the result. In conclusion, this approach promotes both compliance with procedural deadlines and the more effective protection of individual rights. This trend should be viewed in the context of the overall increase in the number of submissions received by the Ombudsman's Office – the number of submissions received in 2025 has risen by just under 30%, which also affects the volume of procedures requiring in-depth assessment.

Recommendations

In accordance with Section 12, Paragraphs 4 and 7 of the Ombudsman Law, the ombudsman, while examining a verification procedure, as well as when resolving disputes in respect of human rights issues (for example, when examining submissions, conducting research or during monitoring visits), shall provide the responsible institutions with recommendations for the prevention of human rights violations. The issuance of recommendations serves as a versatile instrument across the various domains of the ombudsman's activities.

A single addressee may receive multiple recommendations, even within the scope of a single verification procedure; consequently, [the total number of recommendations](#) issued during the reporting period reached 408.

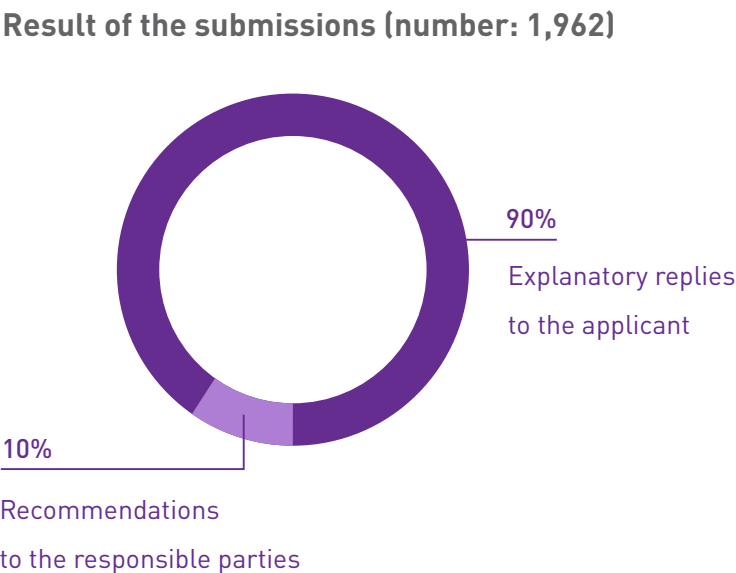
Figure 7



Total number of recommendations: 408

The largest share of recommendations was issued to municipal authorities, accounting for 39% of the total (see Figure 7). The Cabinet of Ministers, ministries, and their subordinate or supervised institutions received the next largest share of recommendations, accounting for 32%. Private law entities² received 22% of the recommendations, while recommendations issued to institutions within the judicial system and the Parliament (Saeima) accounted for 4% and 3%, respectively. This breakdown leads to the conclusion that shortcomings in the performance of municipal authorities and executive bodies have been identified most frequently.

Figure 8



² The ombudsman's mandate within the private sector is limited, primarily focusing on cases involving violations of the principle of non-discrimination.

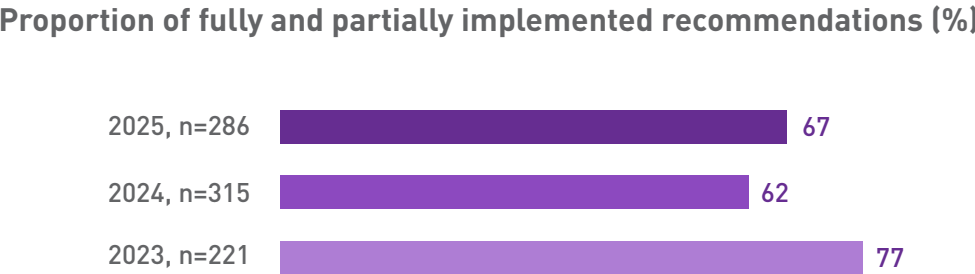
Analysis of the data indicates that recommendations issued to the relevant authorities represent a relatively small proportion of the total outcomes regarding submitted cases. A total of 1,962 responses to submissions were issued throughout the reporting period, which only 10% included recommendations to the responsible parties (see Figure 8). This indicates that, in the majority of cases, no significant infringements of fundamental rights are identified, or that the matters raised in the submissions can be resolved without the necessity of issuing formal recommendations.

Given that 90% of submissions result in the provision of explanatory information, for instance, clarifying the applicable legal framework, identifying the competent authority, or explaining available legal remedies, it can be concluded that a significant portion of the activities of the Ombudsman’s Office is dedicated to informing and educating the public. At the same time, this data highlights two underlying trends.

Firstly, this demonstrates a high level of public trust in the Ombudsman’s Office, as residents turn to the institution for professional guidance regarding their rights.

Secondly, this may also indicate a deficit in outreach or communication by other state and municipal authorities. Consequently, if a person does not receive the necessary information about their rights, they seek clarification from the Ombudsman.

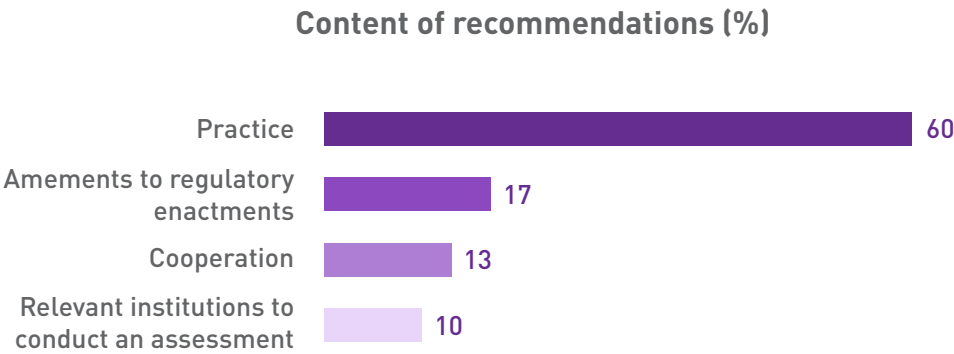
Figure 9



Recommendations are categorized into two types: those whose implementation can be verified, and those that cannot, due to their general formulation and the absence of a specified implementation deadline. Figure 9, therefore, illustrates the implementation status only of recommendations considered verifiable for which implementation data has been received from the relevant institutions. It can be concluded that, in comparison to 2024, the level of compliance with recommendations has notably increased during the current reporting period.

The content of recommendations (see Figure 10) reveals that 60% are intended to improve institutional practice, focusing on the application of legal provisions in compliance with fundamental rights and legal principles. This suggests that the problems identified are often linked to a lack of understanding of the issue on the part of the authorities.

Figure 10



Total number of recommendations: 408

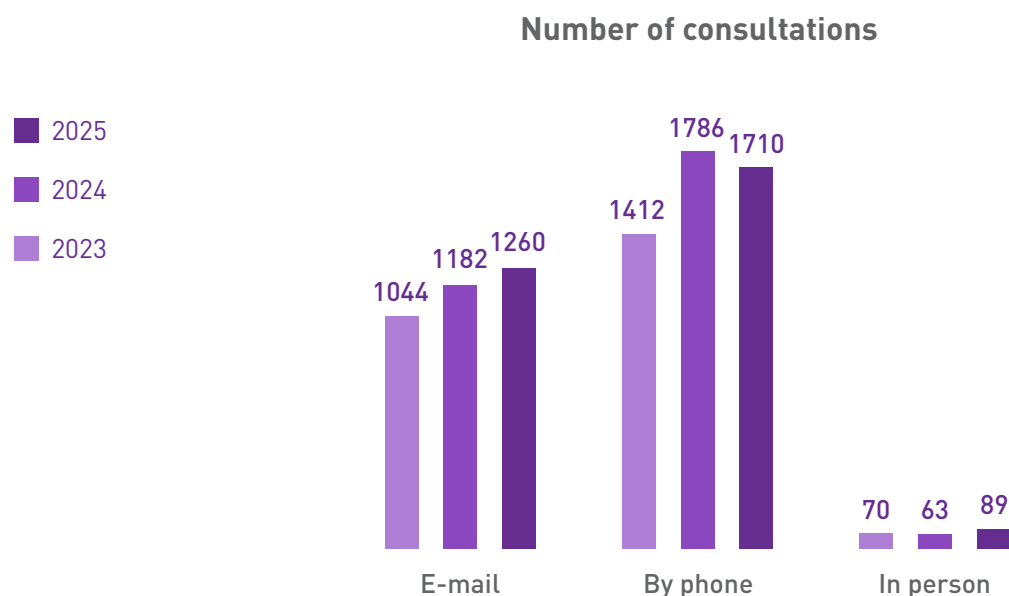
Furthermore, 17% of recommendations propose legislative amendments, while the remaining 13% focus on enhancing interinstitutional communication, staff training, and the strengthening of cooperation with the public. Finally, a small proportion of recommendations (10%) call for a further assessment or an in-depth analysis of specific cases, to be conducted by the relevant sectoral authorities.

Given that the Ombudsman’s Office frequently provides legal guidance to both the residents and administrative bodies regarding the interpretation and application of law, it is clear that this function serves diverse target groups (residents, public administration). Consequently, the dissemination of such information must be scaled with greater strategic intent and operational efficiency.

Consultations

In accordance with Section 12, Paragraph 9 of the Ombudsman Law, one of the ombudsman’s tasks is to provide individuals with consultations on human rights issues, which aims at informing them of their rights and the mechanisms for the protection thereof.

Figure 11



Consultations are available in person, by telephone or by email (see Figure 11). Consultation statistics reveal a clear preference among residents for remote communication channels – telephone and email – when contacting the Ombudsman’s Office.

In comparison to 2023, the number of consultations provided via email and telephone increased by 21% in 2025. Concurrently, 2025 saw a minor year-on-year decline in telephone consultations, which decreased by 4%; nevertheless, the telephone remains the predominant method of communication. Following a decline in 2024, the number of face-to-face consultations saw a notable resurgence in 2025, increasing by 41% compared to the previous year.

The thematic breakdown of consultations (see Figure 12)³ indicates that residents most frequently seek clarification on children's rights (27%) and request information regarding legal remedies for the protection of their rights (18%). Consequently, the prominence of children’s rights issues is evident across both public consultations and formal submissions.

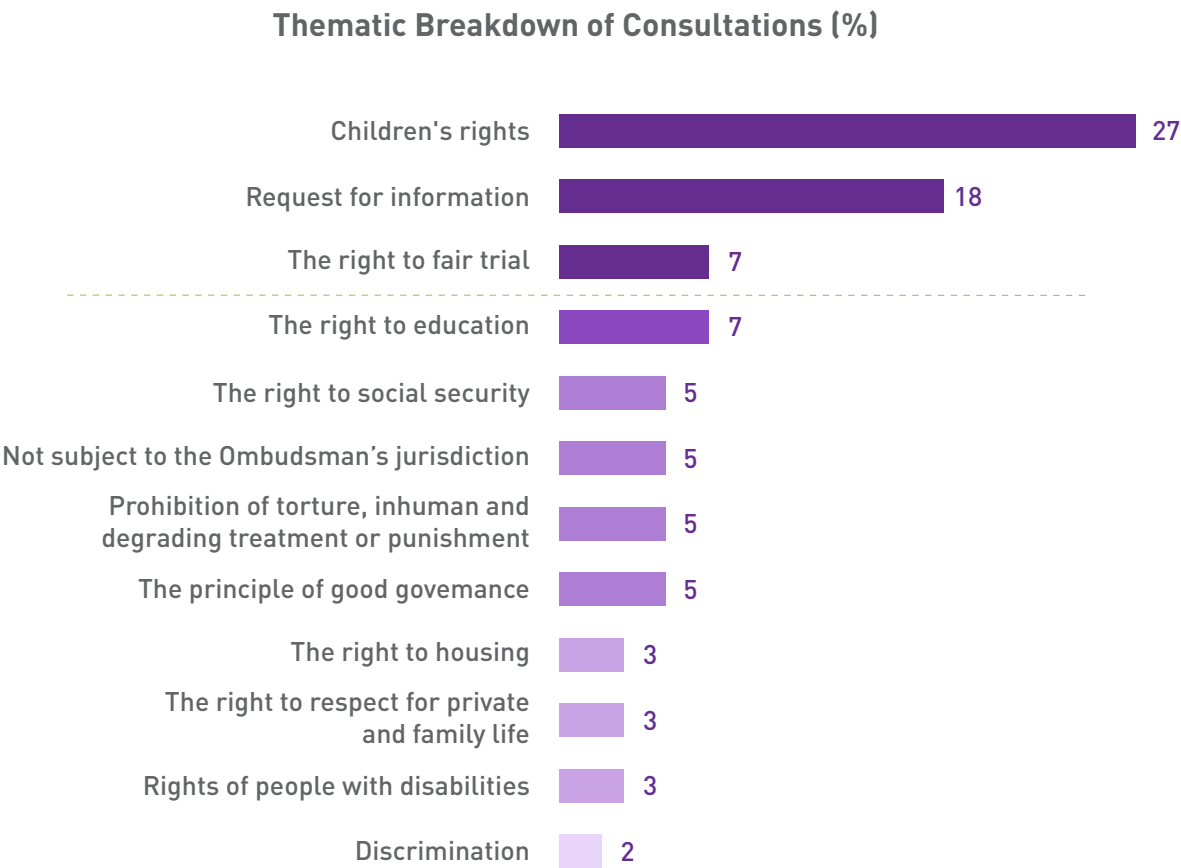
Overall, a significant portion of consultations focuses on clarifying the options available to residents for the protection of their rights. Conversely, a smaller proportion of consultations concern the right to a fair trial and the right to education (7% each), alongside other human rights domains, including social security, the principles of good governance, and the prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment.

³ A single consultation may encompass multiple subject areas, in accordance with the Ombudsman’s Office’s internal thematic classification system.

This thematic distribution underscores the practical needs of the public; residents most frequently seek counsel on matters directly affecting family relationships, the protection of children's interests, and the identification of appropriate institutional or legal mechanisms for their specific situations.

This trend suggests that residents frequently seek clarification regarding their rights outside of the competent authorities, which may indicate a deficiency in the availability of information provided by public administration.

Figure 12



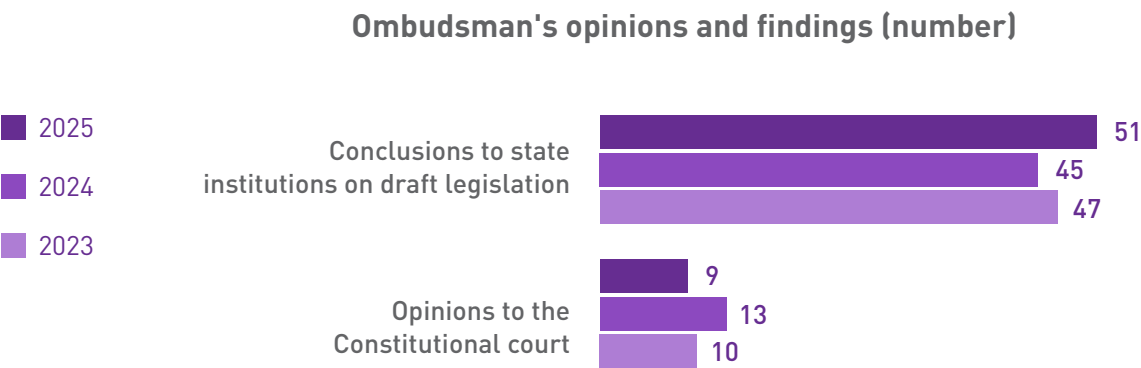
The following topics account for less than 2% of the group:

- The right to property;
- Other issues;
- The right to health protection;
- The right to work;
- The right to liberty and security;
- The right to work;
- The right to liberty and security;
- The right to enabling environment;
- Legal status of a person;
- Freedom of expression;
- The right to effective protection;
- Rights of prisoners;
- The right to life;
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion;
- The right to vote and stand for election;
- Freedom of association.

Total topics covered in consultations: 4,186

Ombudsman’s Opinions to the Constitutional Court and Statements on Draft Legislation

Figure 13

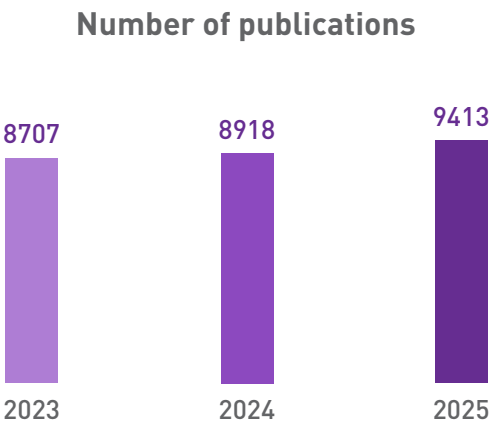


In accordance with Section 12, Paragraph 8 of the Ombudsman Law, the ombudsman issues recommendations regarding the issuance of or amendments to the legislation. Furthermore, at the request of the Constitutional Court, the ombudsman may submit an opinion on matters essential to the adjudication of a specific case.

In 2025, the number of recommendations submitted to state institutions on draft legislation increased, while the number of opinions submitted to the Constitutional Court declined slightly (see Figure 13).

Public Outreach and Information

Figure 14



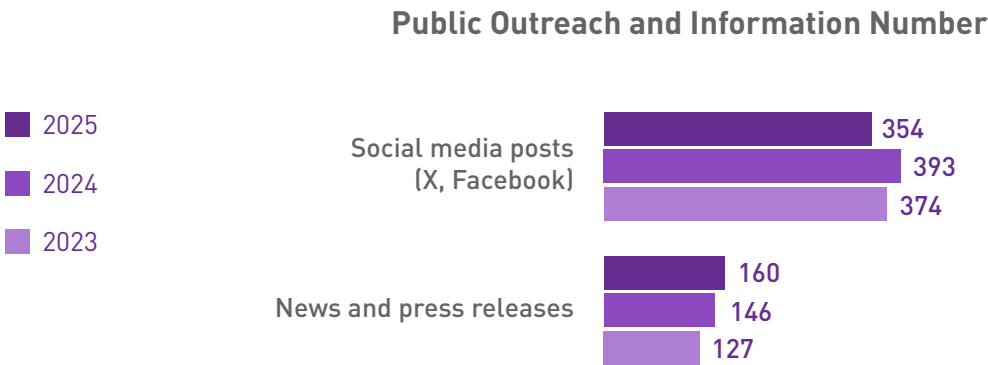
Public awareness efforts remained stable and trended upward (yielding 495 additional publications compared to the previous year), while differing trends are observed across various communication channels.

The total volume of publications increased in 2025, reaching 9,413 items — an average of 25 per day — representing a 6% increase compared to the previous period (see Figure 14).

Three topics were most frequently covered in the publications during the reporting period:

- 1) The right of individuals, particularly children, to live free from domestic violence and sexual harassment;
- 2) The right of children in out-of-home care to access education, healthcare, housing, and social security. In this regard, the case of the Dobeles District Family Support Centre “Lejasstrazdi,” has served as a catalyst for systemic change among the relevant authorities;
- 3) The institutional development and goals of the Ombudsman’s Office under new leadership.

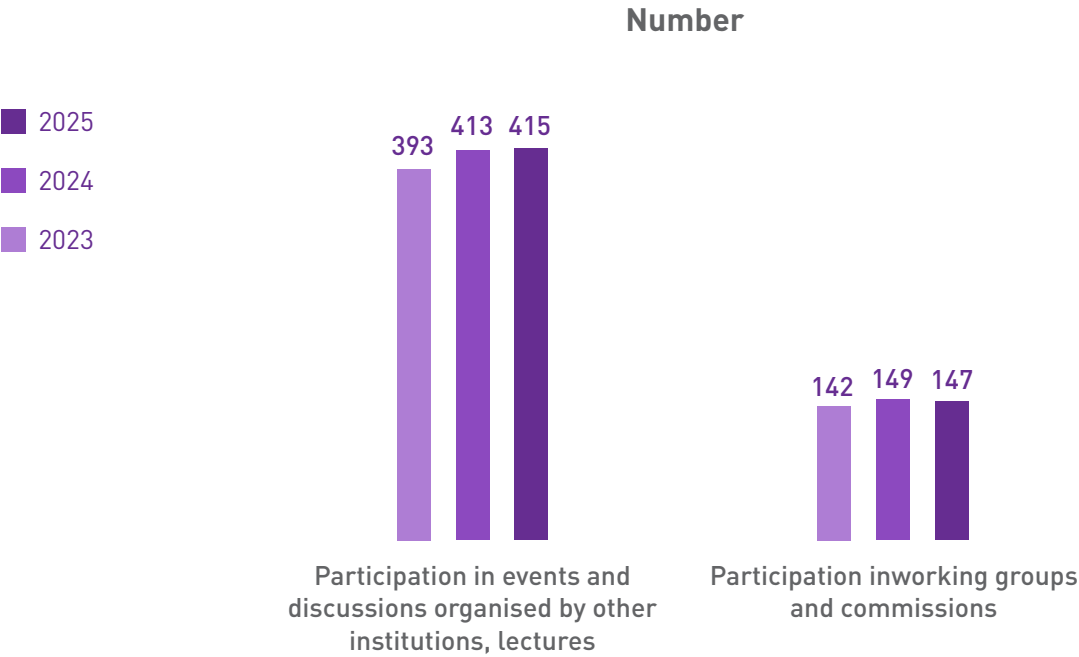
Figure 15



In 2025, the number of social media posts totalled 354, which is fewer than in the previous two years. Meanwhile, the volume of news and press releases continued to rise, with 160 releases published throughout 2025 on issues of public interest (see Figure 15).

This trend demonstrates a steady commitment to public outreach, coupled with an increase in structured engagement with the media, which enables a more comprehensive explanation of complex human rights issues and provides the public with greater insight into the ongoing work of the Ombudsman’s Office.

Figure 16



Participation in working groups, committees and events and discussions organised by other institutions remained stable over the past three years, with a slight upward trend in 2025.

Overview of Key Activities of the Ombudsman’s Office

Month	Event
January	Findings of the survey by the Ombudsman’s Office have been published: employment situation for parents of young children is improving, though significant challenges remain.
February	The ombudsman’s recommendation regarding kindergarten nap policies: daytime rest should not be mandatory for children who do not require it.
March	Publication of the research and educational materials by the Ombudsman’s Office “Sexual harassment or “No means No!”” and initiation of a public awareness campaign.
April	The Ombudsman indicates: urgent rectification of violations at the “Liepa” social care centre for the elderly is required under threat of suspension of operations.
May	Implementation of preventive measures by the Ombudsman to ensure electoral availability and launch of a nationwide lecture series on elections for young people.

June	Following an application by the ombudsman, initiation of constitutional proceedings regarding the regulatory framework for the assessment and management of entertainment-related noise.
July	The Ombudsman's Office issues a recommendation that advocates legislative clarity regarding eligibility of state-funded university tuition for young people, who voluntarily completed national military service.
August	The Ombudsman's Office points to inadequate local access to inclusive education for children with mental health needs, necessitated by municipal inaction, which forces the children to attend a school in another district.
September	Appointment of Karina Palkova as the new ombudsperson by the Parliament (Saeima).
October	The ombudsperson recommends that the Parliament (Saeima) and the Cabinet of Ministers review the provisions regarding pension insurance contributions for the care of a seriously ill child, as these provisions are inconsistent with the Constitution and fail to meet the principles of fairness and human dignity.
November	The Ombudsman's Office has once again been awarded 'A' status by the UN Committee on Accreditation, reaffirming the Office's full compliance with the UN Paris Principles.
December	Following a critical assessment by the ombudsperson, the ombudsperson and the Head of the Dobeles Municipal Council have reached an agreement on remedial measures for the 'Lejasstrazdi' Family Support Centre, aimed at improving the well-being of the children in its care.

The Ombudsman's Office: Human Rights Standards

This section outlines the legal framework applied by the Ombudsman's Office throughout 2025, grounded in the human rights enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia and the significant international legal instruments that guided examination of its verification procedures. This chapter does not cover all the legal provisions that were evaluated in 2025, but outlines the main focus areas. In 2025, the activities of the Ombudsman's Office encompassed virtually the entire spectrum of human rights enshrined in the Constitution.

Article 89

Recognition and protection of fundamental human rights

Article 90

The right to know about their rights

Article 91

The principle of equality and the principle of non-discrimination

Article 92

The right to a fair trial

Article 93

The right to life

Article 94

The right to liberty and security

Article 95

The prohibition of torture and degrading treatment

Article 96

Respect for private and family life

Article 97

The right to freedom of movement

Article 98

The right to enter and depart from the country

Article 99

The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion

Article 100

The right to freedom of expression

Article 101

The right to vote and to participate in the work of the State and of local government

UN

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Convention on the Rights of the Child
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- Universal Periodic Review
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters
- Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees
- Convention on the Abolition of Forced Labour

Council of Europe

- European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms
- Revised European Social Charter
- Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence

The European Union (EU)

- Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union
- Artificial Intelligence Act
- Directive (EU) 2024/1499 on standards for equality bodies
- Directive (EU) 2024/1500 on standards for equality bodies

Article 102

The right to form and join associations and public organisations

Article 103

The freedom of peaceful meetings, street processions and pickets

Article 1, Article 104

The principle of good governance

Article 105

The right to property

Article 106, Article 107, Article 108

The right to work

Article 96, Article 109

The right to housing

Article 109

The right to social security

Article 110

The rights of the child

Article 111

The right to health protection

Article 112

The right to education

Article 114

Minority rights

Article 115

The right to enabling environment

Article 116

The restrictions on fundamental rights and the principle of proportionality

- Directive (EU) 2016/2102 on the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies
- Directive 2006/54/EC on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation
- Council Directive 2004/113/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services

Research by the Ombudsman's Office

In accordance with Section 12 Paragraph 10 of the Ombudsman Law, the ombudsman shall conduct research and analyse the situation in the field of human rights. Each year, therefore, the ombudsman selects one or more topical issues of public concern for in-depth research.

Throughout the reporting period, the ombudsman prioritized the following areas of focus.

- [Sexual harassment in higher education](#)
- [Survey of Latvian higher education institutions regarding experiences of sexual harassment in universities](#)
- [The situation regarding discrimination in Latvia](#)
- [Accessibility of online survey platforms](#)
- [Accessibility of mass media: written news \(online/print media\), radio, TV](#)
- [Mapping of encumbrances and compensation on real estate](#)
- [Report on municipal housing assistance according to length of residence declaration](#)
- [Report on the availability and quality of housing provided under the local government assistance scheme](#)
- [Report on strategies for the social reintegration of homeless individuals](#)
- [Artificial intelligence systems and aspects of discrimination.](#) Part 2.

Fundamental Rights in the Field of Artificial Intelligence



The role of fundamental rights in the field of artificial intelligence (AI) is established by two legislative acts: Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law (2024) and Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down harmonised rules on artificial intelligence and amending Regulations (EC) No 300/2008, (EU) No 167/2013, (EU) No 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2018/1139 and (EU) 2019/2144 and Directives 2014/90/EU, (EU) 2016/797 and (EU) 2020/1828 (AI Act).

AI systems must be designed to ensure they do not infringe upon fundamental rights, including the principles of non-discrimination, the right to health, the right to employment, and others.

Description of the Reporting Period

In 2025, there was a significant increase in activities relating to AI regulation. Although no complaints were received from residents regarding AI-related violations during the reporting period, a significant portion of the work involved documentation from state institutions and international organisations, where issues related to AI regulation predominated (38 cases). This highlights a growing focus on digital and emerging risks within the sphere of fundamental rights.

During the reporting period, work commenced on granting the ombudsman a new mandate in accordance with Article 77 of the Artificial Intelligence Act, with corresponding amendments being drafted to the Ombudsman Law.

The ombudsman continued to play an active role in the implementation of the AI Act by participating in the thematic working groups of the European Commission's AI Office and providing feedback on the interpretation and application of the AI Act and its associated guidelines. This included input on the definition of AI systems, prohibited AI practices, the classification of high-risk AI systems, the content of fundamental rights impact assessments for high-risk systems, and the mandates of authorities responsible for the protection of fundamental rights under the AI Act.

Furthermore, the ombudsman contributed to the development of amendments to the AI Act and provided expert input on Council of Europe documents regarding AI, specifically the Recommendation on equality and artificial intelligence and the Guidelines on the impact of generative artificial intelligence on freedom of expression.

At the national level, the ombudsman participated in drafting the [Practical Guidelines for the Implementation of AI in Institutional Work and Services](#) and contributed to the working group coordinating the implementation of the AI Act's legal framework. Furthermore, the ombudsman began participating as an observer in the joint AI accreditation and standardization technical committee established by LATAK and LVS.

Finally, the ombudsman engaged in advocacy to raise public awareness of [the impact and risks of AI in the field of internal security](#).

In 2025, the study “[Artificial Intelligence Systems and Aspects of Discrimination](#). Part 2” was developed under the mandate of the Ombudsman's Office. The study was published in 2026. The first part of the study⁴ examines examples of how discrimination can manifest across four of the eight high-risk areas listed in Annex III to the AI Act: 1) Biometric identification and categorisation of natural persons; 2) Education and vocational training; 3) Employment, workforce management and access to self-employment; 4) Access to and use of essential private and public services and benefits.

Meanwhile, the second part of the study examines the remaining four high-risk areas identified in Annex III to the AI Act: 1) Law enforcement; 2) Critical infrastructure; 3) Migration, asylum and border control management; 4) The administration of justice and democratic processes.

Similar to the first part, the second part of the study emphasizes that ensuring the protection of fundamental rights and the responsible use of AI systems requires compliance with key standards—such as data quality, human oversight, transparency, and the development of detailed documentation. Furthermore, it highlights the necessity of continuous bias assessment and mitigation, alongside regular training and awareness-raising for all personnel involved in the operation and use of these systems. Additionally, the study emphasizes the critical need to distinguish between high-risk AI systems and prohibited AI practices, particularly within the contexts of law enforcement, migration, asylum, and border control management.

⁴ The first part of the study was published in 2024.



The Principle of Non-discrimination

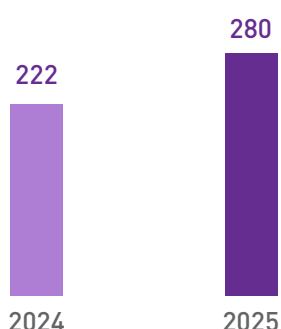
The principle of non-discrimination as a fundamental right is enshrined in the second sentence of Article 91 of the Constitution and in international legal instruments. Discrimination is defined as legally impermissible differential treatment, harassment, exclusion, or restriction — as well as an instruction to discriminate — based on an individual's characteristics, such as gender, ethnicity, disability, age, or other personal circumstances.

Description of the Reporting Period

In 2025, the Ombudsman's Office continued to observe a high level of public and institutional engagement regarding issues of discrimination. During the reporting period, the Ombudsman's Office received 194 submissions from residents regarding potential violations of the non-discrimination principle, alongside 86 inquiries from state institutions and international organisations concerning various discrimination-related aspects (see Figure 17). These figures represent a 27% increase compared to 2024.

17. attēls

Discrimination:
received submissions and requests for information (number)



A thematic analysis of the submissions reveals that, as in previous years, residents most frequently approached the ombudsman regarding potential discrimination on the grounds of disability (46 cases) and gender (25). In 2025, the third most common ground for reported discrimination was age (23 cases), shifting from language, which held that position in 2024. Meanwhile, language (15 cases) transitioned to the fifth most common ground for submissions in 2025.

As in previous years, submissions regarding potential discrimination on the grounds of disability were dominated by issues of environmental and service accessibility, pointing to broader systemic shortcomings that manifest in individual cases. As in previous years, gender-based discrimination remains most prevalent in the context of employment. Meanwhile, age-based discrimination was reported both in the context of employment and in the availability of services. It should be noted that potential age discrimination was not limited to elderly individuals; submissions indicated potential violations occurring at all stages of life. Language-related issues, as in 2024, remain closely linked to the broader social and political climate.

In the reporting year, as in the previous periods, submissions about alleged discrimination in public sector activities, employment, and access to goods and services in the private sector were more frequent.

Alongside the examination of individual submissions, the Ombudsman's Office conducted extensive public awareness and education activities, including media briefings and proactive initiatives – lectures, seminars and dissemination of information materials. Educational activities were implemented at national, as well as at an international level.

Research played a significant role throughout the reporting period. The Ombudsman's Office conducted comprehensive sociological and legal research across several critical areas, specifically examining discrimination, sexual harassment, accessibility, and the quality of the digital environment. These studies highlighted systemic shortcomings in both the regulatory framework and its implementation, specifically addressing concerns related to data quality, internal regulations, and public awareness. Particular mention should be made of the [study on sexual harassment in Latvian higher education institutions](#), which led to the issuance of recommendations to all Latvian higher education institutions, the development of supplementary informational materials, and the publication of the video lecture, [“No Means No!”](#). To date, this resource has been presented to more than 3,000 residents and is available on various online platforms. In view of the high level of public interest, a follow-up lecture entitled [“Sexual Harassment and Children was also developed”](#).

Overall, the data for 2025 indicate that discrimination in Latvia remains a structurally persistent issue, while at the same time exhibiting increasing diversity in terms of the factors involved. For example, alongside traditional grounds for discrimination—such as disability and gender—risks arising from the digital environment are gaining importance, as are complex and intersecting forms of discrimination.

The activities of the Ombudsman's Office underscore the need to strengthen a systematic approach to discrimination prevention by improving the regulatory framework and enhancing institutional capacity. Concurrently, it is essential to continue promoting public awareness, as in practice, the concept of discrimination is still often interpreted too broadly or incorrectly.

Gender Discrimination: an Overview of Key Cases

On Gender Discrimination in the Diplomatic Service

In verification procedure [No. 2025-19-26AB](#), the ombudsman assessed the practice of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of recalling female diplomats and staff members from their overseas postings upon becoming pregnant. It was found that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs lacks internal regulations establishing uniform and consistent procedural practice. Instead, solutions are reached through individual agreements between the Ministry and the female employee. Consequently, different outcomes may be applied in similar situations, and the criteria for these decisions remain unclear; this creates risks of administrative arbitrariness and fails to uphold the principle of good governance. Furthermore, this approach raises significant concerns from the perspective of both gender equality and the principle of non-discrimination.

The verification procedure concluded with a recommendation to draft internal regulations that clearly define the institution's course of action, ensuring a fair balance between the functional continuity of the institution and the individual needs and interests of the employee. A recommendation was also issued to develop a regulatory framework specifying how the mandatory experience required for advancement to the next diplomatic rank may be credited to an employee in cases where an overseas posting is terminated prematurely due to maternity or parental leave, provided the employee has already served a sufficient portion of the total posting period.

On Sexual Harassment in Higher Education

The ombudsman examined three cases involving three different higher education institutions to assess the effectiveness of their internal complaints-handling systems and to evaluate the measures taken by these institutions to strengthen these systems in order to prevent potential cases of sexual harassment. As part of this investigation, information was requested from both the management and ethics committees of the higher education institutions. The previous experience of each institution in handling sexual harassment complaints within the academic environment, as well as the effectiveness of their responses were also assessed.

The ombudsman's assessment focused on several key criteria: whether the higher education institution has internal regulations that define and explicitly condemn sexual harassment; whether its governing bodies possess the competence to investigate such complaints; whether the academic community has received training to recognize such situations; and whether the higher education institution maintains a clear, established procedure for reporting and investigating these matters.

The verification procedures concluded with recommendations to amend internal regulations to include a comprehensive definition of sexual harassment, thereby ensuring a uniform and consistent approach and terminology across the higher education institutions' internal regulatory and legal frameworks. Higher education institutions were also advised to implement training for students, faculty, and general staff. Where necessary, they were encouraged to utilize training [materials](#) by the Ombudsman's Office regarding the definition, identification, recognition, and prevention of sexual harassment, and to incorporate this information into induction programs for all new students and personnel. Higher education institutions were further encouraged to publish this information on their official websites, ensuring its accessibility in a digital format.

Regarding Sexist Content

The ombudsman examined a verification procedure regarding a dispute between athletes within a sports federation concerning sexist remarks posted in a digital chatroom, which was used as a communication platform for the majority of the respective sport's community.

In this verification procedure, the ombudsman investigated the sports federation's decision to dismiss an individual's complaint on formal grounds, effectively refusing to examine the substance of the allegations despite the federation's mandate to oversee compliance with ethical standards in sport.

First, the ombudsman assessed the nature of the statements against relevant legal frameworks and human rights standards. The investigation concluded that these remarks constituted sexism and

gender-based prejudice within a sporting context. Under the Sports Law, such conduct violates the principles of sports ethics, for which prescribed sanctions are applicable. Meanwhile, in assessing the sports federation's response, the ombudsman concluded that the institution had acted ineffectively, adopting a purely formalistic approach that conflicted with the principle of good governance.

The verification procedure concluded with a recommendation to amend the sports federation's internal regulations governing the complaints process, ensuring they are directly available to all licensed athletes. Furthermore, the ombudsman recommended training for federation officials involved in complaint handling, specifically focusing on the practical application of the principles of good governance and the essential procedural requirements for fair complaint examination.

On the Conduct of the Competition at a Music and Art School

The ombudsman issued an opinion to a music and art school regarding whether a piano competition restricted to male participants was compatible with the principle of non-discrimination. The school contended that the objective of the competition was to increase boys' engagement and proficiency in piano performance, thereby seeking to promote greater gender balance within the musical field as a whole. However, the school did not implement corresponding initiatives for girls, nor did it offer mixed-gender competitions.

The ombudsman acknowledged that the idea of organising such a competition with the objective of fostering boys' engagement in piano studies is not inherently discriminatory, as its stated aim is specifically to encourage boys' interest in learning to play the piano, which addresses specific educational disparity of underrepresentation of male students in piano curricula, and may result in an increase in the number of male students in piano curricula at music and art schools. However, the ombudsman emphasized that any such initiatives must be balanced by equal opportunities for development in the field of piano playing for female pupils, for instance, by organising mixed competitions, since gender equality remains central to the educational process.

Discrimination on the Grounds of Disability: an Overview of Key Cases

On Parking Spaces for People with Disabilities

In verification procedure No. [2025-54-26B](#), the ombudsman investigated a potential instance of discrimination based on disability concerning the regulatory framework for the provision of dedicated

parking spaces for persons with disabilities (PWD) at residential apartment blocks. The investigation included an examination of the Law on Residential Properties, specifically Section 17, Paragraph 7.1, second sentence.

In this instance, the ombudsman concluded that the Law on Residential Properties governs accessibility through a civil law framework, effectively leaving this matter under the exclusive and, in practice, unrestricted jurisdiction of private co-owners. Although the amendments to the aforementioned Law of 2021 and 2024 simplified the procedure for establishing PWD parking spaces, the fundamental issue regarding accessibility to the built environment remains unresolved. Ultimately, the ombudsman concluded that the current regulations fail to meet the requirements of the principle of non-discrimination, as they do not ensure physical accessibility in a manner that upholds human dignity. The ombudsman recommended that the Ministry of Economics initiate amendments to the Law on Residential Properties.

Regarding the Pricing Policy of a Hotel

In verification procedure No. [2025-26-26AHA](#), the ombudsman examined a potential instance of disability-based discrimination regarding the pricing policy of a private hotel provider. The investigation focused on the hotel's practice of charging a premium for accessible rooms specifically equipped for guests who use wheelchairs. It was found that the cheapest accommodation option in a hotel for a person with a disability was not a standard room, but a premium room, which cost twice as much as a standard room. Despite the absence of formal booking restrictions for individuals with disabilities, the standard rooms remained inaccessible, rendering them unfit for use.

The ombudsman concluded that the pricing policy constitutes differential treatment on the grounds of disability. The business acknowledged that its pricing policy was ill-conceived and subsequently committed to amending it.

The verification procedure concluded with recommendations requiring the business to rectify its pricing policy and effectuate the necessary amendments to the website of the hotel.

On Tickets with Concessionary Fares

Verification procedure No. [2024-76-26C](#) examined a potential breach of the principle of equality involving the failure to issue a concessionary ticket to a person with a disability at the Riga International Bus Terminal for the Riga–Liepāja commercial route.

The verification established that designated ticket sales points were utilized for individuals entitled to

concessionary fares. Furthermore, it is often the case that this ticket can only be received, if there are still seats available on that particular trip after all passengers, who have purchased a full-price ticket have boarded, or who will still be purchasing one from the driver.

It has been concluded that the approach adopted by transport operators entails differential treatment of individuals entitled to concessionary tickets, hinders persons with disabilities from exercising their rights to transport accessibility, and is contrary to the principle of human dignity. Since no reasonable grounds or legitimate objective were found for the difference in treatment, a breach of the principle of equality was established.

On Accessibility of Public Leisure Areas

Verification procedure No. [2025-64-24D](#) assessed accessibility of the renovated Valka Recreation Area, concluding that compliance was provided in a merely formal and fragmented manner. For instance, while various amenities were installed within the recreation area, the majority remain functionally inaccessible to persons with mobility impairments. The assessment also identified issues regarding the digital accessibility of information displayed within the recreation area, the safety of its footpaths and wooden walkways, and the accuracy of the information provided on signage.

The verification procedure concluded with the issuance of recommendations to the Valka District Council regarding the provision and improvement of accessibility.

Discrimination on the Grounds of Age: an Overview of Key Cases

On the Assessment of the Age of Prospective Adopters

Verification procedure No. 2025-05-26AC examined allegations of age discrimination against prospective adopters by the Orphan and Custody Court and the Office of the Prosecutor (the authorities). It was determined that the opinion of the authorities — which deemed the adoption not to be in the child's best interests — was based on several factors, including the advanced age of the prospective adopters. The authorities failed to provide any objective justification for the weight assigned to the prospective adopters' age in the context of the child's best interests.

The legislation does not specify a maximum age for adopters. According to the case law of the European Court of Human Rights, the consideration of age is not inherently prohibited. It was concluded that in adoption proceedings, factors traditionally regarded as prohibited grounds for discrimination — including age — may be considered, provided that such consideration is strictly justified and focused on

the child's best interests. Given the absence of clear and well-founded reasoning regarding the significance of the adopters' age in these proceedings, it was concluded that the authorities breached the principle of non-discrimination.

The verification procedure concluded with a recommendation that the authorities either conduct an individualized, reasoned assessment of the prospective adopters' age or withdraw the age-based argument from the adoption proceedings entirely. The assessment focused solely on the authorities' actions through the lens of non-discrimination, without conducting a substantive review of the applicants' suitability to adopt a child.

On Minimum Amount of Maintenance Payments

In verification procedure No. 2025-65-26AC, potential age-based discrimination within the Latvian legal framework for determining the minimum amount of child maintenance was assessed. Cabinet Regulation No. 37 of 15 January 2013, "Regulations Regarding the Minimum Amount of Child Maintenance" was assessed. As this Regulation was issued on the basis of Article 179, Paragraph 5 of the Civil Law, which provides for the consideration of the age criterion when determining the minimum amount of maintenance, the provisions of the Civil Law were also assessed.

It was concluded from the drafting documents of Article 179, Paragraph 5 of the Civil Law that the age criterion had been included deliberately; however, no justification for its inclusion was found. With regard to the Cabinet Regulation, it was concluded that it provides for differential treatment based on age, placing children under the age of seven at a disadvantage. It was concluded that no individual assessment is carried out in cases involving minimum maintenance payments. The differential treatment set out in this Regulation is justified by the higher costs of educational materials and equipment, and by the conclusion that school-age children require greater funding for their support.

Since educational costs do not constitute the entirety of a child's needs, and because Article 177, Paragraph 4 of the Civil Law also refers to other circumstances relevant to determining the amount of maintenance, no grounds for differential treatment were found—particularly when taking into account the [2013 amendments to the Education Law](#), which reduced the costs borne by families for school supplies. It was concluded that the current legal framework is in breach of the prohibition against discrimination.

The verification procedure was concluded with a recommendation to the Ministry of Justice to eliminate age-based discrimination within the legal framework governing the determination of the minimum amount of child maintenance.

Regarding Refusal to Enter into a Contract on the Grounds of Age

The ombudsman examined a complaint from an individual concerning a telecommunications operator's refusal to enter into an equipment hire agreement. A contract for an internet tariff plan and television services had been concluded between the individual and the operator; however, the speed of the internet connection significantly impacted the quality of the TV service. The operator's technical support team subsequently advised the individual to replace their router, for instance, by hiring one from the operator. The individual contacted the customer service centre on multiple occasions, but their request was refused. The complainant stated that, during a telephone conversation, they were informed that equipment hire agreements are only concluded with individuals up to the age of 75; the individual in question, however, was 80 years old.

The operator informed the ombudsman that the refusal was not based on the individual's age, but rather on an internal system that evaluates various unspecified factors to determine customer credit limits. Simultaneously, the operator confirmed its willingness to collaborate with the individual to reach a mutually acceptable resolution—specifically, by facilitating the hire of a router or by terminating the television services contract without the imposition of a penalty, should it be proven objectively impossible to provide the service to an adequate standard without a router replacement.

Other Grounds of Discrimination: an Overview of Key Cases

On Language in Doctor's Communication With a Child

An explanation was provided regarding the safeguarding of a child's rights as a patient in instances where the child does not speak the official language. It was underscored that, in communication between a doctor and a patient, regardless of the patient's age, the focus should remain not on the language of communication itself, but on ensuring the information is presented in an understandable manner. A physician is not only permitted but is obliged to employ all available means to ensure information is available to the patient. This includes the use of modern technology, visual aids, or plain language, thereby ensuring the patient comprehends the information in accordance with their age and level of maturity—for example, by adjusting the complexity of communication for younger children compared to that of adolescents. Furthermore, it was noted that a physician is under no obligation to conduct communication in a foreign language.

Discrimination on the Grounds of Sexual Orientation

The Ombudsman's Office prepared an analytical [report](#) for the journal "Jurista Vārds" regarding the judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Union in Case C-713/23, "*Jakub Cupriak-Trojan and Mateusz Trojan v Wojewoda Mazowiecki*".

This case concerned the Polish civil registry authority's refusal to transcribe a marriage certificate issued by another European Union Member State for a same-sex couple, as well as the subsequent challenge to that refusal before the Polish administrative courts. The report examined the findings of the Court of Justice of the European Union, analysed the judgment's alignment with existing case law and the common European legal framework, and offered an assessment regarding its potential implications for Latvia's regulatory landscape.

Data Collection in the Field of Discrimination

An Analysis of Sexual Harassment in Latvian Higher Education Institutions

In 2025, the Ombudsman's Office focused specifically [on the issue of sexual harassment within Latvia's higher education sector](#) by conducting two complementary studies: a quantitative survey of the higher education community (academic and administrative staff, students, and graduates) and an assessment of current practices within these institutions.

Research data (n=3218) confirmed that one in four respondents had experienced sexual harassment, whilst only 6% had reported the incident. This points to a significant lack of trust in existing mechanisms and reporting systems.

Meanwhile, the evaluation of current institutional practices highlighted significant shortcomings in internal regulations. Although most institutions have adopted codes of ethics and gender equality plans, these documents frequently lack clear definitions, defined procedural algorithms, and effective support mechanisms for victims.

The research generally confirms that sexual harassment is not an isolated occurrence, but a systemic problem rooted in power imbalances, organizational culture, and a culture of silence.

In light of the identified risks, the Ombudsman's Office emphasized the necessity of strengthening preventive measures—including systematic education, awareness-raising, the development of institutional capacity, and the establishment of a safe, inclusive environment. Furthermore, it underscored the shared responsibility of society in preventing violence and mitigating the "bystander effect".

The situation regarding discrimination in Latvia

A 2025 study commissioned by the Ombudsman's Office [regarding the state of discrimination in Latvia](#) highlighted significant systemic shortcomings regarding conceptual understanding, research practice, and the application of the principle of non-discrimination. Although the prohibition of discrimination in Latvia is enshrined in the Constitution and various sector-specific laws, the fragmented regulatory framework — characterized by diverse criteria and approaches across legal enactments — creates risks of misinterpretation and hinders a common understanding.

At the same time, significant shortcomings were also identified in research into discrimination—studies often focus primarily on monitoring general public opinion rather than conducting an in-depth analysis of causal relationships, an assessment of the responsible institutions, or the development of specific, evidence-based recommendations. Particular attention should be drawn to the lack of sociological data on manifestations of discrimination in institutional settings, as well as to methodological fragmentation, which results in data that is difficult to compare or even contradictory.

The study also confirms that the concept of discrimination is often misused in the public sphere, where it is frequently confused with a subjective sense of injustice; this highlights an urgent need to raise public awareness and promote media accountability regarding the use of this terminology. At the same time, particular attention must be paid to vulnerable and under-represented groups whose experiences often remain “invisible,” thereby distorting the overall assessment of the prevalence of discrimination.

Overall, the study highlights the need for a more unified legal approach, higher-quality and more targeted research, as well as systematic public education, to ensure the effective reduction of discrimination in Latvia.

Accessibility of online survey platforms

In 2025, the Ombudsman's Office highlighted the issue [of accessibility of online surveys](#), emphasising its significant impact on the representativeness of public opinion and democratic participation. A study on the accessibility of online survey platforms revealed that—both in Latvia and globally—these solutions are often ill-adapted for people with disabilities, effectively excluding a segment of society from the opportunity to express their opinions.

The identified shortcomings typically relate to basic functionality — specifically input fields, navigation, and visual design. For example, insufficient colour contrast makes it significantly more difficult for many users to complete these surveys.

It is particularly concerning that only one of the seven research organizations approached granted access to test their platform. This signals a lack of openness within the sector and reflects an insufficient understanding of the importance of accessibility. The analysis demonstrates that the advantages of digital data collection — namely speed, cost-effectiveness, and wider reach — are only fully utilised when these tools are accessible to all sectors of society, including individuals with visual, hearing, mobility, or cognitive impairments, as well as users with situational limitations.

In view of the identified risks, the Ombudsman's Office has called for measures to ensure that all state and municipality-commissioned surveys are conducted exclusively on accessible platforms.

Furthermore, it advocates for mandatory training for researchers in this area to prevent the systematic exclusion of segments of the public and to improve overall data quality.

Accessibility of the Media

In 2025, the Ombudsman's Office brought the issue [of accessibility of media content](#) in Latvia to the forefront by publishing a study on mass media accessibility across various platforms — including the internet, print media, radio, and television — and hosting an expert discussion on identified challenges and potential solutions. The results of the study show that accessibility remains inadequate, particularly in the television and digital media sectors, where it is often treated as a peripheral requirement rather than a systemic necessity. The findings also reveal a fragmented understanding of different target group needs: audio descriptions and alternative text are essential for people with visual impairments; subtitles and sign language for those with hearing impairments; and plain language and structured information for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

During discussions with industry representatives and non-governmental organizations, it was underscored that accessibility is not merely a technical concern but an ethical and human rights imperative that directly impacts public participation and access to information. The analysis further underscores that ensuring accessibility is a collective responsibility shared among content creators, technology providers, and users, whose ability to utilize available solutions remains a critical factor.

Given that a significant proportion of the Latvian population lives with visual or hearing impairments, the Ombudsman's Office emphasized the necessity for targeted policies, the integration of innovation (including artificial intelligence) and gradual, yet systematic progress toward an inclusive information environment.

Prevention of Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence



Violence against women and domestic violence constitute a serious violation of human rights. These forms of abuse may manifest as physical, sexual, or emotional violence, as well as stalking or coercive control, including in the digital sphere. Women are most commonly affected, but victims can be of any gender, including children and the elderly. As this remains a significant social issue in Latvia, rooted in gender inequality and prejudice, the priority for 2025 was to strengthen protection mechanisms, enhance inter-agency cooperation, and foster greater public awareness regarding domestic violence.

Description of the Reporting Period

In 2025, 13 submissions were received from adults who had been victims of violence. The number of submissions remained stable at five per year throughout 2023 and 2024, marking a significant increase over the reporting period. The complaints concerned the non-compliance with court-ordered interim protection measures, deficiencies in the conduct of state institutions and officials in the performance of their duties, and inadequate institutional responses to reports of domestic violence.

In response to these submissions, individuals were informed of available legal remedies alongside with guidance on the options of accessing necessary legal, psychological, and other forms of support. The ombudsperson requested that the relevant authorities conduct formal reviews and implement stricter oversight of the measures taken to safeguard the applicants' rights.

The Ombudsman's Office also received submissions regarding the unjustified imposition of interim protection measures, including allegations that false information was submitted to the court to obtain such orders. The applicants were provided with comprehensive information regarding their legal standing, the nature of these court decisions, the implications of failure to comply, and the available appellate procedures.

Following a study carried out in 2024 [a study on interim protection against violence in court](#), workshops were organised in [Liepāja](#), [Valmiera](#) and [Daugavpils](#).

During the reporting period, the Ombudsman's Office conducted a public awareness campaign titled ["Vardarbība nav ģimene!"](#) ["Violence is not a family!"]. As part of this initiative, the Ombudsman's Office produced visual materials detailing interim protection measures for individuals, relatives, or neighbours affected by domestic violence. Video materials have been produced on [how to recognise domestic violence and what to do, how to exercise your rights in practice to protect yourself and your children](#). An infographic titled ["Upura celvedis"](#) ["Victims Guide"] has been published to provide step by step explanations of what needs to be done to have interim protection measures applied, as well as the procedures for applying and revoking such measures, along with the legal implications of these actions. The campaign materials are also available on the social media accounts of the Ombudsman's Office.

Toward the end of the year, the Ombudsman's Office addressed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, advocating for a collaborative effort between academics and practitioners to standardize the Latvian translation of the terms "*sex*" and "*gender*" within international documents binding upon the state. This issue gained prominence during widespread public debate regarding the potential withdrawal from the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence — a decision deferred to the next Parliament (Saeima). Central to this discourse was the specific interpretation of the term 'social gender' within the Convention's Latvian translation. Work on implementing the recommendations has begun.

The ombudsperson, Karina Palkova, has expressed a negative assessment regarding the potential withdrawal from the aforementioned Convention, highlighting the adverse impact such a decision would have on human rights protection in Latvia.

An Overview of Key Cases

Inappropriate Conduct by the State Police During a Call-out

Following a complaint concerning unprofessional conduct by State Police officers during a domestic violence incident, the State Police conducted an internal investigation. The investigation confirmed that the officers acted improperly by failing to inform the complainant of their right to apply for a court-ordered temporary protection measure. Concurrently, the investigation revealed that several of the complainant's allegations could not be verified, as the officers had deactivated their body cameras during the incident. The Ombudsman's Office identified this failure to record the interaction as a clear breach of professional protocol. The officers involved were subjected to disciplinary proceedings, and the Office conducted a formal review with the involved personnel to ensure better adherence to operational protocols in future cases.

Meeting Between Victim and Perpetrator at the Orphan and Custody Court

The Ombudsman's Office received a complaint detailing a failure at the Orphan and Custody Court, where a domestic violence survivor was inadvertently left in the same room as her abuser. This occurred despite an active court-ordered interim protection measure that explicitly prohibited the perpetrator from having any contact—including visual contact—with the victim. This incident resulted in severe emotional distress for the victim. In its response to the inquiry, the Orphan and Custody Court acknowledged the failure, offered an official apology to the complainant, and confirmed the implementation of revised internal procedures designed to prevent any such contact between parties in the future.

Effective Investigation of Non-compliance with a Court Decision

A complaint was received from a woman regarding a breach of a court order for interim protection against violence. The perpetrator, who holds a degree in law, had previously been found in violation of the court order on two separate occasions. On this third instance, the individual breached the non-contact mandate by sending an email to the victim.

The investigating authority declined to initiate criminal proceedings, citing an absence of 'malicious intent' in the perpetrator's actions. This decision was subsequently upheld by both the supervising prosecutor and the Office of the Prosecutor General. Following an appeal by the ombudsman, Juris Jansons, to the Prosecutor General — which emphasized the failure to assess the perpetrator's systematic pattern of abusive behaviour — criminal proceedings were ultimately initiated in relation to the circumstances in question.

The right to a fair trial



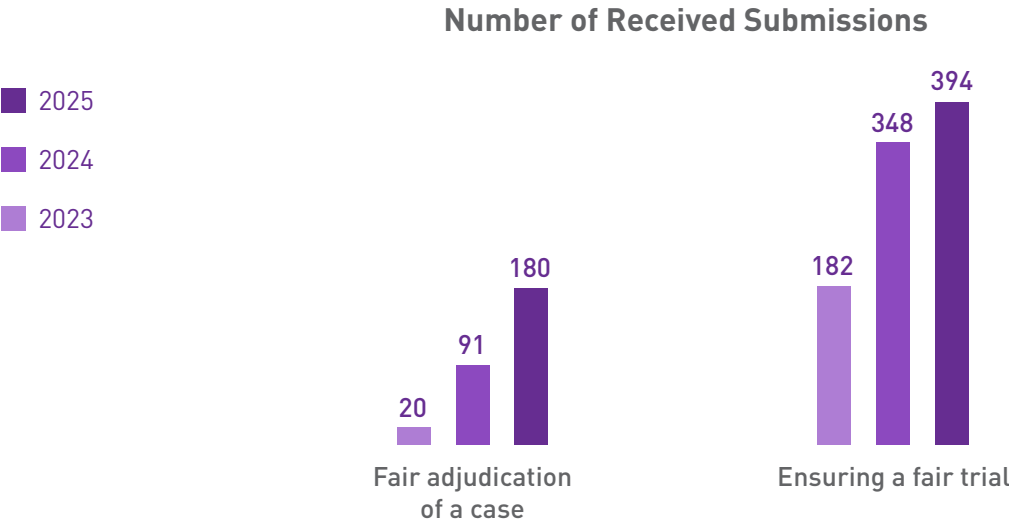
Under Article 92 of the Constitution, the State holds an affirmative obligation to ensure that every individual is guaranteed the right to a fair trial. These rights are further underscored by international human rights instruments, and their content must be interpreted in alignment with Article 6 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the

established case law of the European Court of Human Rights. The safeguarding of the right to a fair trial acts as a cornerstone for the protection of all other human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Description of the Reporting Period

In 2025, the Ombudsman's Office received 394 submissions concerning aspects of ensuring a fair trial; this marks a 13% increase from the 348 submissions received during the previous reporting period. A longitudinal analysis of the statistics of 2025 and previous years reveals that the volume of submissions regarding fair trial proceedings has nearly doubled, rising from 91 in 2024 to 180 in 2025 — a 98% increase (see Figure 18).

Figure 18



These submissions primarily concern the procedural course of litigation, alleged irregularities in judicial conduct, dissatisfaction with the final outcomes, and the adequacy of the grounds provided for court decisions. While submissions regarding the duration of proceedings, complaints regarding enforcement of judicial rulings, and the professional conduct of judges and lawyers also saw an increase in 2025, these figures do not warrant an immediate conclusion of systemic deterioration. Each instance requires an individual assessment to objectively determine whether these trends reflect broader institutional shortcomings.

During the reporting period, in response to individual submissions, the ombudsman initiated interventions in two separate matters. The ombudsman called upon the Supreme Court to prioritize the duration of proceedings and to evaluate the feasibility of expediting specific cases. Concurrently, the

ombudsman requested that the Economic Court, as the authority directing the proceedings, take the necessary steps to ensure the individual's right to legal assistance by appointing a defence counsel in the criminal case.

An Overview of Key Cases

On Legal Certainty of Criminal Procedure Provisions

In verification procedure No. 2024-46-4F, the ombudsman determined that the provisions of Chapter 59 of the Criminal Procedure Law, Proceedings Regarding Criminally Acquired Property,” and Chapter 62, Renewal of Criminal Proceedings in connection with Newly Disclosed Circumstances,” satisfy the requirement of legal certainty within the meaning of Articles 90 and 92 of the Constitution. The ombudsman concluded that no legitimate aim could be identified for restricting the rights guaranteed by Article 92 of the Constitution, nor for reassessing the legality of the property's origin, in circumstances falling under Section 655, Paragraph 2 of the Criminal Procedure Law. The ombudsman addressed the Office of the Prosecutor General and the Ministry of Justice, urging them to adopt an appropriate course of action: either by establishing a uniform interpretation of the Criminal Procedure Law or by initiating amendments to the law regarding the reopening of proceedings concerning the lawful origin of property in light of newly discovered circumstances.

On Appeal Against a Decision on Conditional Early Release

In verification procedure No. 2022-58-3I,4C, the ombudsman noted that the state is not required to provide an appellate process in every instance. The ombudsman concluded that the restriction in the second sentence of Section 651, Paragraph 7 of the Criminal Procedure Law — which limits appeals against decisions on conditional early release to cases of procedural irregularities — is proportionate and does not violate the right to a fair trial.

On the Restriction of Distant Relatives to Challenge a Will in Court Proceedings

The ombudsman provided [an opinion to the Constitutional Court in Case No. 2024-29-01](#) “On the conformity of Article 637 of the Civil Law with the first sentence of Article 92 of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia,” concluding that Article 637 does not infringe upon the rights enshrined in Article 92, as a person's indirect possibility and future-oriented expectation of acquiring an inheritance cannot be regarded as property within the meaning of Article 105 of the Constitution.

On the Right to Lodge a Complaint Against a Decision in an Administrative Offence Case

The ombudsman submitted [an opinion to the Constitutional Court in Case No. 2025-08-01](#) “On the conformity of Section 183, Paragraph 1 of the Law on Administrative Liability with the first sentence of Article 92 of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia”, concluding that Article 183, Paragraph 1 of the Law on Administrative Liability is consistent with the first sentence of Article 92 of the Constitution.

On Providing Evidence of Receipt of State Aid

The ombudsman submitted [an opinion to the Constitutional Court in Case No. 2024-27-0103](#) “On the conformity of Section 31.2, Paragraph 3 of the Electricity Market Law with Article 92 of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia and Sub-sections 48.5, 48.8 and 60.1 of Cabinet Regulation No. 560 of 2 September 2020 “Regulations Regarding the Generation of Electricity Using Renewable Energy Resources, and also the Procedures for Price Determination and Monitoring” sub-paragraphs (in the version in force until 31 March 2022) with Article 105 of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia”.

The ombudsman concluded that Section 31.2, Paragraph 3 of the Electricity Market Law is consistent with Article 92 of the Constitution, as it does not exempt the applicant (a legal entity) from the obligation to cooperate in the proceedings, and it is reasonable to expect the applicant to play a more active role in clarifying the relevant circumstances. It is therefore reasonable that the burden of proof regarding the receipt of state aid should be shifted to the producer itself.

Right to a Fair Trial in Pre-trial Proceedings



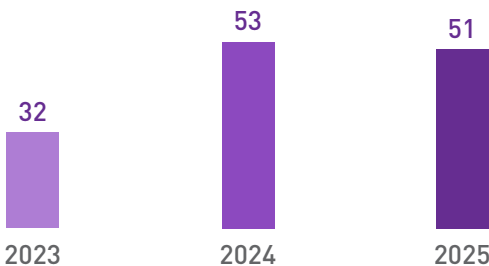
Pre-trial proceedings are an essential part of both criminal proceedings and proceedings concerning administrative offences, as they lay the foundation for the subsequent judicial examination and ensure the individual has the opportunity to effectively exercise their procedural rights. The decisions made and safeguards implemented at this stage significantly impact the conduct of a fair trial as a whole, particularly in cases where the law does not provide for — or explicitly limits — full judicial review. Respect for individual rights at the pre-trial stage is therefore a prerequisite for the fair resolution of legal disputes and for maintaining public confidence in the lawful, objective, and effective functioning of law enforcement agencies within a democratic state governed by the rule of law.

Description of the Reporting Period

In 2025, 51 submissions were received on aspects of ensuring fair trial in pre-trial proceedings. This is in line with last year's figures, when 53 submissions were received. Consequently, compared with the 35 and 32 submissions received in 2022 and 2023 respectively, the number of submissions concerning pre-trial proceedings has remained consistently high in recent years (see Figure 19).

Figure 19

**Regarding aspects of ensuring fair trial in pre-trial proceedings
(number of submissions)**



During the reporting period, the ombudsman received submissions in which individuals raised objections regarding decisions taken during pre-trial criminal and administrative offence proceedings, the legality of procedural actions, compliance with time limits, and the proportionality of the coercive measures applied. There are often differences in the interpretation of legal provisions, and a lack of awareness of the legal remedies provided for by law.

The ombudsman examined several submissions concerning the seizure of property in criminal proceedings, including the seizure of cash and real estate in a long-running criminal case. In one of these cases, the ombudsman approached the Prosecutor General, requesting an assessment of whether the proceedings were being unduly delayed and whether the property seizure had been applied in a timely manner, given that the current duration is infringing upon the rights of the bona fide purchaser of the property.

The ombudsman also examined several submissions regarding the termination of administrative offence proceedings and the imposition of restrictions on the right of appeal. Upon identifying procedural shortcomings, including an unjustified failure to grant victim status, the ombudsman forwarded this information to the Office of the Prosecutor, which, in response to these findings, lodged an objection.

An Overview of Key Cases

On the Status of Victims in Pre-trial Criminal Proceedings and the Delay of Proceedings

The ombudsman examined verification procedure No. 2025-34-4A, 4AC, concerning the prolonged failure to grant victim status during pre-trial criminal proceedings, which restricted the submitter's ability to fully exercise their procedural rights. The submitter repeatedly appealed against the refusals to grant them victim status and filed complaints regarding the delay in proceedings.

The ombudsman concluded that the regulatory framework does not provide for a subjective right to request the determination of a specific status, but does provide for an appeal mechanism, which the applicant had utilised, and therefore no breach was found. Simultaneously, the Office of the Prosecutor was urged to ensure systematic and proactive oversight of the proceedings in question.

Regarding Awareness of Property Owners Affected by Criminal Proceedings Regarding Their Right to Participate and Exercise Procedural Rights

In verification procedure [No. 2024-69-4AD,16B,32](#) the ombudsman found that the owner of the property affected by criminal proceedings had not been timely informed of her procedural status and the resulting rights, nor of the consequences of failing to provide information regarding the vehicle seizure. The ombudsman concluded that the appeals mechanism was, on the whole, effective and that the complainant had actively exercised her rights; consequently, no breach was identified. Concurrently, the ombudsman recommended that the Ministry of Justice raise the issue within its standing working group on the Criminal Procedure Law, ensuring that the owner of affected property is timely informed as soon as the initial restriction on property rights is imposed. This resulted in the drafting and dissemination of an information letter from the State Police to all regional departments.

On the Right to Access Case Files During Pre-trial Criminal Proceedings

In verification procedure [No. 2025-04-4E,4J](#) the ombudsman assessed whether, during pre-trial criminal proceedings, the suspect's right to examine evidence requested at his own initiative for the purposes of his defence had been ensured. It was concluded that while the investigator's and prosecutor's refusal to provide a copy of the document was formally based on the confidentiality of the investigation, the reasoning for this decision was not sufficiently substantiated and should not have been limited to a mere invocation of the principle of investigative secrecy. However, overall, it was not found that the submitter's right to a fair trial had been restricted to an extent that would have had irreversible consequences for the proceedings as a whole.

Concurrently, the ombudsman emphasized that the right to a defence must be effectively guaranteed during the pre-trial stage, and recommended that all investigative authorities and the Office of the Prosecutor conduct a more rigorous assessment of requests for access to case files in the future. In response to the ombudsman’s recommendation, they committed to enhancing their internal procedures for the assessment of such matters.

The right to liberty and security

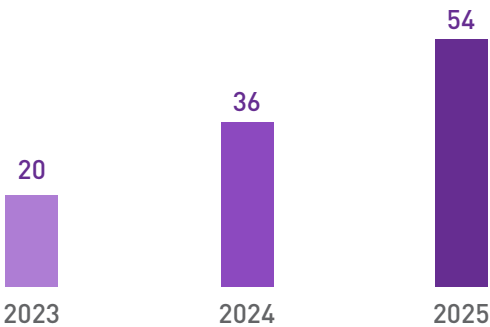


The right to liberty and security mandates that no one may be arbitrarily deprived of their liberty and that any restriction must be lawfully justified, proportionate and comprehensible. The State has a duty to ensure the timely and effective oversight of detention, and to guarantee that a person is able to effectively defend themselves and is informed of the reasons for the restriction of their rights. It is not only a matter of formal compliance with the law, but also of ensuring conditions and procedural safeguards that respect human dignity at every stage of deprivation of liberty.

Description of the Reporting Period

Figure 20

Submissions concerning a person’s right to liberty (number)



A total of 54 submissions regarding the right to liberty were received in 2025 (Figure 20). This represents an increase from 2024 (36 submissions) and 2023 (20 submissions). This marks a 50% increase over the 2024 figures.

There has been an increase in submissions concerning detention, both prior to and following a first-instance court ruling. In submissions concerning the imposition and periodic review of detention, the reasoning behind court decisions was a key issue. In some verification procedures, the court's reasoning was deemed sufficient; in others, shortcomings were identified, including a failure to comply with the standards established in the case law of the European Court of Human Rights. Courts are urged to comply with the requirements regarding the reasoning of decisions, as established in the case law of the European Court of Human Rights.

Access to the case files justifying the imposition of detention also emerged as a significant point of concern.

During the reporting period, representatives of the Ombudsman's Office actively participated in the legislative drafting process, providing expert input on the protection of detainees' rights. This included providing input on the draft law amendments to the “Law on the Procedures for Holding under Arrest” and the draft Cabinet Regulation “Procedure for the Escort of Detainees and Convicted Persons”. Attention was also focused on procedural aspects of detention, such as the right to unrestricted communication with a lawyer and access to documents while under escort. The recommendations were, for the most part, duly considered and integrated.

An Overview of Key Cases

Detention of a Driver for Alcohol Concentration Testing

The ombudsperson, in response to a complaint regarding the conduct of the State Police during administrative detention, called on the Internal Control Bureau to conduct an internal review. The Internal Control Bureau deemed the formalization of detention through arrest reports to be unnecessary, maintaining that police are entitled to detain a driver for alcohol testing without additional documentation. By contrast, the ombudsperson, drawing on the case law of the European Court of Human Rights (for instance, “Čamans and Timofejeva v. Latvia”; “Timofejevs v. Latvia”), deemed this practice to be incorrect and called for it to be changed.

The ombudsperson's recommendation was disregarded.

Adequate Grounds for Detention

In verification procedure [No. 2024-74-3B](#), the ombudsperson concluded that the detention under criminal procedure was unlawful, as the protocol failed to specify any of the grounds for detention provided for in the Criminal Procedure Law.

Having established a violation of the right to liberty, the ombudsman recommended that the State Police and the Office of the Prosecutor ensure that all future detentions are based on proper legal grounds and that procedural documentation is strictly observed.

The Authorization of Detention via Videoconferencing

The ombudsperson submitted its opinion to the court that, as a matter of principle, the initial imposition of detention should occur in person rather than via videoconferencing, arguing that economic efficiency does not justify remote proceedings in such significant instances of rights restriction. Subsequent detention monitoring may be conducted via videoconference, provided that all necessary procedural safeguards are upheld and any request by the individual for an in-person hearing has been duly considered.

Grounds for Detention and Access to Supporting Case Materials

[In verification procedure No. 2025-07-3D,4I](#) the ombudsperson assessed not only the grounds for detention ordered during pre-trial proceedings but also the detainee's right to access the materials justifying its imposition. While no issues were identified regarding the reasoning behind detention orders and periodic reviews, it is recommended that the Office of the Prosecutor ensure timely access to the supporting case materials in all future proceedings.

In response to a separate complaint regarding the refusal to grant access to criminal case materials justifying detention, the ombudsperson addressed the Prosecutor General concerning inconsistent practices within the Office of the Prosecutor regarding the application of Section 60.2 of the Criminal Procedure Law. Consequently, in November 2025, the Office of the Prosecutor issued a circular letter to all prosecutors and investigators, mandating strict compliance with the defence's right to access the evidence justifying detention.

Violation of Detention Time Limits During Trial

In verification procedure No. 2024-70-25D, the ombudsperson examined a case in which an individual remained unaware of the grounds for their detention for a prolonged period following the announcement of a summary judgment. The ombudsperson highlighted shortcomings in the Criminal Procedure Law that facilitate such outcomes.

The Ministry of Justice's working group endorsed the ombudsperson's proposal and has drafted an amendment to Section 277, Paragraph 3 of the Criminal Procedure Law, which proposes removing the word “full” from the text. Consequently, for the duration of the trial, the detention period shall be calculated until the court of first instance drafts its decision, regardless of whether that decision is issued in full or in summary form.

The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion



Article 99 of the Constitution stipulates that everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. The Constitution establishes the separation of church and state. As set forth in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, these rights also encompass the freedom to change one's religion or belief, and to manifest such religion or belief — individually or in community with others — through worship, the observance of religious or ritual ceremonies and the teaching of doctrine. This right also encompasses the freedom of an individual to hold no religious beliefs and to refrain from religious practice, should they so choose.

The year 2025 highlighted the scope of these rights, particularly in light of new legislative initiatives and proceedings brought before the Constitutional Court, both of which have significantly impacted the legal framework governing the activities of religious organizations in Latvia.

Description of the Reporting Period

The right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion is infrequently invoked in submissions from private individuals; notably, in 2025, only three such submissions were received.

However, during the reporting period, emergence of significant legislative initiatives are noted, bringing about substantial reforms to a sector that has long remained largely static. Specifically, at the end of 2025, the Law on the Latvian Dievturi Community entered into force. This legislation was adopted to

formalize the relationship between the Community and the state, and to ensure its clergy are granted the rights under Article 51 of the Civil Law to solemnize marriages with legal effect. It should be noted that, prior to the enactment of the Law on the Latvian Dievturi Community, Article 51 of the Civil Law limited these privileges to only eight specific denominations, with no expansion of this list having occurred to date. During the legislative process, representatives of the Ombudsman's Office emphasized the need for the legislator to establish objective criteria for the granting of additional privileges to religious organizations.

Meanwhile, at the end of 2025, the Constitutional Court initiated proceedings regarding the conformity of Section 5, Paragraph 5 of the Law on Religious Organizations with Articles 91 and 99 of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia. In the applicant's view, the contested provision is inconsistent with the principles of legal equality and freedom of religion as enshrined in Articles 91 and 99 of the Constitution, respectively, insofar as it fails to establish clear criteria or a transparent procedure for religious organizations to seek recognition and obtain the associated legal rights.

In alignment with the applicant's position, the ombudsperson also expressed significant reservations regarding the constitutionality of the provision in question.

An Overview of Key Cases

On Alternative Service

In late 2025, the Union of Jehovah's Witnesses' Congregations contacted the Ombudsman's Office regarding several constitutional complaints submitted to the Constitutional Court. These complaints challenge provisions of the State Defence Service Law on the grounds that they fail to provide a genuine alternative civilian service that is non-punitive in nature. It should be noted that during the drafting of the State Defence Service Law, the Ombudsman's Office repeatedly underscored the criteria established in the case law of the European Court of Human Rights regarding the organization of alternative service. Furthermore, in 2023, the Ombudsman's Office issued a negative opinion on the Ministry of Defence's information report ["On the Introduction of Civilian Service for National Defence"](#) [\[No. 23-TA-292\]](#).

The Ombudsman's Office has requested that the Ministry of Defence provide an update to the ombudsperson regarding its plans to amend the regulations governing alternative service.

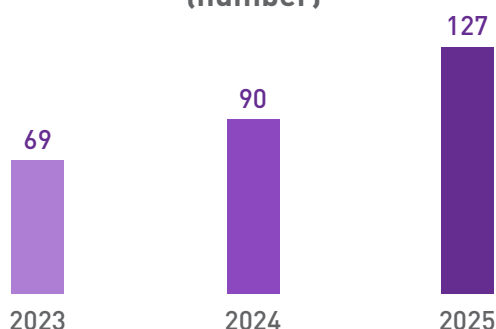


Article 96 of the Constitution provides that everyone has the right to respect for private life, home and correspondence. The content of the right to privacy includes person's identity, physical and mental integrity, including honour and dignity, one's living space, sexual activities and social relations, relations with other persons, including information about these relations. It also includes the right to keep one's private life secret from others. The State has a duty not only not to interfere unreasonably in individuals' private lives, but also to protect them from harassment by fellow people and the media.

Description of the Reporting Period

Figure 21

Submissions regarding the inviolability of private and family life
(number)



During the reporting period, 127 submissions were received, which is an increase compared with the 90 submissions received in 2024 and the 69 submissions received in 2023 (see Figure 21). This represents a 41 % increase in the volume of submissions over the reporting period.

Submissions concerning the exercise of access rights saw the most significant increase, rising to 46 in 2025 from 17 in 2024. Comparatively smaller increases were observed in matters relating to data protection (32 submissions, up from 26 in 2024) and the protection of honour and dignity (15 submissions, up from 9 in 2024).

As in 2024, individuals' right to privacy frequently clashed with national security interests throughout 2025. This tension was particularly evident during the legislative process, as several draft laws tabled during the reporting period required a delicate balancing of these competing interests. While in 2024 the Ombudsman's Office focused on internal regulatory acts of state institutions that imposed reporting obligations for travel outside EU and NATO member states, in the first half of 2025, it became necessary to express an opinion on the draft [Law on Restricting Measures to Counter Threats to National Security](#), specifically regarding the travel restrictions to Russia and Belarus it proposed for certain groups of individuals.

Similarly, the Ombudsman's Office also drew attention to a number of issues that systematically affected data processing carried out by public authorities. For instance, in response to public concerns regarding the use of 'Cellebrite' digital analysis software by the State Revenue Service, the Ombudsman's Office reviewed publicly available information and obtained an explanation from the Service regarding the legal basis for, and the operational application of, this tool in tax control measures.

Bearing in mind the potential impact on the right to privacy and the protection of personal data, as well as the necessity for adequate procedural safeguards in administrative proceedings, the Ombudsman's Office convened an inter-institutional discussion on 28 November 2025 to clarify both the legal and practical aspects of the software's utilization. In another respect, data protection requirements were also considered in the context of the protection of employees' data, balancing these issues against the public's interest in receiving information.

An Overview of Key Cases

On the Filming of Public Officials

To provide greater legal clarity, the State Data Inspectorate, in collaboration with the Ombudsman's Office, has developed guidelines entitled '["The Processing of Public Officials Data in Audiovisual Form and the Publication of Such Material"](#)'. While these guidelines primarily address the processing of data concerning officials of state and municipal authorities—specifically regarding the publication of their photographs, video recordings, or audio recordings—their application extends to personnel at other state and local government institutions who interact with the public, including educators and staff providing direct services to residents.

On the Publication of Officials' Remuneration

On 1 February 2025, amendments to Section 92 to the State Administration Structure Law, entitled “Information on an institution's assets and the remuneration of officials and employees came into force, introducing”. In order to rectify regulatory inconsistencies with the Constitution, the ombudsman addressed a [letter](#) to the Parliament (Saeima), requesting that the legislator to decide — no later than 25 August 2025 — on the removal of the new provisions regarding the publication of public officials' remuneration from the State Administration Structure Law.

On the Retrieval of Data from Electronic Communications Operators in Cases of Administrative Offences

In 2025, focus was directed toward the draft law “Amendments to the Law on Administrative Liability”, specifically the proposal to redraft Section 112 by expanding the provisions governing the retrieval of data from electronic communications operators. At present, data can only be obtained from cases of administrative offences involving physical and emotional abuse of children. These amendments were subject to extensive deliberation within the Ministry of the Interior's working group, as well as the Parliament (Saeima) Legal Affairs Committee and its Sub-Committee on Criminal Law and Criminal Policy.

On the Processing of Personal Data Following the Closure of an Administrative Offence Case

A submission from a private individual highlighted a significant issue: Section 23, Paragraph 3 of the Punishment Register Law mandates the processing of personal data for individuals subject to administrative liability for a period of ten years, even in cases where the proceedings regarding the offence have been discontinued. Specifically, the personal data of individuals subject to administrative penalties is retained in the Ministry of the Interior's Information Centre database for the same duration as data concerning significantly more serious offences. In the view of the Ombudsman's Office, this is contrary to the purpose defined in Section 1 of the Punishment Register Law.

In view of the above, the ombudsman called upon the Ministry of the Interior to amend Section 23, Paragraph 3 of the Punishment Register Law, thereby preventing the disproportionately long processing of data concerning individuals subject to administrative penalties, as well as those who were ultimately not held liable for administrative offences.

The Ministry of the Interior has announced plans to draft the necessary amendments to the Punishment Register Law.



The right to property

In Article 105 of the Constitution, the State guarantees everyone's right to property. However, these rights are not absolute. Property rights cannot be used contrary to the public good. The State may restrict a person's right to property only in accordance with the procedure laid down by law. If a person's right is restricted, the restriction must have a legitimate aim and be proportionate.

Description of the Reporting Period

The Ombudsman's Office received a total of 156 submissions related to property rights (compared to 151 in 2024). These included 7 submissions concerning the expropriation of property, 25 regarding the limitation of property rights, and 9 concerning the protection of property rights in instances of infringement by third parties.

A total of 27 submissions were received regarding the obligation to pay tax (20 applications in 2024). Of these 27 submissions, 5 related to personal income tax and 15 to real estate tax. Seven submissions were received regarding other types of tax. Five submissions concerned the exercise of a child's property rights, while 86 applications addressed various other property-related matters.

Residents have primarily sought the ombudsman's assistance regarding individual grievances, including disputes over property boundaries, access to property, the actions of building authorities and the State Revenue Service, tax-related matters, land use charges in cases of compulsory shared ownership, and the determination of land cadastral values.

An Overview of Key Cases

Regarding the Study: "Mapping of Real Estate Encumbrances and Compensation Mechanisms"

The ombudsman commissioned a study entitled ["Mapping of Real Estate Encumbrances and Compensation Mechanisms"](#), which examines the restrictions on real estate activities established by Latvian legislation and the associated compensation mechanisms. Based on these conclusions, the ombudsman recommended that the Cabinet of Ministers identify a solution to improve the compensation system, thereby preventing any risk of infringement upon individuals' fundamental rights. To ensure the

the implementation of these recommendations, the ombudsman sent a follow-up [letter to the Cabinet of Ministers](#), requesting a response by 1 October 2025. Specifically, the ombudsman called for a comprehensive analysis and comparison of legislation governing compensation for property restrictions, the identification of instances where compensation is inadequate or fails to comply with the principle of legal equality, and the drafting and submission of necessary legislative amendments for adoption.

Regarding Cēsis District Council's Management of Real Estate Under Its Jurisdiction

In verification procedure [No. 2024-50-16C](#) the actions of Cēsis Municipality were assessed in relation to its prolonged delay in resolving property rights issues. The Municipality is urged to complete the development of a unified strategy for the management of municipal property, while addressing the deficiencies identified in the ombudsman's opinion. Furthermore, the Municipality should henceforth prioritize the protection and guarantee of individuals' fundamental rights in all its management processes.

On the Inclusion of Mandatory State Social Insurance Contributions in the Expenses of Self-Employed Persons

[Upon assessing](#) the alleged infringement of property rights of a private individual engaged in economic activity — specifically regarding the administration of personal income tax (PIT) and mandatory state social insurance contributions — the ombudsman found no such infringements. However, it was acknowledged that the provisions of the Law “On Personal Income Tax” — as well as the current practice regarding their application — lack sufficient clarity. The average taxpayer may find it difficult to determine how Mandatory State Social Insurance Contributions should be recorded and to understand their impact on the calculation of taxable income for both personal income tax and social insurance purposes. Such ambiguity undermines the principle of legal certainty.

Consequently, the ombudsman requested that the Ministry of Finance draft the necessary legislative amendments by 1 December 2025 — a task the Ministry has since fulfilled.

Ombudsperson's Opinion to the Constitutional Court on the Electricity Market and Renewable Energy Sources

In [her opinion submitted to the Constitutional Court in Case No. 2024-27-0103](#), the ombudsperson concluded that the contested provisions — which mandate the revocation of previously granted rights and require electricity producers to repay state aid deemed unjustified or unlawfully obtained — do not contravene Articles 92 and 105 of the Constitution. The Constitutional Court reached the same conclusion upon the [completion of its examination of the case](#).

Regarding the Ombudsman's Opinion to the Constitutional Court on Fixed Aid Rates for Restrictions on Forestry Activities

The ombudsperson submitted [an opinion to the Constitutional Court in Case No. 2025-09-03](#), which assessed the fixed rate of support payable for forestry restrictions within micro-reserves. In the opinion, the ombudsperson concluded that these provisions are incompatible incompatible with the first sentence of Article 91 and Article 105 of the Constitution.

It was concluded that the contested provisions lack the necessary degree of individualization, thereby unjustifiably mandating the same fixed rate of compensation for forestry restrictions in all cases. In this instance, however, the Constitutional Court reached a [different conclusion](#).

Ombudsperson's Opinion to the Constitutional Court on the Registration of State- or Municipality-Owned Immovable Property in the Land Register, Free from Debts, Encumbrances, and Prohibitions

In an [opinion submitted to the Constitutional Court in Case No. 2025-13-01](#), “On the conformity of Article 416, Paragraph 7 of the Civil Law with the first sentence of Article 91 and Article 105 of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia,” the ombudsperson concluded that the provision — which mandates the removal of debt obligations, encumbrances, and restrictive notes registered in the Land Register for properties falling under State or municipal jurisdiction — is compliant with the Constitution. The opinion emphasizes the State's distinct role in civil law transactions, which is incompatible with the maintenance of indefinite, long-term obligations toward every tenant of State-owned immovable property. The Constitutional Court, however, reached a different conclusion [in its adjudication of the case](#).

Ombudsperson's Opinion to the Constitutional Court on the Constitutionality of Regulations Governing the Release of Natural Persons from Credit Obligations

The ombudsperson submitted [an opinion to the Constitutional Court in Case No. 2025-23-01](#) “On the conformity of Section 4, Part 1, Paragraphs 2 and 5, and Section 5, Part 1, Paragraphs 2 and 2.1 of the Law on the Release of Natural Persons from Debt Obligations with Article 1 and the first three sentences of Article 105 of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia”.

The ombudsperson concluded that the contested provisions are incompatible with the Constitution, as the legislator unjustifiably abandoned a person's financial situation as the sole criterion for fairly determining the eligibility for statutory debt relief.



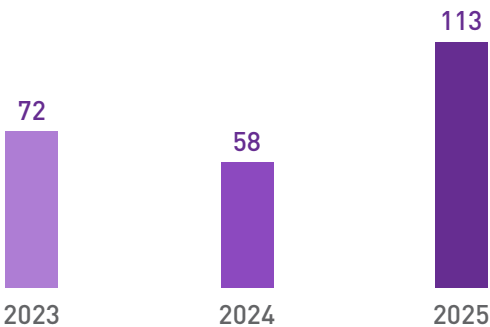
Work is an essential aspect of a person's life, as it provides financial security while simultaneously contributing to their social and professional development. Work gives people the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and talents, helping them fulfil their unique potential. It contributes to inclusion in society by encouraging active participation in its social and economic processes.

The fundamental rights of the individual in the field of employment are enshrined in Articles 106, 107 and 108 of the Constitution. They are also regulated by the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the Revised European Social Charter and other international instruments binding on Latvia.

Description of the Reporting Period

Figure 22

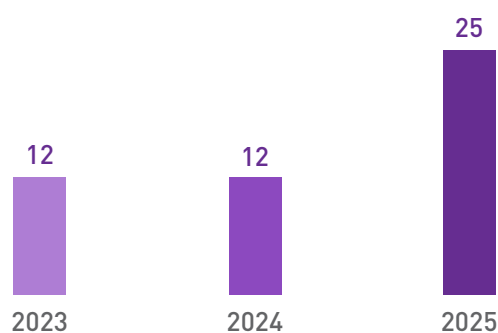
Complaints regarding the right to work (number)



Submissions received by the ombudsman indicate that the volume of employment-related complaints in 2025 has, overall, doubled compared to the previous (2024) year: In 2025, the ombudsman received 113 submissions regarding the right to work, compared with 58 in 2024 and 72 in 2023. This represents a 95 % increase in 2025 compared with the previous year (see Figure 22). A notable increase was observed in complaints concerning alleged mobbing, bossing, and unsafe, unfair, or unethical working conditions (12 submissions in 2023, 12 in 2024, and 25 in 2025; see Figure 23) .

Figure 23

Complaints regarding alleged mobbing, bossing, and an unsafe, unfair or unethical working conditions (number)



Individuals often turn to the ombudsman with complaints about prolonged and unresolved conflicts at work, unethical and unequal treatment. Individuals frequently seek to resolve personal and emotional work-related conflicts through external legal channels, often turning to law enforcement authorities rather than exhausting internal workplace resources and mediation procedures.

An Overview of Key Cases

Unethical and Unprofessional Communication and Behaviour by Municipal Council Chairperson

In verification procedure No. 2023-12-27L, the ombudsman examined a public dispute between the Chairperson of the Municipal Council and employees of a municipal institution. The ombudsman concluded that the escalation of the conflict was driven by excessive formalism, traits of authoritarian leadership, an inability or unwillingness to resolve disagreements in an ethical, constructive and respectful manner, legal nihilism among the responsible officials, and systemic shortcomings in the municipal authority's regulatory framework governing ethics and oversight mechanisms. Furthermore, the ombudsman determined that the head of the municipal institution was subjected to psychological intimidation in the form of covert 'bossing.' This included disrespectful behaviour by the Municipal Council Chairperson and the application of otherwise lawful procedures under the guise of institutional reorganization, effectively coercing the head of the institution into resignation.

The ombudsman called upon the municipality to critically evaluate the causes, evolution, impact, and consequences of the conflict by examining the errors made and deriving conclusions in the context of the rule of law, communication, dispute resolution, and principles of good governance. The ombudsman reiterated the recommendation that the municipality engage qualified specialists to assist in drafting a code of ethics for councillors, implement mandatory training, and proactively strengthen, refine, and foster a professional internal culture focused on ethics, emotional intelligence, and effective conflict resolution, both within the municipality and in its engagement with subordinate institutions.

Mobbing in the Healthcare Sector

The Ombudsman's Office examined a submission lodged by an individual concerning the conduct of university hospital management regarding workplace mobbing. The case involved established instances of mobbing, as confirmed by a court judgment, perpetrated by a department head and several staff members loyal to the department head.

The Ombudsman's Office called upon the hospital board to evaluate whether the circumstances of this case warrant termination under Section 101, Part 1, Paragraphs 2 or 3 of the Labour Law. These provisions address situations where an employee has acted unlawfully in the course of their duties, resulting in a loss of employer trust, or where an employee has engaged in conduct contrary to good morals, rendering the continuation of the employment relationship untenable.

It should be noted that the individual's unlawful conduct was established by a final, non-appealable court judgment. Consequently, this judgment *prima facie* constitutes sufficient grounds for the employer to issue a notice of termination, as it provides an objective and legally verified basis for the dismissal. However, the situation is procedurally complex: under the general principles of the Labour Law, the employer is required to obtain an explanation from the employee before invoking these grounds for termination. "Failure by the employer to properly request and consider such an explanation without justification creates a significant procedural risk, as the dismissal may subsequently be challenged in a labour dispute. Similarly, the hospital board was asked to assess the applicability of Section 79 of the Labour Law, which relates to deductions made to compensate the employer for losses incurred.

The right to social security

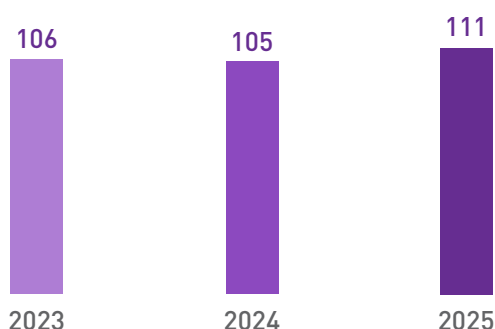


The right to social security is a very important and specific human right, as implementation of this right is closely linked to the financial capacity of each country. The State has a duty to achieve the fullest possible realisation of social rights, within the maximum limits of available resources, at an increasing pace and with the help of adequate resources. The right to social security is guaranteed by Article 109 of the Constitution, and the purpose of this right is to serve, as far as possible, to ensure a dignified existence.

Description of the Reporting Period

Figure 24

The Right to Social Security (number of submissions)



The ombudsman received 111 submissions on various aspects of the right to social security, which is not significantly different (see Figure 24) from the number of submissions received in 2024 and 2023 (105 and 106 submissions respectively).

As in previous years, a significant proportion of submissions in 2025 concerned the incorrect or inequitable calculation of old-age pensions, frequently stemming from errors in the determination of insurance periods. Similarly, a significant number of submissions concerned social assistance and services provided by municipal authorities.

During the reporting period, the ombudsman has mainly explained the procedure for granting and calculating pensions, social insurance benefits or social assistance.

An Overview of Key Cases

On the Object of Mandatory State Social Insurance Contributions

Upon examining verification procedure [No. 2025-28-17AI](#) regarding the object of mandatory state social insurance contributions, the ombudsperson concluded that the legal norms providing that mandatory state social insurance contributions for pension insurance for a person receiving a child care allowance for a child with disabilities shall be made in the amount of 20% of 71.14 euros do not comply with Article 110 of the Constitution. The ombudsperson called upon the Parliament (Saeima) to review the authorisation granted to the Cabinet of Ministers in Section 14, Paragraph three of the Law “On State Social Insurance” to determine the object of mandatory contributions to be made from the state basic budget, by incorporating therein the basic principles for determining the object of mandatory contributions, and also called upon the Cabinet of Ministers to review the object of mandatory contributions provided in the legal norms in accordance with the basic principles established by the legislator.

On the Proposal for the 2nd Reading of the Draft Law “On the State Budget for 2026 and the Medium-Term Budget Framework for 2026, 2027 and 2028”

Based on the findings in verification procedure No. 2025-28-17AI, the ombudsperson [submitted](#) a proposal for the 2nd reading of the draft law “On the State Budget for 2026 and the Medium-Term Budget Framework for 2026, 2027 and 2028” (1130/Lp14), which provides for an increase in the object of state social insurance contributions for pension insurance from 71.14 to 413.43 euros, corresponding to the amount of the child care allowance for a child with disabilities. The Government took the ombudsperson's proposal into consideration, providing for an appropriate budget allocation.

On the Application to the Constitutional Court Regarding the Right of a Student to Receive a Social Support Stipend

The ombudsman [submitted](#) an application to the Constitutional Court regarding the right of young nationals from large families studying abroad to also receive a social support stipend (the “Studēt gods” social stipend), pointing out unequal treatment compared to young nationals from large families studying at Latvian higher education institutions. Conversely, the Constitutional Court [held](#) that the norm providing for the right of a student from a large family to receive a social stipend for studies in Latvia complies with the Constitution.

On the Opinion to the Constitutional Court Regarding the Reduced Contribution Rate in the 2nd Pension Pillar

The ombudsperson provided an opinion to the Constitutional Court in case No. 2025-14-01 "[On the Compliance of Paragraph 40 of the Transitional Provisions of the Law on State Funded Pensions with Articles 1 and 109 of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia](#)". The ombudsperson holds that Paragraph 40 of the Transitional Provisions of the Law on State Funded Pensions, according to which the contribution rate in the 2nd pension pillar is reduced for a specified period of time, complies with Articles 1 and 109 of the Constitution.

On Survivor's Pension for State Defence Service Soldiers

The ombudsman [called upon](#) the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Welfare to evaluate the possibility of amending the legal framework to ensure that State Defence Service soldiers do not have their rights to receive a survivor's pension restricted during their period of service. The Ministry of Welfare submitted corresponding proposals for priority measures in the 2026 budget; however, additional funding for them was not approved.

On State Social Security Benefit for Persons who Have Lost Their Provider

The ombudsman [called upon](#) the Ministry of Welfare to eliminate different treatment related to the age criterion when paying the state social security benefit in the event of the loss of a provider. The Ministry of Welfare will evaluate the possibility of submitting a proposal when preparing proposals for priority measures in the 2027 budget.

On Income when Evaluating Compliance with the Status of a Low-income or Disadvantaged Household

The ombudsman called upon the Ministry of Welfare to put forward amendments to the Law on Social Services and Social Assistance, as well as to call upon municipal social services to disregard the "Studēt gods" social stipend, when evaluating compliance with the status of a low-income or disadvantaged household or for the granting of social assistance benefits.

On Housing Renovation Cost Burden for Low-income Households

The ombudsperson called upon the Ministry of Welfare and the Ministry of Economics to seek a solution to reduce the cost burden for low-income and disadvantaged households in connection with the renovation of multi-apartment buildings, particularly regarding energy efficiency projects.



The right to housing means the right to live in security, peace and dignity. International human rights instruments set a minimum standard for this right, which the State must ensure within the resources available to it. The State has to prioritise assistance to individuals who, for objective reasons, are unable to exercise their right to housing. Concurrently, the right to housing does not mean that the State is obliged to provide housing to everyone according to their needs and wishes, but that a minimum standard of this right must be ensured.

Description of the Reporting Period

In 2025, as in 2024, a total of 69 submissions were received on matters relating to the right to housing. As anticipated, these submissions highlight persistent ambiguities in the Residential Tenancy Law, particularly concerning the conversion of open-ended tenancy agreements into fixed-term contracts.

Consistent with trends from previous years, the majority of submissions received during the reporting period pertained to the management and administration of residential properties.

An Overview of Key Cases

In 2025, several municipal authorities amended their binding regulations in response to recommendations issued by the Ombudsman's Office in the [Report on municipal authority assistance in the housing sector, depending on the length of residence](#). The municipal authorities of Aizkraukle, Augšdaugava, Ķekava, and Olaine municipalities have repealed provisions that unjustifiably mandated a minimum duration of registered residency as a prerequisite for priority housing assistance. Meanwhile, several municipal authorities have reduced the registration deadlines for those applying under the general housing assistance scheme.

Ten years have passed since the last monitoring of municipal housing quality and the subsequent Report on the quality of housing offered under municipal assistance scheme. At that time, while many premises were found to meet the formal criteria for habitation, there was a persistent shortage of high-quality apartments (living spaces) available for those in need of assistance. The latest [Report on the availability and quality of housing offered under the municipal assistance scheme](#) highlights a positive trend in the quality of housing offered through these programs. Concurrently, the monitoring conducted during the preparation of the report led to several recommendations for municipalities, specifically concerning the implementation of certain provisions within the Residential Tenancy Law.

On the Failure to Observe Principles of Good Governance in the Provision of Municipal Housing Assistance

In verification procedure No. 2025-23-18AA, the ombudsman assessed the actions of the Riga City Council regarding its refusal to register an individual for municipal housing assistance following their release from prison. The refusal was based on the applicant's disposal of a property in 2013—a transaction that occurred more than ten years prior to the request. The assessment concluded that the municipal authority's actions violated the principles of good governance by applying a narrow, formalistic interpretation of the law. By focusing strictly on the applicant's prior property disposal, the municipal authority failed to recognize that a refusal was manifestly disproportionate to the circumstances. In such atypical cases, the municipality is expected to adopt a systemic and purposive interpretation of the legal provisions to ensure an outcome that aligns with the fundamental objective of housing assistance.

The municipality failed to implement the ombudsman's recommendation to reconsider and overturn the adverse decision taken against the individual.

On the Actions of Municipalities Regarding Residential Rent-Setting Practices

[In verification procedure No. 2025-31-18CE](#), the ombudsman examined the Riga City Council's practice of increasing rent for municipal tenants by relying on a decision adopted under legislation that is no longer in force. Pursuant to the Law on Official Publications and Legal Information, such a decision is rendered void simultaneously with the invalidation of its enabling legislation. A situation resulting in a legal vacuum, where a public law relationship remains entirely unregulated by legislation for a period, is legally untenable. Consequently, until new legislative provisions are enacted, the previous regulatory framework must remain in force. At the same time, such an arrangement cannot persist for a disproportionately long time. In this instance, however, the lack of updated regulation continued for several years.

Consequently, the Ombudsman's Office called upon the municipality to issue, without delay, binding regulations for setting rent on residential premises owned or leased by the municipal authority, in strict accordance with Section 31, Paragraph 1 of the Residential Tenancy Law. The regulations were adopted in February 2026.

Report on strategies for the social reintegration of homeless individuals

In 2025, the Ombudsman's Office conducted a [study](#) on the possibilities of social reintegration of homeless individuals, with a specific focus on the so called 'motivated' homeless persons. The findings indicate that the mere provision of housing is insufficient to resolve the situation. Comprehensive and cross-institutional cooperation is required to reintegrate these people into society. While this process is complex, resource-intensive and also psychologically demanding, it is fundamentally achievable.

Overall, while current efforts in Latvia to mitigate homelessness are positive, they remain insufficient. The absence of a unified national strategy, sustained funding, and a formalized model for inter-institutional cooperation prevents the implementation of a systematic and effective long-term support framework. Prioritizing the establishment of a clear legal definition of homelessness is essential; this foundation is a prerequisite for developing a unified national strategy capable of addressing the issue of mitigation of homelessness in Latvia. It should be noted that Latvia is a signatory of the Lisbon Declaration on the European Platform to End Homelessness, which establishes the objective to eradicate homelessness in Europe by 2030.

The right to health protection

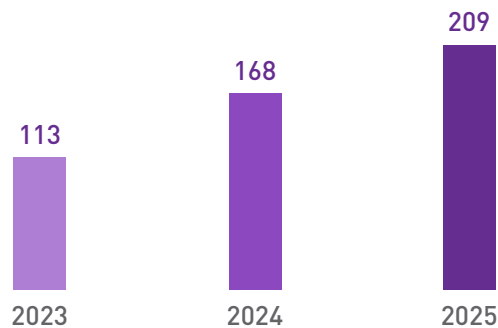


The right to health protection is guaranteed by Article 111 of the Constitution (Satversme) and is also enshrined in Articles 25 and 28 of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 12 of the UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Articles 11 and 13 of the European Social Charter.

Description of the Reporting Period

Figure 25

The Right to Health Protection (number of submissions)



In 2025, the ombudsman received a total of 209 submissions on aspects of the right to health protection, a significant increase from 168 in the previous reporting period (see Figure 25).

Most of the issues raised in the submissions have already come to the ombudsman's attention. People continue to point to systemic problems such as unavailability of medical services, high co-payments (especially for in cases of oncological and rare diseases), expensive medicines, quality of medicine, and the process of handling complaints about the quality of medical services.

During the reporting period, the ombudsman continued to monitor the application of the individual medicine reimbursement mechanism following regulatory updates. These amendments introduced specific criteria for individual reimbursement in exceptionally severe cases⁵ and expanded the scope of conditions under which the National Health Service (NVD) is empowered to issue a favourable decision.⁵ Given that conclusions on the impact of the new regulatory amendments can only be drawn after a certain period, the Ombudsman's Office will continue to monitor this issue by analysing the decisions made based on the new regulatory framework.

⁵ See Section 91.¹ of the Cabinet of Regulation No. 899 of 31 October 2006 "[Procedures for the Reimbursement of Expenditures for the Acquisition of Medicinal Products and Medical Devices Intended for Outpatient Medical Treatment](#)".

⁶ Ibid., Sub-section 92.3.

An Overview of Key Cases

On Professional Standard for Psychotherapy Specialists

Back in 2024, the ombudsman conducted a study into the nature of the services provided by so-called psychotherapy specialist service providers, specifically examining the potential adverse effects on the mental health and well-being of service users. The ombudsman's inquiry revealed that psychotherapy specialists, when providing services to the public, employ methods synonymous with those utilized by licensed medical psychotherapists and psychologists in their work. In essence, these services are functionally indistinguishable from clinical interventions, as they are explicitly aimed at the restoration and enhancement of mental health.

Notwithstanding the clinical nature of their work, the profession of 'psychotherapist' remains entirely unregulated: there is no legal framework, standard, qualification requirements or supervisory mechanism in place for the profession. In ombudsman's opinion, given that public health is one of the areas to be particularly protected, this situation, where the profession using psychotherapy methods does not have clear requirements and supervision, leaving a significant vacuum in professional accountability, is not in the public interest.

The situation has not yet been resolved. Consequently, the competent health authorities must conduct a formal assessment of the impact of the situation on public health.

The right to enabling environment



The effective protection of environmental rights, as enshrined in Article 115 of the Constitution, is not possible without the cooperation of state institutions, municipal authorities, businesses, and the public. Developments in 2025 confirmed that the State's responsibility in this area is increasingly linked to human rights principles and a long-term vision for development.

The public's growing interest in environmental quality, pollution prevention, and the sustainable use of resources confirms that adherence to environmental law is becoming a key indicator of the quality of democracy and good governance.

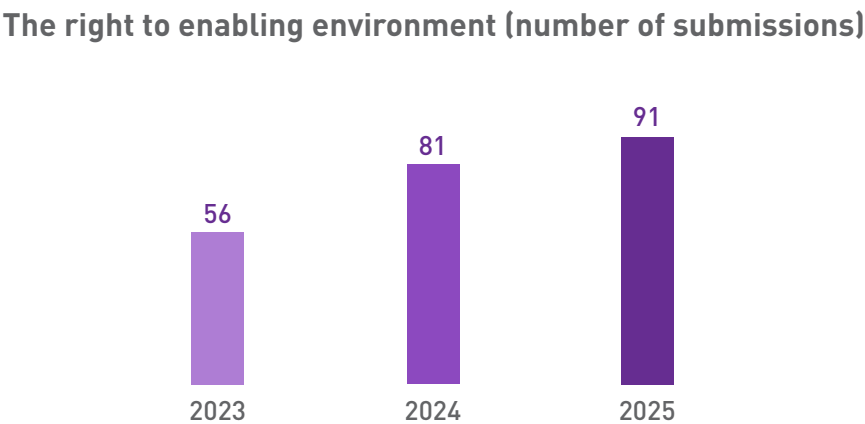
In 2025, the Constitutional Court also made a significant contribution to this understanding by repeatedly emphasising in its case law the obligation of the State and municipal authorities to ensure well-considered, evidence-based decision-making on environmental matters that serves the public interest. This reinforces the constitutional principle of the right to a favourable environment, including the requirement for a comprehensive environmental impact assessment at the planning stage. The Constitutional Court's judgment of 13 November 2025 in Case [No. 2024-26-03](#) demonstrates that case law is increasingly reinforcing the principle that development must not come at the expense of environmental quality and the interests of future generations, even though it is one of the few cases in which the Constitutional Court has directly linked municipal spatial planning decisions to the human right to a favourable environment.

At the same time, in 2025 the Latvian government continued to pursue its climate and environmental policy objectives by promoting the use of renewable energy sources while also encouraging public participation in decision-making.

Based on the submissions received by the Ombudsman's Office, residents have been particularly active in participating in environmental impact assessment (EIA) procedures relating to the numerous proposals for the development of wind farms.

Description of the Reporting Period

Figure 26



In 2025, there was a further increase in the number of submissions relating to the right to an enabling environment (see Figure 26). The Ombudsman's Office received 91 submissions on this matter (81 in 2024 and 56 in 2023), representing an increase of 12% compared with 2024.

A significant proportion of the submissions received concerned residents' dissatisfaction with the environmental impact assessment (EIA) procedures associated with wind farm development proposals across the country. A total of 40 submissions were received on this subject, a significant number of which were collective submissions. The letters express the view that residents understand and are aware of the importance of Latvia's energy independence, but that the manner in which processes related to the development of wind farm projects are being carried out is not acceptable to them. Residents have drawn attention to a number of issues, including concerns about inadequately developed environmental impact assessment criteria, unjustified restrictions on the public's right to participate, and insufficient capacity within the public administration to ensure proper oversight of EIA procedures.

The submissions demonstrate that public interest in participating in the assessment of projects with environmental impact has grown significantly. Largely as a result of this process, the number of submissions regarding spatial planning matters has also increased – 31 submissions on the matter were received.

The number of submissions regarding noise pollution from various sources remains high, with 23 submissions received. Thirteen submissions were received regarding air pollution, a figure consistent with previous reporting periods. The remaining submissions concerned various other environmental issues.

An Overview of Key Cases

Improving the Legal Framework on Entertainment-Related Noise

Throughout the reporting year, the Ombudsman's Office maintained oversight of developments in the legal framework governing entertainment-related noise. According to the ombudsman's [opinion](#), while the working group established by the Ministry of Economics began its task with optimism, the proposed legal framework ultimately proved [unsatisfactory](#).

As the intended outcome clearly failed to protect the fundamental rights of citizens, the ombudsman lodged an [application](#) to the Constitutional Court concerning Paragraphs 9, 1. for 0, 11, and 12 of Cabinet Regulation No. 16 of 7 January 2014, 'Procedures for the Assessment and Management of Environmental Noise', insofar as they fail to provide for the regulation of entertainment noise in accordance with Articles 96, 111, and 115 of the Constitution. On 14 April 2026, the Constitutional Court delivered its judgment [in Case No. 2025-18-03](#), ruling that the regulations governing noise assessment

and management are inconsistent with the Constitution insofar as they fail to ensure adequate protection against excessive entertainment-related noise. The Constitutional Court concluded that the State, in breach of its obligations, had failed to regulate the assessment and control of entertainment-related noise, as well as the associated matters of liability.

The ombudsperson welcomes the work of the Parliament's (Saeima) Human Rights and Public Affairs Committee, which has led to the drafting of the bill, 'Amendments to the Law on Pollution,' intended to empower municipal authorities to regulate entertainment-related noise through binding municipal regulations.

Regarding Shortcomings in the Legal Framework for Wind Farm Development

In verification procedure [No. 2024-21-16C,22F](#) regarding shortcomings in the regulatory framework following the abolition of safety buffer zones around wind farms, the ombudsman concluded that, firstly, the Cabinet of Ministers' regulations governing these zones have not been updated, despite the legal abolition of the safety zone institute.

Secondly, no regulations have been drafted or adopted to govern the assessment of the impact of noise, flickering, and low-frequency sound on human health. These regulations were scheduled to be in place as early as 2023.

In response to this recommendation, the Cabinet of Ministers committed to drafting the necessary legal framework, yet failed to establish a specific timeline for its implementation.

Regarding Nuisance Caused by Animals Kept on Neighbouring Properties

Having examined several submissions regarding disturbances caused by animals kept on a neighbouring property (barking, howling, odours), the ombudsman initiated a verification procedure on its own initiative to examine the owner's responsibility to ensure that their animals do not disturb or endanger other persons or animals. In verification procedure No. [2024-71-22F](#) the Ombudsman's Office concluded that the existing regulatory framework is insufficient to provide proportionate protection of the right of neighbours to a favourable environment, particularly concerning disturbances caused by indoor pets, such as barking, howling, and odours.

Based on these findings, the Ombudsman's Office supports the position of municipal authorities that it is necessary to establish a uniform legal framework for addressing nuisances caused by domestic pets, particularly in instances where such behaviour does not constitute a breach of animal welfare regulations. In the view of the Ombudsman's Office, the administrative liability mechanism that was in

effect prior to the entry into force of Cabinet Regulation No. 411 of 25 June 2024, 'Regulations Regarding the Welfare and Protection of Pet Animals,' was effective, well-established and familiar to municipal authorities for managing disturbances by domestic (indoor) animals, when preventive measures proved insufficient. Its repeal, therefore, was unjustified.

Regarding the Disruption Caused by an Illegal Motor Racing Track

Verification procedure No. [2025-08-22B,22C](#) was initiated following a complaint from Inciems residents against the Sigulda Municipality regarding the operation of an unauthorized motor racing track, 'Slapjā Ragana.' The complaints concern the track's diverse activities, including drift car rentals, track leasing, practice sessions, as well as the organization of public and private events.

The Municipality has informed residents that the vehicles operate on a privately-owned paved surface and that no unauthorized construction of a motor racing track has been identified. Upon assessment of the legal framework governing the establishment and operation of motor racing tracks — encompassing both construction requirements and sports sector regulations — it was concluded that the legality of such a track depends on several interrelated elements. The absence of any one of these requirements precludes the track from being permitted to operate.

On Limited Access to Benefits for Electric Vehicle Drivers in the City of Riga

Following an individual's complaint regarding the eligibility of electric vehicles registered in other EU Member States for free parking in paid zones operated by the Riga City Council, the ombudsman initiated a verification procedure to assess whether Paragraph 19.5 of the Council's regulations on the management and use of paid parking facilities is consistent with Article 91 of the Constitution. [In the opinion](#) the ombudsman concluded that the application of Paragraph 19.5 of these binding regulations results in the differential treatment of persons in identical or comparable circumstances. Specifically, Riga's parking regulations grant free access only to electric vehicles registered in accordance with the laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia. This excludes electric vehicles registered in other EU Member States from the same concessions for electric vehicles in Riga, thereby creating an unjustified difference in treatment of vehicle owners based solely on the vehicle's place of registration.



Rights of Children and Youth

Children's rights are a set of fundamental rights and freedoms that must be guaranteed to every child, without exception. A child has limited legal capacity and specific rights linked to age, family situation and other circumstances. As a physically and intellectually immature person, the child requires special protection and care from their parents or persons acting in their place and of the State, including appropriate legal protection. In all relations, in institutional and legislative work affecting the child, the rights and legal interests of the child shall take precedence.⁷

Description of the Reporting Period

In 2025, the protection of children's right to health in the context of providing support for substance-dependent minors remained a significant concern. Since 1 September 2025, there has been positive progress: the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Centre at the Children's Clinical University Hospital (BKUS) has launched a pilot project providing multidisciplinary inpatient and outpatient addiction treatment services.

In March 2025, widely debated amendments to Cabinet Regulation No. 474 of 22 August 2023, 'Procedures for Ensuring Preventive Healthcare, First Aid, and Safety of Educates in Educational Institutions and at Events Organized by Them,' entered into force. These amendments establish the procedure by which the head of an educational institution, or their authorized representative, may require a student to present their personal belongings for inspection and impose restrictions on the student's movement. Since the entry into force of these amendments, the Ombudsman's Office has not received any complaints regarding their application.

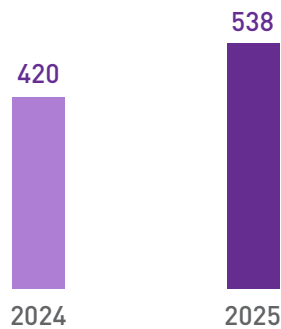
The number of submissions relating to the rights of children and young people has increased (see Figure 27). A total of 538 written submissions were received, including three from children. For comparison, 420 submissions were received in 2024,⁸ one of which was from a child.

⁷ Information on the rights of children with disabilities can be found in the section "Rights of People With Disabilities".

⁸ The record-keeping system for children's rights reporting was revised in 2023.

Figure 27

Submissions concerning the rights of children and young people (number of submissions)



Compared to 2024, the total number of submissions increased by 28% during the reporting period. The majority of submissions (203) related to the exercise of access rights, compared to 177 in 2024 and 213 in 2023. There has been no significant progress in this area, largely due to a continued lack of adequate support for parents seeking to restore their relationships.

Submissions concerning the right to education remain at a consistently high level, totalling 200. Key factors driving these figures include limited access to distance learning, financial burdens associated with education, and reported breaches of professional ethics by educators.

Submissions regarding the termination or restoration of custody rights have risen significantly to 170, compared to 101 in 2024 and 109 in 2023. Complaints primarily concern procedural irregularities within the Orphan and Custody Courts, including the failure to initiate or improper initiation of administrative proceedings, missed deadlines for issuing written decisions, and excessive delays throughout the process, etc.

The number of submissions regarding violence in educational institutions has more than doubled, reaching 125, compared to 59 in 2024 and 53 in 2023. This shows that the situation is not improving; educational institutions are not violence-free environments.

System for the Protection of Children's Rights



The child protection system is based on the shared responsibility of the state, municipalities and society for the safety and well-being of children. Its effectiveness relies on the ability of every involved professional to promptly identify risks and implement measures to improve the child's situation, consistently acting in the child's best interests. It is everyone's duty to provide assistance to a child in need.

Description of the Reporting Period

The reporting period included several monitoring visits to long-term social care and rehabilitation institutions for children to assess the state of children's rights. Children in state care are entirely dependent on the integrity of the system. When their rights are violated, these cases often go unaddressed, as the individuals responsible for the violations are frequently the same entities legally obligated to protect those rights. This vulnerability was starkly [demonstrated](#) at the "Lejasstrazdi" Family Support Centre. Although recommendations to remedy these breaches were issued to the Dobeles Municipal Council and the centre in 2023, follow-up visits during the current reporting period confirmed that violations of children's rights persist, alongside inadequate monitoring of service quality. These recommendations have been implemented only partially, and the quality of the measures taken remains unsatisfactory.

The most significant findings included the following breaches: children were not provided with essential clothing and footwear; access to adequate nutrition was restricted; necessary social rehabilitation services were not delivered; and there was a critical shortage of personnel qualified to work effectively with the children. The centre presents a high risk of violence; furthermore, there is evidence of substance abuse among the children, and school attendance remains non-existent. The centre fails to provide opportunities for children to engage in meaningful leisure activities, such as participation in sports, cultural events, or social interactions, both within the institution and in the wider community.

The Ombudsman's Office formally requested that the Ministry of Welfare conduct an immediate, in-depth investigation into the services provided at the centre. Subsequently, the Office facilitated an inter-agency meeting, engaged with municipal leadership, and conducted a follow-up inspection in collaboration with both the Ministry of Welfare and the Child Protection Centre. Following negotiations initiated by the ombudsperson, an agreement was reached with the chairman of the municipal council

to restructure services to better align with the children's best interests and safety. The agreement emphasizes the necessity of immediate action to improve the children's quality of life.

Two additional monitoring visits were conducted at the 'Vecružina' Multifunctional Social Services Centre, operated by the Rēzekne Municipal Council. These visits [highlighted](#) an urgent need to improve living conditions and ensure the protection of children's rights. Initially, the children's living quarters and living environment were found to be in a dilapidated and unsuitable condition; however, following discussions with the Ombudsman's Office, the institution promptly initiated renovation works.

A significant issue was identified regarding the centralized procurement of children's clothing. The municipality's standardized process resulted in the provision of poor-quality goods that failed to meet the age-appropriate needs and preferences of the children, thereby creating a tangible risk of stigmatization among their peers. Following the visit, this practice was discontinued, allowing the children to buy their own clothes.

In response to the report, the institution emphasized its commitment to ongoing improvement. Planned measures include the introduction of self-catering opportunities, unrestricted access to necessary goods, the enhancement of motivational programs for adolescents, and a sustained focus on preparing young residents for independent living.

Monitoring visits were also conducted at the Jelgava District Social Care and Rehabilitation Centre “[Eleja](#)” and the Ventspils Children's Care Centre “[Namiņš](#)”. These inspections identified several shortcomings, which the respective institutions have formally committed to rectifying. Meanwhile, at the Liepāja Children's Support Centre “Dzintari”, a stark disparity in living conditions has emerged. While the centre's detached housing facilities are modern and comfortable, the accommodation of children provided in social housing flats is unsuitable, and even potentially hazardous due to the socio-economic deprivation and safety risks inherent in the surrounding neighbourhoods. While the municipality is currently evaluating several real estate options for the establishment of new service delivery points, it has yet to provide a definitive timeline for the implementation of the required remedial measures. The ombudsperson will monitor the implementation of the recommendations.

An Overview of Key Cases

Regarding Unaccompanied Asylum-seeking Children

The Ropaži Municipal Council has reported on an emergency situation regarding the disproportionate

administrative burden placed on the Orphan and Custody Court due to the accommodation of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children at the 'Mucenieki' Asylum Seeker Accommodation Centre. The issue was first brought to attention in 2023. The municipality emphasises that the workload associated with representing and caring for these children has increased dramatically, yet the state budget does not provide for the reimbursement of the actual costs incurred in carrying out this specific work. The municipality emphasizes that the workload associated with representing and caring for these children has increased dramatically; however, the current state budget fails to provide for the reimbursement of the actual costs incurred in carrying out these essential functions.

As this long-standing funding deficit threatens the full realization of children's rights, the Ombudsman's Office has formally requested that the Cabinet of Ministers urgently establish a compensation mechanism. Simultaneously, the Human Rights and Public Affairs Committee of the Parliament (Saeima) has been called upon to exercise rigorous parliamentary oversight. As an interim measure, a solution has been implemented to address the funding shortfall: municipal expenditures associated with these duties will henceforth be covered by state budget allocations earmarked for unforeseen contingencies.

On Cost-Saving Measures at the Cēsis Correctional Educational Institution for Juveniles

Following a monitoring visit to the Cēsis Juvenile Detention Centre, the Ombudsman's Office formally expressed its concerns to the State Chancellery, the Ministry of Justice, and the Prison Administration regarding the adverse impact of proposed austerity measures. The Ombudsman's Office emphasized that such cuts would undermine the resocialization of young offenders and compromise the safeguarding of their fundamental rights, and has consequently called for a moratorium on any budgetary reductions that directly affect this vulnerable population. In response, the authorities clarified that the proposed budgetary reductions are restricted to operational expenditures — such as utility costs and administrative streamlining — and will not affect essential education or psychosocial support services. Furthermore, it has been confirmed that the number of resocialization staff and their respective compensation levels will remain unchanged.



Safety serves as a fundamental prerequisite for a child's development, placing an overarching obligation upon the state to guarantee an environment free from hazards and conducive to their well-being. This duty encompasses not only the provision of physical protection and constant supervision but also the guarantee of effective legal representation to ensure that the child's best interests are comprehensively safeguarded at all times. The State must ensure that every child receives the protection necessary for their well-being.

Description of the Reporting Period

In the context of child safety and legal protection, particular attention was paid to the “Bērna māja” inter-institutional cooperation programme [by assessing](#) its work with children who have experienced sexual abuse. While national regulations mandate that 'Bērna māja' must adhere to all ten international Barnahus quality standards, monitoring has revealed a significant disparity in implementation. While the three standards pertaining to institutional and organizational infrastructure have been successfully integrated, the six core standards — specifically those governing inter-agency case management, investigative interviews, and the provision of specialized rehabilitation services — remain inadequately met. At the outset of its operations, the institution faced significant recruitment challenges, failing to secure psychologists with the requisite experience and professional certification. Consequently, official standards were lowered to permit the participation of uncertified psychologists — individuals lacking both independent practice authorization and the necessary specialized experience — in sensitive investigative interviews with child victims of sexual abuse. Shortcomings were also identified in the rehabilitation programmes provided for children who had experienced violence, including insufficient qualifications and experience among psychologists.

The ombudsman issued recommendations to several state bodies, including the Parliament (Saeima), the Cabinet of Ministers, the Ministry of Welfare, the Child Protection Centre, and the State Police. Some of the recommendations have been implemented. The ombudsperson continues to work on implementing the recommendations to ensure that the programme upholds high standards in safeguarding the interests and rights of children who have been victims of sexual abuse.

During the reporting period, the issue of failure to report resurfaced in cases, where professionals were in possession of information about potential child abuse. Since 2019, the ombudsman has consistently drawn the legislator's attention to this systemic shortcoming, including submission of proposals to amend the Law on the Protection of the Children's Right to establish administrative liability for failure to report. Although the proposal was not supported at the time, recent cases [demonstrate](#) that this issue remains as urgent as ever. Of particular concern is the practice in healthcare facilities and state institutions whereby, in some cases, a lack of knowledge, reliance on others to take action, or a passive approach has hindered the timely prevention of serious offences against a child's sexual integrity. In response to a request from the Office of the Prosecutor, a verification procedure has been initiated to reassess the effectiveness of reporting mechanisms and promote individual accountability among professionals working in child rights protection.

An Overview of Key Cases

On the Oversight of Providers of Child Supervision Services

The need to improve the legal framework [has been established](#), specifically to ensure effective oversight of the providers of child supervision services and to guarantee a timely response to violations, including the immediate removal of offenders from the service provider register. The current system, wherein administrative proceedings regarding violence against children and non-compliance with the requirements for the provision of child supervision services are conducted by the police, while cases are examined by municipal committees, fails to ensure a consistent approach to the handling of offences and limits the scope for national-level oversight of service providers.

The Ministry of Welfare is called upon to propose amendments to the Law on the Protection of the Children's Rights, delegating the conduct of administrative offence proceedings to the Child Protection Centre, establishing a procedure for the suspension of service providers' activities, and drafting methodological guidelines to ensure the consistent protection of children's rights while they are receiving child supervision services.

On the Application of the Legal Framework on Sexual Harassment

In cases where young people have been subjected to sexual advances by another child within an educational establishment, an incorrect interpretation of legal provisions and inappropriate conduct by officials [have been identified](#), specifically a prevailing view that such situations should be resolved solely within the educational institution, or even the shaming of adolescent victims for reporting the incidents. This practice discourages children from seeking assistance and diminishes opportunities for timely intervention to address and prevent the recurrence of such behaviour.

To address these shortcomings, it is recommended that the State Police ensure a uniform understanding and mandatory application of the legal framework governing sexual harassment, explicitly extending this to instances of peer-to-peer sexual advances within educational institutions. In response, the State Police [issued](#) an explanatory letter to all territorial police departments aimed at ensuring that the response to every case of sexual advances is professional and strictly adheres to the best interests of the child.

On Ensuring a Safe Environment in a Preschool Educational Institution

Urgent intervention is required from the Riga City Council to eliminate life-threatening hazards caused by the failing heating system at a city preschool educational institution. The municipality has a duty to uphold the right of children to a safe environment conducive to well-being, the municipality must act to replace the failing system with a modern, safe heating solution. The municipality has announced that the boiler is scheduled for replacement in the near future.



Many elements shape an individual's identity, including information regarding one's origins, race, culture, religion, language, nationality, name, and family ties. A child's right to know their parents entails a corresponding obligation on the part of the parents to establish paternity. Approximately three percent of children born in Latvia each year do not have established paternity.

A key priority area within the Guidelines for the Development of Children, Youth, and Family 2022–2027 is strengthening equal opportunities for children whose paternity has not been established. The state is obligated to take all necessary measures to establish paternity in cases where the child's father has not been identified.

Description of the Reporting Period

In 2023, the ombudsman formally addressed all Orphan and Custody Courts to promote children's right to identity. The ombudsman urged these courts to exercise their authority to file paternity determination applications in instances where legal representatives fail to act and prior efforts to encourage them have proven unsuccessful. However, delays persist in resolving matters of children's identity — specifically regarding children whose fathers are not listed in the birth register or whose citizenship status remains undetermined.

Information regarding one's origins is a fundamental component of individual identity; consequently, the state is obligated to assist in restoring these elements of identity should they be omitted from official records. Meanwhile, citizenship is more than a formal status; it represents a permanent legal bond between an individual and the state, establishing the foundation for a comprehensive set of rights and obligations. The situation is particularly critical for children in out-of-home care. In these instances, the child's legal representative — whether the Orphan and Custody Court, a court-appointed guardian, or the head of a care institution — is responsible for taking all necessary measures to establish the child's identity.

To uphold the child's right to identity, Orphan and Custody Courts are increasingly called upon to intervene in individual cases, assisting in the resolution of paternity or citizenship status for children in guardianship or institutional care.

An Overview of Key Cases

Regarding Re-registration of the Birth of an Adopted Child Whose Birth Was Registered Abroad

Adoptive parents exercising their priority right to adopt a child registered abroad — who had previously been placed within their foster care — encountered significant bureaucratic obstacles when attempting to formalize the child's re-registration in Latvia. The purpose of such re-registration was to amend the child's birth record to reflect the legal parentage of the adoptive parents. The Registry Office refused to update the records without official refusal from the relevant foreign authority, effectively and unjustifiably shifting the entire burden of obtaining this document onto the adoptive parents.

Following the court-approved adoption, the child's placement in foster care officially terminated; however, because the registration process remained incomplete, the adoptive parents were not yet recognized as the child's legal parents. Consequently, the child was left lacking an official representative. This prevented the family from accessing state benefits and the services the child needed.

To address this systemic issue, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Welfare were urged to refine the procedures established by legislation to ensure the continuity of a child's rights and benefits throughout the adoption process. Although both ministries expressed their willingness to introduce these amendments, the recommendation has yet to be implemented.

On the Recognition of Paternity in a Place of Detention

The Ministry of Justice and the relevant registry offices were [called upon](#) to process the imprisoned father's application for acknowledgment of paternity without delay, thereby ensuring the child's right to have paternal details accurately recorded in the register. The process had previously been stalled by formalistic requirements, specifically the absence of the father's identity documents — despite the fact that his incarceration in a state facility objectively confirms his identity beyond any reasonable doubt.

Child's Right of Access



A child possesses the fundamental right to maintain personal relationships and direct contact with both parents, siblings, and grandparents, as well as with other individuals with whom the child has shared a long-term household (the right of access). For parents, however, contact with their child is not only a right but also a duty. Right of access does not fall within the scope of custody rights.

Description of the Reporting Period

Regrettably, there has been no tangible progress in safeguarding a child's right of access when parental disputes are adjudicated through the courts. A particularly problematic situation emerged during a [verification procedure](#) regarding children in out-of-home care and their contact with close relatives. The findings indicate inconsistent practices among Orphan and Custody Courts, resulting in unequal treatment in the application of legal protection mechanisms.

While courts are mandated to issue interim decisions in parental disputes within a one-month timeframe, no such deadline is imposed upon the Orphan and Custody Courts, which leads to unjustified delays, effectively depriving children of the prompt legal protection to which they are entitled. To address these disparities, proposals have been submitted to the Legal Affairs Committee of the Parliament (Saeima) as part of the draft bill 'Amendments to the Law on Orphan and Custody Courts,' which would establish mandatory time limits for the adoption of provisional decisions.

It must further be emphasized that decisions issued by the Orphan and Custody Courts regarding a child's contact with grandparents — whether granting visitation or imposing restrictions — must possess the same degree of specificity and enforceability as judicial rulings. The draft bill is currently under consideration in the Parliament (Saeima), while the Ministry of Welfare and the Ministry of Justice have been tasked with drafting further legislative amendments to standardize the procedures for exercising the right of access, ensuring consistency across all levels of decision-making. The Ministry of Welfare has acknowledged that current practices within Orphan and Custody Courts are marked by inconsistent interpretations regarding the restriction of access rights and the establishment of guardianship procedures. Consequently, the Ministry has committed to ongoing inter-institutional discussions to refine both administrative practice and the supporting regulatory framework.

An Overview of Key Cases

On the Right of Access: Maintaining Sibling Bonds in Out-of-Home Care

Several submissions revealed a concerning practice, wherein siblings placed in out-of-home care, are separated and assigned to different out-of-home care providers. In these instances, regular contact between siblings is frequently neglected, as guardians, foster families, and residential institutions often fail to prioritize these connections, and the oversight by the Orphan and Custody Courts remain insufficient.

Recommendations have been issued to Orphan and Custody Courts to ensure that regular contact is maintained in all cases where children are not placed together in the same foster family or residential care institution.

On the Child's Right of Access to a Parent in Detention

In the absence of an Orphan and Custody Court decision restricting contact, caregivers are legally obligated to facilitate communication between the child and their parents, including in instances where the parent is incarcerated. However, in one documented case, the Orphan and Custody Court failed to take timely action to assist an incarcerated mother in maintaining contact with her children, who were in foster care. The Orphan and Custody Court justified the denial of contact on the grounds of the children's best interests; however, this position was never formalized through a legal decision. Despite a formal recommendation that the Orphan and Custody Court either facilitate contact between the mother and child or issue a reasoned decision to restrict these rights, the Court failed to comply. The Child Protection Centre was informed of the actions taken by the Orphan and Custody Court.

On the Right of Parental Access for Children in Foster Care

When evaluating matters of custody, the regularity and quality of parental contact are of paramount importance, serving as a fundamental prerequisite for the successful restoration of the parent-child relationship and the eventual reintegration of the family. An example of commendable practice in safeguarding the right to family life involves a judicial ancillary decision that formally identified breaches by the Orphan and Custody Court. The failure to address the challenges parents encountered in exercising contact with their child while in foster care was highlighted in the decision. In this instance, the Orphan and Custody Court failed to provide formal written notification to the out-of-home care support centre regarding established contact arrangements. Furthermore, the Orphan and Custody Court did not actively assist in the coordination of these visits. Consequently, meetings occurred with unacceptable irregularity and were held in unsuitable environments. Although the Orphan and Custody

Court cited insufficient contact as a reason for not restoring parental custody rights, the parents' complaints regarding obstacles created by the foster family were not properly investigated, and therefore recommendations were made to the Orphan and Custody Court to improve the oversight of the contact process and the foster family's conduct.

On Parental Rights Regarding Photographs and Filming During Contact Visits

Internal regulations at the 'Liepāja' Family Support Centre of Kurzeme Region, operated by the Social Support and Education Fund, have been found to arbitrarily prohibit parental photography and videography during visits. The restriction must be regarded as disproportionate and unjustified. Parents' right to record memories of their child and of the child's growth and development is closely linked to the exercise of the right to private and family life. If the centre serves as the exclusive venue for in-person contact between parents and their child, such prohibitions result in the total deprivation of the parents' ability to document their child's development. The ban may apply only to filming or photographing other people, such as foster families or centre personnel.

The centre's internal regulations were amended following the ombudsman's recommendation.

Child's Right to Freedom from Violence



Child abuse refers to all forms of physical and/or emotional maltreatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, commercial or other forms of exploitation that, within the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power, cause actual or potential harm to a child's health, survival, development or dignity. Eradicating all forms of violence against children is one of the priorities of the government.

Description of the Reporting Period

The problem of peer-to-peer violence in educational institutions is an escalating concern. Cases of high-intensity peer violence, resulting in serious physical injuries to children, are observed with

increasing frequency in educational institutions. This highlights children's lack of skills in resolving conflicts without violence and schools' failure to identify behavioural risks at an early stage.

Reports indicate a critical trend: educational establishments often hesitate to report incidents to relevant authorities, while other institutions delay taking action with the child's family. This leads to violence effectively being tolerated and to a significant disruption of the learning process. Although a number of measures have been introduced in recent years, including procedures laid down by the Cabinet of Ministers and the Child Protection Centre's action algorithm, inter-agency cooperation remains weak in practice. Delays in involving other institutions, such as education authorities and the Child Protection Centre, prevent threats to children's safety from being addressed in a timely and effective manner.

To strengthen parental responsibility, amendments to the Education Law came into force during the reporting period. These establish parental liability for failing to provide the educational institution with information regarding the child's state of health or other circumstances that significantly affect the learning process. However, there is currently no evidence that this new mechanism has been applied in practice to resolve systemic problems.

An Overview of Key Cases

Regarding the Forwarding a Decision on Interim Protection Against Violence to Social Services

As early as 2022, the ombudsman drew the courts' attention to the obligation to forward decisions on interim protection against violence to social services and the Orphan and Custody Court. The Riga Regional Court's decision failed to stipulate that it was to be transmitted to the social services department in the child's place of residence. The President of the Riga Regional Court was therefore invited to reiterate to judges the requirement to forward decisions on interim protection against violence to social services in accordance with Section 250.6², Paragraph 5 of the Civil Procedure Law.

On Malicious Non-Compliance with a Protection Order Against Violence

The refusal of the State Police and the Office of the Prosecutor to initiate criminal proceedings against a father for attending his child's September 1st celebrations — despite a restraining order prohibiting his presence at the school — highlights a problematic interpretation of the concept of "malice". The authorities' approach was inconsistent with the established application of Section 168.1 of the Criminal Law, as defined in case law and legal doctrine, thereby restricting the right to protection from violence.

Following a request to review the legality of the decision, the Office of the Prosecutor General concluded that the refusal to initiate proceedings was unlawful, leading to the subsequent commencement of criminal proceedings. To prevent inconsistent application of the rules and to safeguard the interests of victims, a circular letter was issued to prosecutors clarifying the legal concept of “malice” and ensuring a uniform response to non-compliance with judicial orders.

Child's Right to Health Protection



A child's right to health protection guarantees access to high-quality medical care and the highest attainable standard of health. The State has a duty to ensure timely preventive care and treatment while promoting the child's participation in the healthcare process. In accordance with their level of maturity, children have the right to receive information they can understand and to have their views taken into account in decisions regarding their medical treatment.

Description of the Reporting Period

Significant attention has been directed toward children's right to healthcare, specifically by addressing previously identified shortcomings in support services for children with substance use issues. In accordance with the recommendations provided in the 2024 [report](#), the Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the Ombudsman's Office and other institutions, has developed a new legal framework. Amendments to the Medical Treatment Law now establish the procedure for mandatory inpatient addictive substance abuse treatment for children, which may be ordered by the court when a significant threat to the child's life or health has been identified.

Since 1 September 2025, a pilot project has been underway at the Children's Clinical University Hospital (BKUS) to provide integrated, multidisciplinary support for children with moderate to severe mental and behavioural disorders resulting from the use of psychoactive substances. This approach ensures continuous addiction treatment support, spanning from acute inpatient care through to social reintegration.

Data provided to the Ombudsman's Office indicates that, by the end of January 2026, the service had been provided to 23 children across 36 treatment episodes, confirming both the high demand for and the necessity of this service. Although the law allows for treatment without consent, the medical panel has not yet identified a need for such measures, notwithstanding that eight children required readmission—five on two occasions, two on three occasions, and one on five separate occasions.

The situation across the country remains a matter of serious concern. Data from emergency medical services for 2025 reveals a significant number of call-outs involving children under the influence of substances:

- 1) 991 call-outs for alcohol intoxication, of which 689 resulted in hospitalisation;
- 2) 233 call-outs for drug intoxication, of which 193 resulted in hospitalisation;
- 3) 25 call-outs relating to the use of toxic substances, including three cases involving infants under one year of age.

These figures confirm that the launch of the pilot project and the implementation of the new legal framework are crucial steps toward safeguarding children's health and safety; however, sustained efforts are required to expand service availability and strengthen preventive measures.

Work [initiated](#) in 2024 on setting an earlier start time for the school day in educational institutions continued. The ombudsperson met with the Human Rights and Public Affairs Committee of the Parliament (Saeima), securing support for a proposal stipulating that the school day must commence no earlier than 8:30 for pupils in the first stage of basic education (Years 1–6), and no earlier than 9:00 for pupils in the second stage of basic education and secondary education. It was agreed that prior to any formal legislative changes, guidelines would be issued to educational institutions, enabling them to regulate this matter independently; the committee will subsequently assess the impact of these school-led initiatives in the autumn of 2026. The ombudsperson will continue to monitor the implementation of the recommendations.

An Overview of Key Cases

On Access to Specialised Healthcare for Children and Long Waiting Times

Submissions from residents highlight a critical shortage of paediatric psychiatrists and immunologists at the Children's Clinical University Hospital (BKUS), where waiting times for specialist consultations now extend to 12–15 months. This situation is particularly alarming for children with autism spectrum disorders and Asperger's syndrome, who require specialized, ongoing support; furthermore, the field of immunology is critically understaffed, with services currently provided by only a single specialist nationwide.

The explanation provided by the Children's Clinical University Hospital (BKUS) confirms that these waiting lists are the result of a significant increase in demand, compounded by a critical shortage of specialists. Although the hospital employs an internal 'urgency queue' system to prioritize the most acute cases, its systemic capacity remains insufficient to meet demand.

The National Health Service and the Ministry of Health have announced an allocation of additional funding for 2026, specifically aimed at improving the accessibility of maternal and child healthcare services. The relevant authorities remain committed to developing solutions that reduce waiting lists and safeguarding children's right of access to timely healthcare services.

On the Protection of Children from Smoking in Educational Institutions

Smoking on school premises compromises not only the health of the underage individual but also that of the wider student body. The violation was witnessed by a teacher, and the pupil confirmed his involvement, noting that he had been smoking for one year. The educational institution reported the incident to the State Police, while the headteacher formally issued a warning to the pupil. The situation became problematic following the police inspector's decision to discontinue the administrative offence proceedings against the pupil. Consequently, the executive director of the municipality was compelled to rescind the head-teacher's directive.

The municipality expressed its concern regarding the lack of clarity in the police's actions to the ombudsman, noting that this effectively establishes a precedent where smoking on school premises is tolerated. Following an inquiry from the ombudsman regarding the grounds for discontinuing the proceedings, a senior official determined the decision to be unlawful and subsequently quashed it. In response to the incident, an internal investigation has been initiated to evaluate the official's professional conduct.

Child's Right to Education



Everyone has the right to a high-quality and inclusive education. The Constitution guarantees state-funded primary and secondary education. Municipalities are legally mandated to ensure that children have access to pre-school, primary, and secondary education, as well as the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities. National legislation mandates the completion of pre-school and primary education, while affirming each child's right to instruction aligned with their individual level of physical and psychological development.

Description of the Reporting Period

In 2025, significant focus was placed on amendments to the Education Law aimed at substantially restricting the use of distance learning within the primary stage of general education (Years 1 to 6). The legislator has been consistently [urged](#) to assess the impact of the restrictions on children's development, while emphasising the need to preserve distance learning as an accessible option for all children.

In accordance with the principle of prioritising the best interests of the child, the state must ensure adequate support for families selecting this form of education to address a child's unique developmental requirements. Notwithstanding the objections raised, the Parliament (Saeima) adopted amendments in January 2026, stipulating that distance learning for the first stage of basic education will henceforth be permitted only in exceptional cases. The President returned the bill to the Parliament (Saeima) for further review; while expressing no objection to the policy intent regarding distance learning, the President called for a more proportionate transition period to ensure a feasible implementation of these new requirements.

During the reporting period, the newly introduced funding model, "Programme at School", prompted private educational institutions to raise objections to the application of uniform quantitative criteria, although no violations were identified. However, the submissions highlighted a fundamental issue: the impact of this model on the quality of inclusive education in municipal schools. Concerns have been raised that the stringent minimum pupil enrolment criteria in state cities may inadvertently obstruct the formation of smaller classes, which are often essential for providing the individualized pedagogical support required by children with special educational needs (e.g., ADHD, autism spectrum disorders, and specific learning disabilities).

Although the Ministry of Education and Science asserts that the overall programme funding theoretically permits the reallocation of resources to sustain smaller classes, there are reasonable concerns regarding the efficacy of this mechanism in practical application. It remains uncertain whether the presence of support staff alone is sufficient to facilitate inclusive education within large classes for pupils who struggle to integrate; consequently, regulation of class size must be recognized as a specific support measure.

An Overview of Key Cases

On the Inaccessibility of Special Education Programmes and Transport Provision in Ādaži Municipality

For years, Ādaži Municipality has failed to provide children with severe developmental disabilities access to primary education (program code 21015911) within its own borders, placing an undue burden on families forced to seek services in other municipalities. The lack of access to educational programmes also exacerbated problems with specialised transport for children.

The municipality has been advised to license the educational program and improve transport logistics, specifically by implementing personalized transport services for affected students. Although the municipality has committed to analysing its transport logistics, it has stated that it cannot implement the new curriculum within the proposed timeframe. Consequently, parents have been advised of their right to challenge the authority's actions through formal administrative appeals.

On the Prevention of Violence in Interest Education and Professionally Oriented Education Institutions

Every educational institution, including sports centres, is legally obligated to ensure a safe environment for pupils and to establish clear, codified procedures for addressing incidents of violence. Following an investigation into a case where the Ogre Sports Centre and a coach failed to notify parents promptly regarding a conflict involving children and behavioural issues, the authority was urged to revise its internal regulations and provide staff training on reporting and cooperation protocols for incidents involving a risk of violence. The head of the institution must ensure that all staff are fully trained in the requisite actions to take when violence is identified, thereby ensuring the fundamental rights and safety of all pupils.

Regarding Admission to a Professionally Oriented Sports Education Programme

In response to recommendations, the Ogre Sports Centre revised its regulations regarding pupil admission and program transfers, subsequently publishing the updated policy on its website. This new procedure ensures that vacancies in fully formed groups are filled through a transparent and clear

process, the procedures are compliant with the principles of good governance, thereby preventing potential disputes regarding changes to pupils' status.

The institution's actions are to be commended as a model of transparent and predictable administrative practice.

On the Protection of Children's Rights and Safety in a Private Preschool Educational Institution

Private educational institutions are likewise legally obligated to prioritize the best interests of the child and to maintain a secure, safe environment for all pupils. In instances where an institution's internal regulations permitted [the exclusion of a child](#) without legal or objective grounds, the institution is urged to align its policies with the broader regulatory framework to eliminate arbitrary practices and safeguard the child's right to uninterrupted education. Furthermore, [it is recommended](#) that individuals not employed by the institution, for whom no verification of prior criminal convictions has been conducted, be prohibited from having direct contact with children.

On Students' Right to Freedom of Expression and the Political Neutrality of Educational Institutions

Valmiera State Gymnasium [has been advised](#) to refrain from using official communication channels to promote or endorse positions on matters where public opinion is significantly divided. Staff members at educational institutions should refrain from demonstrating their personal views on matters intended to foster pupil discussion, thereby safeguarding each child's right to freedom of thought, opinion, and expression.

Child's Right to a Family and Social Security



Every child possesses an inalienable right to a family, to decent living conditions, and to a supportive social environment — all of which are essential to ensuring their full physical and intellectual development. To reach their full potential and develop harmoniously as individuals, children must grow up in a family environment defined by happiness, love, and understanding. Every child should be provided with adequate food, clothing and housing. To assist in the upbringing and education of children, families receive a range of benefits and support services provided by both local authorities and the state.

Description of the Reporting Period

Throughout 2025, work continued on submissions challenging the Riga City Council's practice of categorizing minor children as 'other persons' rather than as members of the tenant's family within municipal tenancy agreements. Such a procedure, as established in the municipality's binding regulations, contravenes the constitutional obligation to protect the family and the rights of the child under Article 110 of the Constitution, as well as the definition of the family set forth in Article 214 of the Civil Law.

As early as 2021, the ombudsman concluded that classifying a child as an 'other person' artificially separates the child from the tenant's family and contravenes the Residential Tenancy Law and the principle of prioritising the child's best interests. The court has also criticized the municipality for its failure to maintain consistency between its binding regulations and higher-level legislation. The Riga Regional Court, in its judgment of 3 April 2024 in Case No. C30465122, held that such regulation infringes the principle of equality by creating disparate rights for children based on their date of birth, rather than the timing of their eligibility for municipal assistance. Refusing to recognize a child as a family member based on regulations of lower legal force directly contravenes the fundamental principle of protecting children's rights.

Despite amendments made by the municipality following repeated recommendations, it has been found that the core issue remains unresolved, perpetuating legal uncertainty regarding the status of the affected children.

If a child is conceived as a result of a crime, the father is usually not recorded in the child's birth register. This situation arises both when the child's biological father is identified during criminal proceedings and when he is not. Where parentage is established but remains unregistered in the birth registry, the child's father may effectively circumvent his maintenance obligations. Consequently, the mother is left without recourse, as she is unable to secure maintenance payments for the child from either the father or the Maintenance Guarantee Fund.

In 2024, the Ministry of Justice responded to the ombudsman's [proposal](#) by acknowledging the issue and concluding that a viable solution would involve establishing a new form of support for children whose paternity remains unestablished. As this support mechanism has not yet been implemented, the matter has been raised again with the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Welfare.

The Ministry of Welfare has pledged to collaborate with governmental and non-governmental organizations to develop an improved support framework for children and mothers affected by cases where conception resulted from a criminal offence. In the ombudsman's view, the prolonged delay in implementing this support mechanism is unacceptable.

An Overview of Key Cases

On Municipal Meal Allowance for Large Families

Under the binding regulations of the Ogre Municipality, entitlement to a meal allowance in educational institutions was subject to the condition that all members of the household were registered in the municipality and lived in the same household, and there was also a restriction on adult children (up to the age of 24) – they were not permitted to be employed.

The Law on the Protection of the Children's Rights clearly defines the status of large families without imposing any such restrictions. The criteria established by the municipality unjustifiably narrow the group of pupils eligible for state or municipal support. Following the ombudsman's recommendation, the municipality removed the additional requirements that were inconsistent with the law from its binding regulations, thereby ensuring equal access to the meal allowance for all large families.

On Municipal Co-financing for Catering at Vocational Education Institutions

The Riga City Council's methodology for allocating co-funding for school meals has been formally assessed as unfair. Support is provided to pupils in general education institutions but is withheld from those in vocational education institutions (such as technical schools and colleges), despite both groups being of a similar age, remaining under parental care, and lacking the capacity to support themselves independently. Furthermore, it has been observed that young people from socially vulnerable backgrounds — including those from low-income households or large families — frequently opt for vocational education to acquire a trade more expediently.

The Municipality has been urged to address this inequity and to extend co-funding to students in vocational education institutions; however, no concrete solution has yet been identified.

On Support for a Foster Family Caring for a Stateless Child

Individuals are entitled to state social benefits for a child who has been assigned a personal identity number, maintains an active status in the Register of Natural Persons, and is a permanent resident of Latvia. A child with no established legal status in Latvia was placed with a foster family; consequently, it was impossible to award the allowance to which the foster family is entitled for the child care and supervision. Local and national authorities had long been unable to determine the child's legal status; consequently, the ombudsperson issued a recommendation to the Minister for Welfare to identify a solution that ensures emergency foster families receive benefits immediately upon a child's placement. The recommendation has been implemented.

On Allowance for the Maintenance of a Child in Foster Care

The Ministry of Welfare has been urged to address the unequal treatment of children placed with foster families by proposing amendments to Section 78 of Cabinet Regulation No. 354 of 26 June 2018, Regulations for Foster Families, stipulating that the child maintenance allowance must be at least double the minimum Child maintenance amount set by the Cabinet of Ministers.

The recommendation has been implemented.

Rights of Orphans and Children Deprived of Parental Care



The state has a duty to provide special protection for orphans and children deprived of parental care, as they constitute a socially vulnerable group. For these children, the stability and quality of their living environment are more precarious than for those raised within their families; consequently, they are more acutely affected by the shortcomings of the child protection system. State and municipal authorities have a duty to ensure social safeguards for orphans and children deprived of parental care.

Description of the Reporting Period

The ombudsman has repeatedly emphasized the necessity of prioritizing the protection of children in care; however, this issue remains unresolved. This issue became strikingly evident during an inspection of the 'Vecružina' social services centre, where it was discovered that children with special needs are compelled to pursue their education in a different municipality and — necessitated by the lengthy commute — reside in a boarding school, as the Rēzekne Municipal Council has failed to ensure the availability of appropriate special education programmes within its jurisdiction.

This is not merely a question of the municipality's duty, as stipulated in the Education Law, to guarantee that a child can access basic education at an institution in close proximity to their place of residence. This is fundamentally a matter of the attitude toward children in out-of-home care. While these children already suffer from the lack of a family environment, their situation is exacerbated by municipal inaction,

which deprives them of the limited stability, security, and care they might otherwise receive within an institutional setting.

In response to the recommendation, the municipality promptly engaged in discussions with the children and local educational institutions. As a result, two children were able to continue their education within the Rēzekne County, closer to their place of residence, thereby receiving appropriate support measures. Having assessed the third child's individual needs and considered his desire to maintain his current social environment and friendships, the authorities supported his decision to continue his education at his existing institution.

An Overview of Key Cases

On Parental Participation in a Child's Health Care

A foster family prohibited a parent, whose custody rights had been suspended, from accompanying the child to a neurologist's appointment. While legislation does not explicitly mandate that foster families ensure parental attendance at every medical appointment, it also contains no provision prohibiting such participation.

Parental involvement fosters a greater understanding of the child's health status and facilitates the continuity of care necessary for the child's eventual reintegration into their biological family. Emphasizing that the fundamental aim of the foster care system is to support a child's reunification with their parents, the Orphan and Custody Court is urged to discuss with the foster family their duty to foster parental cooperation, including allowing parents to accompany the child to medical visits where possible.

On the Representation of a Child's Personal and Property Rights in Foster Families

In practice, Orphan and Custody Courts — which serve as the legal representatives of children in foster care — frequently authorize foster families to perform their duties on their behalf, including representation in criminal proceedings. At the same time, foster families are not reimbursed for these expenses. There is a significant risk that the Orphan and Custody Court's role as legal representative is becoming purely formalistic. The Ministry of Welfare is therefore urged to consider enhancing the regulatory framework to better delineate the responsibilities shared between these courts and foster families.

While it has been proposed that foster families receive compensation for carrying out duties assigned by the Orphan and Custody Court, the Ministry of Welfare currently maintains that there are no significant shortcomings in the existing legal framework or its practical application.



The protection of the rights of persons with disabilities is enshrined in Article 91 of the Constitution and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the implementation of which is monitored by the ombudsman. The protection of the rights of persons with disabilities encompasses a wide range of areas, including: the prohibition of discrimination, the provision of accessibility, the right to life, education, employment, and health care. Furthermore, it covers adaptation and rehabilitation services, the right to an adequate standard of living and social protection, as well as the right to participate in political, public, and cultural life, and sports, etc.

Description of the Reporting Period

In 2025, the ombudsman received 38 submissions pertaining to the rights of people with disabilities.⁹ This figure represents a decrease in the number of submissions compared to the 56 cases received in 2024.¹⁰ The residents primarily highlighted barriers to accessibility — particularly regarding information and technology — alongside concerns involving employment and deficiencies in the provision of community-based services.

During the reporting period, the ombudsperson's Advisory Council on Disability Issues was established to evaluate the current implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Latvia. Its mandate includes ascertaining the perspectives of persons with disabilities regarding the exercise of their rights, as well as assessing the efficacy of measures taken by state and local authorities to uphold these protections.

During the reporting period, various issues concerning the rights of persons with mental health conditions, prompted by submissions from the individuals themselves and other stakeholders were addressed. Key areas of focus included the right to community living, freedom of choosing one's place of residence, the right to privacy, and the appointment of guardianship. Consequently, recommendations were issued to state and local authorities, aimed at strengthening the safeguards for persons with disabilities in alignment with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

⁹ Excluding submissions alleging potential discrimination on the grounds of disability.

¹⁰ The method of recording submissions changed in 2025 compared to 2024.

Furthermore, the measures were taken in specific cases to ensure the lawfulness of involuntary admissions to psychoneurological hospitals. These efforts have included highlighting to the relevant authorities the right of such individuals to receive comprehensive information regarding available community-based services, in accordance with the aforementioned convention.

During this period, a number of verification procedures were examined, to assess various aspects relating to the protection of the rights of this vulnerable group and possible infringements of their rights. In the course of examining these submissions, the Orphan and Custody Courts have been repeatedly urged to pay closer attention to the quality of guardianship performance.

People with mental health conditions were provided with guidance regarding their right to a fair trial and state-funded legal aid. Furthermore, advisory support was offered on matters concerning involuntary psychiatric care, the appointment of guardians, and established procedures for resolving disputes between wards and their appointed guardians. In summary, this reporting period once again highlights the issues surrounding the initial lack of access to legal aid for vulnerable individuals, including both people with mental health conditions themselves, as well as their relatives. Furthermore, it highlights a critical need for ongoing education among the professionals responsible for interpreting the law and providing daily aid and support to these individuals.

The ombudsperson has issued an opinion to the State Ltd. 'National Centre for Mental Health' regarding the application of Article 68 of the Medical Treatment Law, prompted by issues brought to the attention of the Ombudsman's Office. The ombudsperson submitted an opinion to the Orphan and Custody Court concerning the procedures for opening bank accounts for individuals with limited legal capacity.

The Ombudsman's Office maintained a strong focus on the provision of community-based social care services (day care centres, group homes, specialised workshops) in municipalities by conducting systematic inspections of the services.

Following submissions from individuals alleging potential violations of the rights of persons with disabilities to community living, the ombudsman evaluated group home-based (apartment) services in two municipalities and issued recommendations for service improvements.

In the area of children with special needs, the rights and safety of pupils with diabetes in educational institutions have remained a priority concern for the Ombudsman's Office for several years, viewed from a variety of perspectives. For example, while efforts in previous years focused on the broader aspects of inclusive education, the reporting period has been characterized by intense public debate regarding the roles and responsibilities of school nurses — specifically concerning their authority to initiate and administer essential medical procedures, such as insulin injections.

A recent case involving a school under the jurisdiction of the Riga City Council, which refused to administer insulin to a child, highlighted a contentious interpretation of existing legislation. Both the municipality and the institution adopted a restrictive stance, arguing that regulations concerning preventive pupil healthcare mandate only general support, rather than the administration of specific medical procedures. This restrictive interpretation effectively shifted an undue burden onto the child, necessitating self-administration of insulin and thereby jeopardising their right to a safe and inclusive educational environment.

In response to inquiries from the Ombudsman's Office, the Health Inspectorate and the State Education Quality Service issued official clarifications, affirming that school nurses, being certified healthcare professionals, are authorized to perform medical injections. Consequently, heads of educational institutions have a mandatory duty to ensure that medical support prescribed by the attending physician is provided, confirming that such tasks may be delegated to any trained member of staff. A formal recommendation to the school and the municipality was issued, requiring them to ensure that the child with type 1 diabetes is provided with the necessary practical assistance for the administration of insulin injections.

The ombudsman has conducted extensive research on the rights of persons with disabilities,¹¹ organised dedicated conferences to address these matters, and engaged in various public awareness-raising initiatives, both within Latvia and at the international level.¹²

An Overview of Key Cases

On Exemption from the Payment of the Vehicle Operation Tax

The ombudsperson [called upon](#) the Ministry of Transport to draft and submit for approval amendments to both the Law on the Vehicle Operation Tax and Company Car Tax and Cabinet Regulation No. 858 of 11 December 2012, "Procedures for the Payment of the Vehicle Operation Tax and Company Car Tax." These amendments aim to extend tax exemptions to parents of adults with a Group I disability, provided the individual has been assessed as requiring special care due to a disability originating in childhood.

The recommendation has been implemented.

¹¹ For further details, see the 'Research' section of the report.

¹² For further details, see the section of the report entitled 'Public Awareness and Engagement'.

On Survivor's Pension for a Person with a Disability Since Childhood

The ombudsperson urged the Ministry of Welfare to initiate amendments to Section 19, Paragraph 2, Clause 1 of the Law On State Pensions by establishing the right to a survivor's pension for individuals whose disability is caused by a 'childhood illness,' regardless of the date on which the disability was determined.

The recommendation has not been implemented.

On the Provision of Dental Services for Long-term Psychiatric Patients

Building upon the findings concerning the dental services available to long-term psychiatric patients and the extent to which these are funded from state budget brought to life in verification procedure No. 2024-75-2AD, 2CD, 19B, the Ombudsman's Office held a discussion with representatives of the National Health Service and the Ministry of Health to address the accessibility and state funding of dental services for long-term psychiatric patients. The discussion concluded that amendments to Sub-section 4.1.6 of Cabinet Regulation No. 555 of 28 August 2018 "Procedures for the Organisation of and Payment for Health Care Services" are essential. Furthermore, the participants emphasized the need to improve the dissemination of information regarding these services to the specific target group.

Appropriate recommendations have been made to improve the regulatory framework and clarify the available information. At the time of the compilation of this report, the recommendations are found to have been partially implemented. Consequently, the ombudsperson will continue to monitor this issue throughout 2026.

On the Amendment to the Sexual and Reproductive Health Law

Continuing the oversight of the issue first raised in 2024 regarding the surgical sterilization of persons with limited legal capacity under Section 24, Paragraph 3, Clause 2 of the Sexual and Reproductive Health Law, which permits such procedures with the consent of a guardian, the ombudsman renewed their call to the Ministry of Health in 2025. The ombudsman highlighted the incompatibility of this provision with international human rights standards and urged the Ministry to amend the current legislative framework.

The amendment to the Law on Sexual and Reproductive Health adopted on 18 December 2025 and effective as of 20 January 2026, removes the requirement for guardian consent for surgical contraception.

On Contraindications to Receiving Social Services

In 2025, the ombudsman formally approached the Ministry of Welfare to address the lack of access to community-based social services for individuals subject to court-ordered outpatient medical coercive measures, as well as those identified to be at high risk of suicide.

In light of the Ministry of Welfare's announcement that a draft amendment to Cabinet Regulation No. 138, "Regulations Regarding the Receipt of Social Services and Social Assistance," is currently being prepared — which may include a review of contraindications — the ombudsperson will continue to monitor the progress of these legislative developments throughout 2026.

On a Person's Participation in Decision-making

In an individual case, the Ombudsman's Office repeatedly urged both municipal social services and the Orphan and Custody Court to prioritize the protection of the rights of vulnerable person with limited legal capacity. It was established that the individual is not provided with comprehensive information regarding community-based services available in the municipality, nor is their opinion on the choice of residence duly heard. Consequently, the relevant municipal authorities were requested to provide the individual with appropriate information and ensure their meaningful participation in the decision-making process.

On the Municipal Assistant for a Child Requiring Special Care

The mother of a child with functional impairments requested assistance in securing a personal assistant for her child, stating that she could no longer manage these responsibilities alongside her professional and academic obligations. In practice, the role of a personal assistant for children with disabilities is frequently assumed by parents due to insufficient remuneration and staffing shortages; however, legislation does not impose an obligation on families to secure their own service providers or to bear these responsibilities themselves.

Under the existing regulatory framework, the social services department bears the obligation to not only grant access to services but also to guarantee their actual delivery, including by entering into agreements with legal entities. Consequently, the Ādaži Municipality was requested to take an active role in securing a support worker, with the ombudsman emphasizing that upon receiving a request from a parent, the social services department bears the responsibility to identify a solution and ensure the child is provided with the necessary support person.

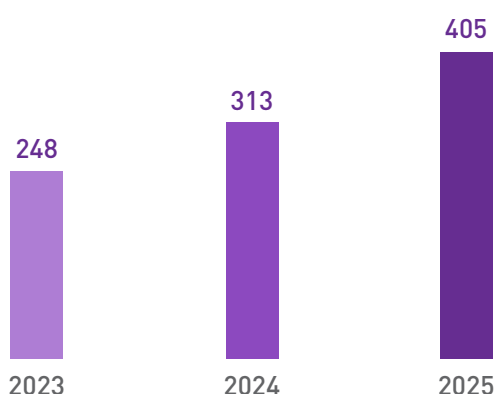


Even while in detention, an individual retains all fundamental rights, with the sole exception of the right to liberty. It is the State's obligation to ensure that any restrictions on fundamental rights are proportionate and strictly limited to what is necessitated by the inherent nature of imprisonment. The State bears the responsibility to ensure that the conditions and environment within correctional facilities do not cause the individual to experience additional suffering or hardship.

Description of the Reporting Period

Figure 28

Prisoners' rights (number of submissions)



In 2025, the Office received 405 submissions from correctional facilities, covering issues related to both conditions of detention and other human rights matters outside the prison system.

Consequently, in 2025, the number of submissions received from correctional facilities increased by 29% compared to the previous year, rising from 313 submissions in 2024 (see Figure 28). This trend may be attributed to two primary factors: the transition to a two-tier prison system and the appointment of a new ombudsperson, as leadership transitions historically correlate with an increase in public engagement with the institution. Accordingly, the total volume of submissions received by the Ombudsman's Office saw an overall increase in 2025. Riga Central Prison (125) and Daugavgrīva Prison (111) continue to account for the highest volume of submissions received.

Submissions regarding life in correctional facilities highlight several critical issues. Notably, complaints concerning detention and the enforcement of sentences have increased to 182, up from 124 in 2024 and 100 in 2023. Furthermore, submissions regarding medical care have risen significantly to 79 (from 53 in 2024 and 28 in 2023), with specific emphasis placed on the provision of medication, timely access to specialists, and the challenges in contacting the Emergency Medical Service (NMPD) during nighttime hours.

Twenty-one submissions were received regarding dishonest conduct or the abuse of authority by prison personnel (compared to 17 in 2024 and 10 in 2023). Notably, one of these submissions included a specific allegation of physical violence committed by a staff member against an inmate. Furthermore, 22 submissions were received (up from 16 in 2024 and 12 in 2023) regarding substandard living conditions. These concerns specifically pertained to isolation cells, exercise yards, and quarantine areas, as well as the presence of insects and inadequate spatial configurations within the cells. In addition, the Ombudsman's Office received 69 submissions in which inmates sought clarification on various matters, compared to 47 in 2024 and 60 in 2023.

Complaints have been received from open prisons regarding limited opportunities for inmates to independently visit medical practitioners outside the facility. Inmates have further noted a lack of cooperation from prison medical staff in implementing treatment recommendations provided by external specialists, particularly regarding the administration of prescribed medication.

Concurrently, the Office continued to receive submissions regarding the persistence of informal hierarchies within prisons. Simultaneously, following adjustments to the regulatory framework, there has been a notable increase in complaints concerning restrictions on the use of video game consoles.

The Ombudsman's Office was actively involved in the drafting of legislation, submitting formal opinions regarding the proposed Law on the Execution of Criminal Sentences and several related regulatory enactment governing imprisonment. However, the year 2025 was most notably marked by the completion of Latvia's first newly constructed prison — a pivotal development for the safe enforcement of custodial sentences and the assurance of detention conditions that align with international human rights standards. However, the ongoing shortage of both custodial and medical staff remains a critical challenge. This deficit undermines the protection of prisoners' rights and presents tangible safety risks to correctional personnel and the wider community.

An Overview of Key Cases

On the Medical Rehabilitation of Prisoners

As early as 2024, the [issue](#) of ensuring prisoner access to medical rehabilitation moved to the forefront of the ombudsman's agenda. Relevant authorities have indicated plans to establish a dedicated rehabilitation ward within the Latvian Prison Hospital. Given the significant interest expressed by inmates regarding this matter, a formal request was submitted in 2025 for an update on the progress of this initiative. The response received indicates that, due to budgetary constraints, funding has not been allocated for this initiative. However, the authorities have indicated that they will continue to explore alternative options for providing these services. In the interim, prisoners remain eligible to access rehabilitation services externally; however, this is contingent upon their ability to cover the costs independently.

On Visits to Detained Persons

During the reporting year, the issue regarding the frequency and duration of visits to detainees gained increased relevance.

In accordance with Section 13, Paragraph 1, Clause 6 of the Law on the Procedures for Holding under Arrest, detainees are entitled to at least one visit per month with a minimum duration of one hour. Given that detainees were routinely granted only the minimum one-hour monthly visit, the Ombudsman's Office [called upon](#) the relevant authorities to conduct individual assessments when determining the duration and frequency of visits.

The responses received indicate a lack of uniformity in the implementation of visitation rights: in the largest facilities, the duration of monthly visits is limited to between one hour and one hour and five minutes, whereas other institutions allow for visits of up to two hours per month. In the view of the relevant authorities, an individual assessment is conducted, citing constraints such as detainee populations, staffing levels, and infrastructure availability. Furthermore, they noted that following the opening of the new prison in 2026, they intend to reassess prison capacity and explore potential solutions.

On the Conditions of Detention for Persons with Disabilities

During the reporting year, the issue of prisoners with disabilities and limited self-care capacity emerged as a matter of urgent concern.

A pertinent case illustrating this issue was identified at Jelgava Prison. Although the inmate, whose self-care capacity was severely impaired by medical conditions, was periodically transferred to the Latvian Prison Hospital for treatment, he spent the majority of his time in his cell, where his care was largely left to the responsibility of a cellmate.

In light of these findings, the relevant authorities were urged to take immediate action, with a particular emphasis on the urgent need to establish access to professional care services for inmates in need. Failure to provide such assistance constitutes a violation of the prohibition against inhuman or degrading treatment.

The Ministry of Justice asserted that the individual in question remains under medical supervision and that the Latvian Prison Administration has implemented all necessary measures to mitigate the situation. Furthermore, solutions to ensure the provision of appropriate conditions for the detainee will be sought.

Rights of Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons; Legal Status of Individuals

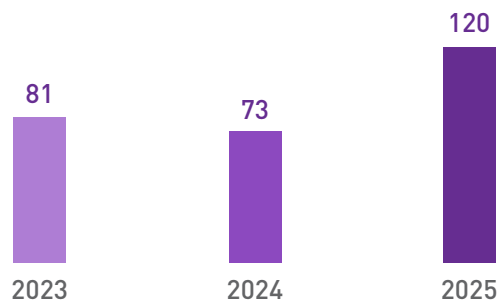


Both the Constitution and the international legal instruments binding on Latvia stipulate that the fundamental human rights of every individual must be protected. While certain fundamental human rights, such as the right to life, must be guaranteed to every individual regardless of their legal status, the scope of other rights and obligations is inherently linked to a person's residence status — whether they are a national, a permanent resident, an asylum seeker, or a recipient of international protection.

Description of the Reporting Period

Figure 29

**Rights of foreign nationals and stateless persons;
legal status of individuals (number of submissions)**



In 2025, the Ombudsman's Office observed an increase in the number of submissions concerning the rights of foreign nationals and stateless persons, as well as issues related to an individual's legal status, compared to 2024.

In 2024, the Ombudsman's Office received 73 such submissions, whereas in 2025 the number rose to 120, representing a 64% increase (see Figure 29).

The submissions addressed to the Ombudsman's Office primarily concerned the granting and denial of residence permits, the revocation of citizenship, as well as the rights of asylum seekers and persons subject to deportation.

In 2025, the ombudsman continued to engage in the legislative process by submitting several [proposals](#) and considerations regarding the second reading of the new Immigration Law. Similarly, within the scope of its mandate, the Ombudsman's Office engaged in the implementation of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, including by participating in the designated working group and regularly providing its views on proposed amendments to various EU legislative acts regarding migration.

An Overview of Key Cases

On the Revocation of Citizenship from Young Persons Who Had Acquired Dual Citizenship

The Ombudsman's Office received several submissions regarding the revocation of Latvian citizenship from young adults who, upon reaching the age of 18, had acquired dual citizenship with a country with which dual citizenship is generally not permitted. In such instances, the Citizenship Law stipulates that the individual must make a formal choice regarding which citizenship to retain by the age of 25.

In response to these submissions, the Ombudsman's Office addressed a [request](#) to the Ministry of the Interior and the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs to ensure that young people subject to Section 23, Paragraph 3 of the Citizenship Law are notified in a timely manner of their obligation to choose which citizenship to retain, as well as the legal consequences of failing to do so.

On Obtaining a Residence Permit While in Prison

A foreign national in custody sought the assistance of the Ombudsman's Office, citing an inability to file a residence permit application while detained. The issue was initially raised with the Ministry of the Interior. Subsequently, the Latvian Prison Administration and the administration of the relevant prison were requested to take into account the views of the Ombudsman's Office and the Ministry of the Interior, namely that residence permits may be processed and issued to foreign nationals who are held in custody pending the delivery of a final judgment.

On the Partial Closure of Border Control Crossing Points

In response to a request from a Parliament (Saeima) committee, the ombudsman provided [an opinion](#) regarding the human rights impact of Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 166 of 19 March 2025, On the establishment of requirements for entry by motor vehicles only at the border crossing points "Pāternieki", "Terehova", and "Grebņeva". The opinion concludes that the requirement to cross the border by motor vehicle does not, in and of itself, restrict human rights, provided that State Border Guard officials may, in specific circumstances, grant exceptions and allow certain groups of persons to cross the border on foot. In accordance with Article 98 of the Constitution, such an exception must be permitted for Latvian citizens wishing to return to Latvia.

The ombudsman further emphasized that the Cabinet of Ministers' order constitutes a general administrative act and, therefore, cannot alter the procedure for submitting asylum applications as prescribed by Section 6 of the Asylum Law.

On Visits Carried Out

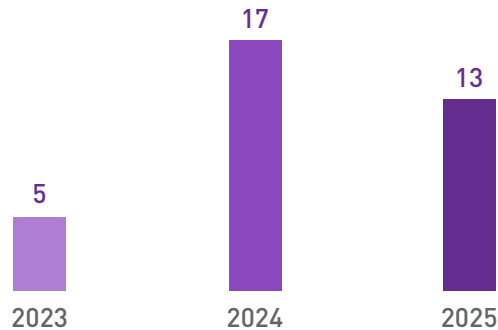
On 26 February 2025, representatives from the Ombudsman's Office conducted a visit to the 'Liepna' Asylum Seekers' Accommodation Centre, where they examined the provision of basic necessities and medical care for individuals accommodated at the centre, as well as their access to education and other related issues. In addition, it was concluded that the regulatory framework requires improvement by establishing liability for residents who fail to comply with the centre's internal rules of conduct.

On 21 November 2025, representatives from the Ombudsman's Office visited the 'Mucenieki' Detention Centre for detained foreign nationals. Following the visit, [a letter](#) was drafted requesting that the Ministry of the Interior, in cooperation with the State Border Guard and the Office of Citizenship and Affairs, take the necessary measures to eliminate unsanitary conditions and pest infestations within the accommodation and detention centres for asylum seekers and foreign nationals.

Monitoring of Forced Returns

Figure 30

Surveys of foreign nationals to be repatriated (number)



In 2025, 89 decisions regarding the forced removal of foreign nationals were issued, 88 of which were subsequently executed.

Pursuant to the obligations set out in Section 50. of the Immigration Law, observers from the Ombudsman's Office interviewed 13 foreign nationals pending compulsory removal during the reporting period and participated in four actual removal operations (see Figure 30).

When monitoring forced returns, the ombudsman prioritised cases involving a risk of the use of force or the removal of vulnerable persons. Similarly, in response to a complaint from an individual, the Ombudsman's Office contacted the State Border Guard, urging it to investigate the situation and ensure that the detained person's right to appeal the forced removal decision in court is upheld.

In an observer capacity, a representative of the Ombudsman's Office also participated in a forced return operation coordinated by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (*Frontex*) from another European Union Member State.

Prevention of Human Trafficking



Human trafficking is one of the most serious human rights violations imaginable. It is a gross affront to human dignity and physical integrity that exploits vulnerability, helplessness, and lack of awareness. This crisis affects a vast number of people, particularly the most vulnerable populations, including children, women, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and the socially marginalized people. It is estimated that around 50 million people worldwide are living in conditions of modern-day slavery.

The main aim of human trafficking is the exploitation of individuals, usually for financial gain. Human trafficking manifests in various forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, compelled criminal activity, forced begging, domestic servitude, and coerced marriage. However, the phenomenon of human trafficking continues to evolve, becoming increasingly difficult to track. This shift is driven by both emerging forms of exploitation — such as illegal adoption and the exploitation of surrogate mothers — and the expanding role of the digital environment in facilitating these crimes.

Furthermore, artificial intelligence also plays a role in human trafficking, as it can be used to conceal the true identity of the traffickers. Digital technology is being weaponized against children through the creation of manipulated sexual images. Traffickers take original photographs and digitally alter them or use facial-swapping techniques to create nude content, which is then disseminated online for financial gain.

Human trafficking is a global problem, and the European Union is no exception. According to data published by *Eurostat*, the number of registered human trafficking victims in the European Union reached 9,678 in 2024, representing an 8% decrease compared to 2023.

Almost two-thirds (63%) of the registered victims of human trafficking in 2024 were women or girls. While sexual exploitation remains the most prevalent form of human trafficking within the European Union, accounting for 46% of cases, there has been a significant rise in victims trafficked for forced labour and services. Over the last six years, this category has grown substantially, reaching 41% of all recorded cases by 2024.

Human trafficking is a reality in Latvia too: In Latvia, the number of identified human trafficking victims fluctuated over the last three years, with 24 cases recorded in 2023, 38 in 2024, and 22 in 2025. Identified victims of human trafficking include both Latvian nationals and third-country nationals, who have been subjected to exploitation either within Latvia or abroad.

Comprehensive data for 2025 is not yet fully available at the time of this report. Therefore, 2024 remains the most recent year for which complete, finalized statistics are provided. Specifically, of the 38 human trafficking victims identified in 2024, 21 were Latvian nationals and 17 were third-country nationals. Latvia was the most frequent site of exploitation, accounting for 17 cases. Within this group, the majority of victims were third-country nationals. In contrast, Latvian nationals were primarily subjected to exploitation abroad. The majority of identified victims were adults, while four were minors.

In 2024, labour exploitation remained the most common form of human trafficking in Latvia, accounting for 16 cases. This was followed by sexual exploitation (9 cases) and forced sham marriages (4 cases). In addition, nine individuals were identified as victims of other forms of human trafficking in 2024, including forced begging and the compulsion to commit criminal offenses. This represents a significant increase compared with previous years: while only four cases of 'other' forms of exploitation were identified in 2023, a total of only two such cases were recorded between 2016 and 2022. This upward trend underscores the evolving and increasingly diverse nature of human trafficking.

Description of the Reporting Period

There are virtually no complaints regarding human trafficking issues brought to the ombudsman's attention, and there were none in 2025 either. The investigation of this serious crime falls under the competence of the State Police, while victim assistance is provided by social service providers, specifically the association "Centrs MARTA" and the association 'Patvērums "Drošā māja". However, in accordance with the mandate to promote public awareness, the ombudsman continued public education initiatives on human trafficking launched in previous years.

Personnel from the Ombudsman's Office continued to participate in the 'Ready for Life' school program, during which they delivered lectures to pupils on human trafficking. In 2025, 13 lectures on human trafficking were delivered to school pupils in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 2025, experts from the Ombudsman's Office, together with representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the 'Centrs MARTA' association, visited 18 Latvian schools offering specialized educational programs or boarding facilities to educate students and teachers on the risks of human trafficking. Experience to date indicates that children and young people in out-of-home care or enrolled in special educational programs are at a higher risk of becoming victims of human trafficking.

An Overview of Key Cases

Guidelines for the Prevention of Human Trafficking and Labour Exploitation Risks in Public Procurement

In 2025, the ombudsman, in collaboration with the Ministry of the Interior and the Procurement Monitoring Bureau, completed the development of [guidelines](#) to mitigate the risks of human trafficking and labour exploitation within public procurement. These guidelines will strengthen the reputation of contracting authorities —state and local government bodies — as socially responsible entities by ensuring secure procurement processes that protect those involved from labour exploitation and human trafficking. Awareness initiatives for these guidelines are planned for 2026.

The principle of good governance



Principles of good governance include transparency toward individuals and the public, data protection, and the fair conduct of proceedings within a reasonable timeframe. "Similarly, the principle of good governance is understood to encompass further provisions aimed at ensuring that public administration respects the rights and legitimate interests of private individuals.

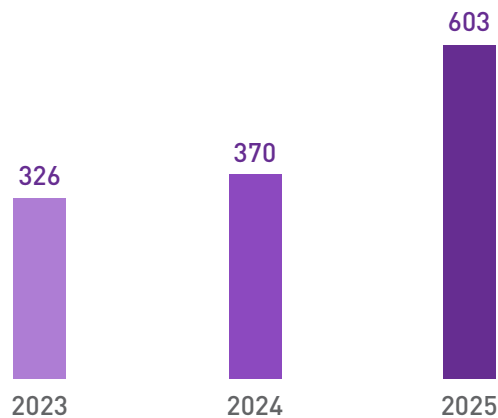
Description of the Reporting Period

The Ombudsman's Office addressed the principle of good governance from both a systemic and an individual perspective throughout the reporting period.

From a systemic perspective, a study was conducted titled "[The Institute for the Rotation of Civil Servants: Data, Trends and Risks \(Ierēdņu pārcelšanas institūts: dati, tendences un riski\)](#)". Recognized as the first large-scale study on the actual implementation of civil servant transfers, its findings served as the basis for a public debate in late 2025 titled "[The Rotation of Civil Servants Balancing Public Trust, Efficiency and Good Governance!](#)" ([Ierēdņu pārcelšana starp sabiedrības uzticību, efektivitāti un labu pārvaldību!](#)).

Figure 31

Submissions relating to good governance (number of submissions)



During the reporting year, 603 submissions relating to good governance were received. This represents a significantly higher number of submissions than in 2024, when 370 submissions were received, and in 2023, when 326 submissions were received. Overall, the number of submissions increased by 63% in 2025 compared with 2024 (see Figure 31).

In 2025, breaches of the principle of good governance were largely individual in nature, with the majority of reports alleging violations by local authorities.¹³ Most of the reports came from the residents. Overall, an upward trend is observed in the willingness of institutions to rectify their errors.

Throughout the reporting period, several distinct sub-themes emerged in which violations of the principle of good governance were identified.

Acting in the Best Interests of People and Correcting Mistakes

During the reporting year, several instances were identified where public administration acted commendably. For example, in response to a complaint regarding the Dienvidkurzeme Municipal Council's refusal to pay funeral allowances to registered partners, the council clarified that its current regulations on remuneration and social guarantees for educational staff did not provide for such benefits. The municipality acknowledged the necessity of amending the relevant regulations; however, it clarified that such actions were not currently feasible, as the amendments were not provided for by legislation of higher legal force.

Following a request from the Ombudsman's Office to apply Article 110 of the Constitution — citing, among other factors, the Ministry of Justice's opinion — the Dienvidkurzeme Municipal Council paid the funeral allowance.

¹³ Note: It is not always possible to identify the party responsible for a breach of the good governance principle based on the submission alone.

However, upon reviewing an [application of an individual](#) for the restoration of land ownership rights to an heir, it was determined that the Sigulda Municipal Council had acted in error in 2014 by adopting a decision to terminate the individual's permanent land use rights. The municipality did not notify the addressee of this decision until 2021.

The regulatory framework concerning the termination of permanent land use rights was applicable solely to persons holding land granted for permanent use, wherein such rights were subject to redemption. This procedure did not apply to the applicant, as she had already been granted the right to restore her title to the land. In 2025, the Sigulda District Council revoked its previous decision, restoring the applicant's entitlement to property rights as the heir of the former landowner.

While examining another submission, the Ombudsman's Office found that the Vidzeme Regional Administration of the Nature Conservation Agency had issued an unlawful administrative act that harmed the individual concerned. Specifically, the individual was ordered to fell the pine trees and remove the fence on their property within the "Vērenes muižas aleja" protected nature area, despite the fact that the area's protected status was granted well after the trees were planted and the fence was erected. The Ombudsman's Office called on the Nature Conservation Agency to review the legality of the administrative act, which was subsequently repealed.

Upon reviewing the submission of a self-employed individual, it was determined that the State Social Insurance Agency (VSAA) had deferred the allocation of sickness benefits; specifically, the agency's interim decision contained erroneous information that misled the applicant regarding her entitlements. The Ombudsman's Office found that the State Social Insurance Agency had failed to amend the content of the interim decision. The VSAA acknowledged that the erroneous content necessitated the issuance of a revised interim decision. In accordance with the principles of good governance, the VSAA contacted the submitter and granted the sickness benefit.

In examining the verification procedure [No. 2024-61-16B,27D](#), which addressed an error by the State Land Service (VZD) in the cadastral register and a failure to inform the affected individual, the VZD was advised to issue a formal apology. Additionally, the agency was directed to review its internal procedures to mitigate future occurrences; where errors do arise, the agency is expected to acknowledge and rectify them in a transparent manner, ensuring the affected individual is duly notified. The VZD apologised to the individual.

In a separate case, the Ombudsman's Office established that "Rīgas namu pārvaldnieks," a municipal housing management company, had continued to issue invoices to an individual for a property destroyed by fire, notwithstanding the individual's previous relinquishment of ownership. It was determined that a systemic failure in inter-agency communication had occurred, as information regarding the destruction

of the apartment by fire had not been duly transmitted to the relevant authorities of the Riga City Council. Following the Ombudsman's intervention, the municipality expressed its willingness to cover all property-related charges, including debts accumulated over the year, and to initiate the necessary steps to register the property in the Land Register under the name of the Riga City Council.

Compliance with the Law and Respect for Rights

During the reporting period, the ombudsperson urged the Prime Minister, in line with the principle of good governance, to refrain from referring complaints regarding the Director of the Corruption Prevention Bureau back to the Bureau where the complainant had lodged the complaint against the Director personally. This recommendation was issued in consideration of the fact that the head of the relevant institution is subject to institutional oversight by the Cabinet of Ministers, which is exercised through the Prime Minister.

In another instance, the ombudsperson concluded that the Sigulda Municipal Council neglected its statutory obligation to evaluate the reputation of a candidate for a board position within a limited company. Additionally, the Council's failure to invite the candidate to express their views, combined with the unnecessary duplication of administrative procedures, constituted a breach of the principle of good governance. The municipality was urged to adhere to the principles of good governance when organizing public competitions.

In another case, the Ombudsman's Office [found](#) that the Valmiera Municipality processes applications for Grade 1 enrolment in the order in which they are submitted to the municipality's central register. The Ombudsman's Office concluded that this was not in line with the principle of good governance. Specifically, the current registration procedure poses a significant risk of administrative error and compromises the principle of equal opportunity for children to attend the educational institution closest to their place of residence. As the queue position is determined by the precise time of application rather than geographic proximity or residency, the process fails to adequately account for the interests of local children. Such a procedure is disproportionate and fails to safeguard the right of the child to receive an education at the establishment in closest proximity to their place of residence. The municipality opted not to alter the underlying registration system; however, it formally specified the criteria under which children from the district would receive priority for admission.

In verification procedure No. 2025-75-20A, the ombudsperson concluded that improvements are needed to ensure an effective child supervision service and a timely response to violations, including the ability to immediately remove offenders from the register of service providers. The current regulatory framework governing child supervision services lacks uniformity and necessitates inter-agency

cooperation. Consequently, there is insufficient clarity for the public regarding the appropriate channels for reporting suspected violence against a child by a service provider. The ombudsperson recommended that the Ministry of Welfare draft comprehensive guidelines to guarantee a harmonized institutional approach to the protection of children's rights in the context of child supervision services.

Failure to Respond Within the Time Limit Prescribed by Law

Mirroring its 2024 performance, the State Education Quality Service was found to have failed to adhere to the time limits prescribed by law for issuing responses in 2025. The Ombudsman's Office addressed the Minister of Education and Science to highlight this persistent failure. Unfortunately, the situation has not changed.

These problems have also been persisting in the Ropaži Municipality for another year.

Ventspils Municipal Council delayed its response to the application by several months before issuing an apology to the applicant.

The Riga City Council's Department of Outdoor Space and Mobility Projects, in correspondence with a resident regarding public safety concerns stemming from unregulated electric scooter traffic in Riga, failed to register one of the submissions, thereby failing to provide a timely response. Several months later, upon discovering this error, the authority issued a comprehensive response.

Delays in responding to applications were also identified within the Preiļi District Council and the Orphan and Custody Court of the Dienvidkurzeme Municipal Council.

Failure to Provide a Substantive Response

The Ombudsman's Office found that the Ministry of the Interior had failed to provide a substantive response to a public official's request for an *ex post* assessment of the appropriateness of the official's rotation. The Ombudsman's Office concluded that, pursuant to case law, a substantive response from the Ministry of the Interior was required to clarify the feasibility of an *ex post* assessment of the rotation, or provide reasons if it was not. The Ministry of the Interior had failed to do so.

The Ropaži Municipality twice neglected to substantively consider or respond to applications submitted by non-governmental organizations regarding the granting of hunting lease rights on municipal parcels, citing the applicants' failure to meet formal requirements stipulated in the municipality's regulatory enactments.

Formalistic Approach to Case Handling

The Ombudsman's Office noted that the Preiļi Municipal Council exhibited a formalistic approach in its response to a submission from a resident acting on behalf of the local community to ascertain the council's stance regarding the construction of a wind farm. The ombudsman noted that the submission addressed serious matters regarding the municipality, which had been unjustifiably treated by the municipality as a mere expression of opinion. Similarly, the municipality's objection to the lack of attached signatures, submitted on behalf of the residents, was merely a procedural formality. Instead of contacting the applicant and requesting the relevant information, the municipality issued a formalistic reply.

Furthermore, the Ombudsman's Office concluded that the Balvi Municipal Council adopted a formalistic approach to the Local Government Law, failing to engage the Rugāji Parish Residents' Council in the decision-making process regarding the relocation of the primary school classes at Rugāji Secondary School, as well as the Rugāji Library and the history room at the Rugāji Community Centre. The Ombudsman's Office found that the municipality's adherence to mere formalities was inconsistent with the principle of good governance and failed to promote effective collaboration with residents' representatives. The Balvi Municipal Council was advised to consult with residents' councils in a timely manner.

An Overview of Key Cases

Ensuring Fair Procedures and Safeguarding People's Interests

The Ombudsman's Office has noted [prior instances](#) wherein the State Revenue Service (SRS) engaged in practices inconsistent with good governance, particularly concerning the handling of protracted correspondence with taxpayers, resulting in subsequent consequences. A comparable trend was identified during the reporting year: although the SRS seemingly offers advisory support to taxpayers, its experts lack a uniform framework for determining when to issue notifications regarding legal actions — a deficiency that is particularly notable in cases, where the position of the SRS remains unambiguous.

The ombudsman acknowledged that such a notification should be issued as soon as it becomes evident that the views and practices of the SRS diverge from those of the taxpayer. An iterative exchange of views devoid of 'clear rules of the game' fails to promote either the taxpayer's interests or effective cooperation, particularly in instances where the State Revenue Service is already fully aware of its intended actions.

The ombudsman urged the State Revenue Service to address this issue by improving its operational practices.

Ensuring the Fairness of Laws

Upon examining verification procedure No. [2023-30-26AA](#), the ombudsman urged the Parliament (Saeima) to amend Section 56, Paragraph 1, of the Local Government Law, thereby extending the right to submit collective petitions to EU citizens who have attained the age of 16, are registered in the Register of Natural Persons, and maintain either a declared place of residence or ownership of immovable property within the administrative territory of the respective municipality. The Parliament's (Saeima) Committee on Public Administration and Local Government expressed its conceptual support for these amendments.

Strict Adherence to the Legal Framework and Respect for People's Interests

[In verification procedure No. 2024-48-27J, 27N](#), the ombudsperson found that the Child Protection Centre, upon receiving reports of suspected child abuse, does not consistently issue the decision to refuse to initiate administrative offence proceedings as required by the Law on Administrative Liability, choosing instead to respond under the Law on Submissions.

The Right Not to Be Subjected to Torture or to Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment



The [Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment](#) establishes provisions for the establishment of a mandatory mechanism designed to detect and prevent risks of torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in institutions where individuals' freedom is, or may be, restricted. In order to ensure adherence to these requirements, the ombudsman is empowered to undertake visits to various institutions, as well as closed facilities including, but not limited to, prisons, psychiatric hospitals, and social care centres. Such visits may be conducted either on an announced or unannounced basis, at any hour of the day or night, including weekends and public holidays. The ombudsman may invite specialised experts, such as psychiatrists, to participate in monitoring visits. Visits may also be conducted in cooperation with national supervisory authorities, such as the Health Inspectorate or the Ministry of Welfare.

Description of the Reporting Period

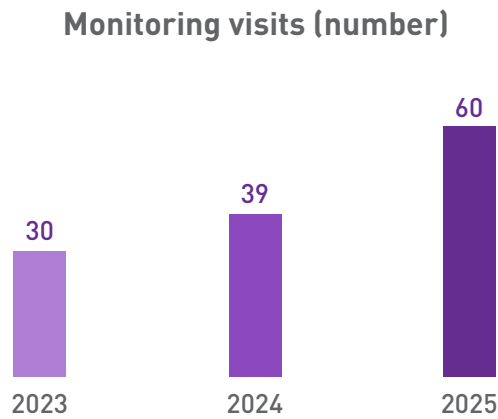
During the reporting period, amendments to the Ombudsman Law were enacted, explicitly reinforcing the role of the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) in ensuring the effective protection of individuals against torture and inhuman treatment. These amendments provide enhanced clarity regarding the mandate, reinforce the independence of the mechanism, and facilitate the comprehensive fulfilment of Latvia's international obligations.

Consistent with the recommendations promulgated by the UN Human Rights Committee in July 2025, the NPM has been institutionalized as a dedicated administrative unit within the Ombudsman's Office, titled the National Preventive Mechanism Division. Previously, it operated as part of the Civil and Political Rights Division. The formal establishment of a dedicated unit serves to bolster the independence, subject-matter specialization, and operational capacity of the NPM in the systematic execution of its preventive mandate.

In an effort to enhance client awareness regarding their rights and obligations, the NPM disseminated an informational document — “Key things to know about life in a social care centre”— to all municipal and private social care and rehabilitation facilities. The document is formulated in clear and accessible terms, with the objective of fostering legal awareness and mitigating the potential for human rights violations within such institutions.

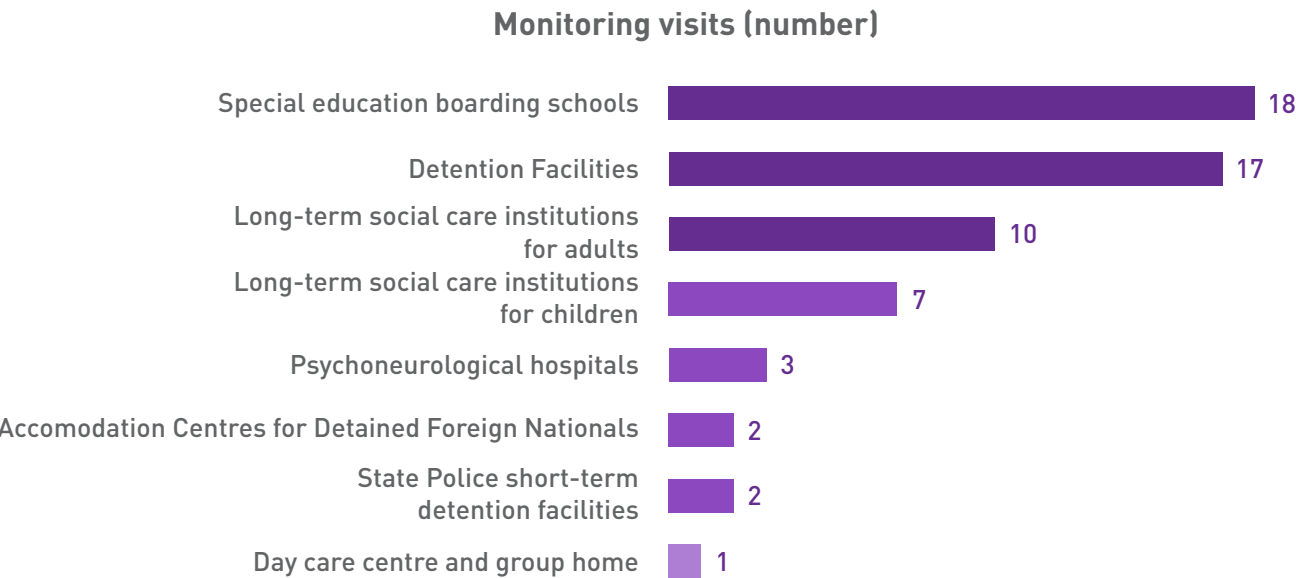
Within the scope of the reporting period, an comprehensive analysis evaluating the status and efficacy of the implementation of these recommendations was initiated. In instances where follow-up inspections confirmed that recommendations had not been implemented, or were implemented to an insufficient degree, the Ombudsman's Office pursued additional targeted measures. These included leveraging media engagement, facilitating direct dialogue with municipal leadership, and convening inter-institutional meetings, all intended to expedite the fulfilment of recommendations and remediate identified human rights violations. Specifically concerning the circumstances at the 'Lejasstrazdi' and 'Liepa' centres, the Ombudsman's Office initiated inter-institutional meetings, conducted consultations with municipal council representatives, carried out follow-up monitoring visits, and collaborated with other state supervisory authorities. This approach facilitates the more robust implementation of recommendations and bolsters institutional accountability..

Figure 32



In 2025, the number of monitoring visits increased by 54 percent to 60, compared with 39 in 2024 and 30 in 2023 (see Figure 32).

Figure 33



Total number of monitoring visits: 60

In 2025, the following monitoring visits were organised: 17 visits to places of detention; 2 visits to State Police temporary detention centres (TDCs); 2 visits to accommodation centres for detained foreign nationals; 3 visits to psychiatric hospitals; 7 visits to long-term social care and social rehabilitation institutions for children; 10 visits to long-term social care and social rehabilitation institutions for adults; 1 visit to a day care centre and a group home; 18 educational visits to specialised boarding schools (see Figure 33).

The selection of monitoring sites and the frequency of visits were determined on the basis of pre-defined risk and significance criteria. The assessment included an evaluation of the institution's nature and operational functions, resident population levels, turnover rates, and potential risks regarding ill-treatment or human rights violations, as well as other pertinent factors influencing the safeguarding of fundamental rights. This approach enabled targeted resource allocation specifically toward areas requiring prioritized preventive supervision.

To ensure a comprehensive and professional assessment of the situation, the Ombudsman's Office included subject-matter experts, specifically a certified psychiatrist and a general practitioner, into the composition of monitoring teams. Specialist involvement is indispensable for conducting a professional assessment of healthcare accessibility and quality, evaluating potential health risks, and identifying potential indicators of abuse.

In parallel with on-site inspection activities, international cooperation with other preventive bodies and relevant global organizations is regarded as a fundamental component of the NPM's operational efficacy. The Ombudsman's Office holds membership in the Council of Europe's Network of National Preventive Mechanisms against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and continues to foster close engagement with its counterparts in other European jurisdictions.

Monitoring Visits

Detention Facilities

During the reporting period, the NPM conducted 17 visits to detention facilities, including Daugavgrīva Prison, Cēsis Juvenile Correctional Facility, Riga Central Prison, Jelgava Prison, Jēkabpils Prison, Ilūciems Prison, and Liepāja Prison.

During their visits, staff from the Ombudsman's Office placed particular emphasis on the conditions within detention cells, conducting thorough assessments of their technical state, hygiene, ventilation, and lighting provisions.

During the inspection of the punishment and quarantine cells at the Daugavpils Branch of Daugavgrīva Prison, it was determined that both the living standards and the technical condition of the premises are inadequate for the long-term accommodation of inmates. Given the specific circumstances and the duration of confinement, the continued use of these premises for detention of individuals may constitute a risk of human rights violations, notably concerning the prohibition against inhuman or degrading treatment.

During the inspections, the accessibility of healthcare services for convicted persons was systematically analysed, encompassing the timeliness of medical intervention, access to specialist consultations, and the adequate provision of necessary medication.

Additionally, the evaluation encompassed the mechanisms through which convicted persons exercise their right to submit petitions to state and municipal authorities, particularly concerning the safeguarding of confidentiality, the rigor of registration procedures, and the adherence to timely forwarding to the addressees.

Based on the findings of these visits, the Ombudsman's Office issued recommendations to the respective prison administrations, aimed at remediating the identified shortcomings and fortifying the protection of human rights within these facilities. [Reports have been drawn up on the findings of the visits.](#)

Psychiatric Hospitals

Within the reporting period, representatives from the Ombudsman's Office conducted site visits to two psychiatric hospitals, as well as the Expert Examination Unit of the Centre for Forensic Psychiatric Assessments and Compulsory Treatment, which operates under the state-owned National Centre for Mental Health.

Personnel from the Ombudsman's Office visited the Expert Examination Unit within the framework of a verification procedure, once again emphasizing the necessity of upholding the human rights of individuals undergoing assessment.

Personnel of the Ombudsman's Office carried out an unannounced visit to the State-owned Ltd. "Ģintermuiža Hospital". The primary purpose of this monitoring visit was to assess the state of human rights protection and to monitor the implementation of recommendations outlined in the ombudsman's Opinion No. 2019-25-2CD, dated 20 September 2019 ([refer here for additional details regarding the visit](#)).

During the reporting period, a monitoring visit was conducted at the State-owned Ltd. "Piejūras slimnīca" with the objective of understanding the current circumstances and the challenges encountered by the hospital's management in ensuring the protection of human rights within their daily activities.

Accommodation Centres for Detained Foreign Nationals

During the reporting period, the Ombudsman's Office inspected the "Liepna" Accommodation Centre for Asylum Seekers, operated by the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs. The facility in question initiated its operations on 21 August 2023, and this was the first visit by Ombudsman's Office's since the opening of the centre.

The primary purpose of this visit was to obtain an overview of the centre's operational organisation, gather up-to-date information regarding accommodation conditions and reception capacity, and engage in dialogue with the administration concerning the practical aspects of receiving asylum seekers and meeting their daily requirements.

In response to an anonymous complaint submitted via email, the Ombudsman's Office carried out an unannounced monitoring visit to the "Mucenieki" Detention Centre for Foreign Nationals operated by the State Border Guard. The monitoring visit included an assessment of the detainees' living conditions, the procedures for maintaining internal order, and the accessibility of healthcare services. The inspection revealed a number of deficiencies regarding adherence to internal regulations, including the practical enforcement of smoking prohibitions as well as the adequacy of ventilation within the premises.

Long-Term Social Care and Social Rehabilitation Institutions for Children

Within the reporting period, representatives of the Ombudsman's Office conducted site visits to seven out-of-home care facilities for children. During these site visits, representatives of the Ombudsman's Office assessed the extent to which these institutions upheld children's rights as prescribed by the relevant regulatory framework.

The visits focused on evaluating whether living conditions are consistent with the best interests and needs of the children, while also ensuring the protection of their right to privacy, the exercise of their right to maintain contact with family, and the identification and prevention of violence risks within the out-of-home care environment.

Throughout the reporting period, priority was given to monitoring the "operations of" [Lejasstrazdi Family Support Centre](#), particularly in light of previously documented and persistent shortcomings in the protection of children's rights. In 2025, the ombudsperson conducted an in-person visit to the institution to carry out an on-site assessment of the situation and to discuss the implementation of essential improvements. Furthermore, a meeting was convened with representatives of the Dobeles District Council to enhance the efficacy of efforts to safeguard children's rights and to implement measures aimed at preventing potential violations in the future.

Long-Term Social Care and Social Rehabilitation Institutions for Adults

Throughout 2025, representatives of the Ombudsman's Office performed unannounced monitoring visits to 10 long-term social care and social rehabilitation institutions serving adults.

The visits focused on verifying adherence to the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment, as well as examining the adequacy of overall living conditions and the accessibility

social care and rehabilitation services provided to clients. The ombudsman invited subject-matter experts — specifically a general practitioner and a psychiatrist — to participate in several of these inspection visits.

In response to the irregularities identified during the visits, the Ombudsman's Office prepared formal [reports](#) requiring the responsible authorities to implement necessary rectifications, thereby ensuring the sustained protection of the rights of those residing in long-term social care and social rehabilitation institutions.

Throughout 2025, the Ombudsman's Office prioritized monitoring the “Liepa” Social Care Centre for the Elderly (SAC “Liepa”), an institution that has been under the ombudsman's oversight since 2017. During all previous visits (in 2017, 2020, 2023) the personnel of the Ombudsman's Office identified several instances where conditions did not comply with human rights standards and legislation, and on each occasion they also informed the management of the “Liepa” Social Care Centre and the supervisory authorities.

On 16 April 2025, the Ombudsman's Office organised an inter-institutional [meeting](#) to address the violations identified in the operations of the “Liepa” Social Care Centre and the implementation of long-term measures aimed at enhancing service quality. Representatives from the supervisory authorities attended the meeting to report on the findings of their inspections and the corrective measures identified to remedy the existing deficiencies.

The ombudsperson maintains ongoing oversight of the situation and the extent of compliance with the directives issued by supervisory authorities to ensure protection of the rights and interests of the clients residing at SAC “Liepa”.

Public Awareness and Engagement



One of the ombudsman's fundamental responsibilities is to educate the public and foster greater awareness regarding the breadth of human rights, the principles of good governance, and the mechanisms available for the protection of those rights. To promote openness to the public, the ombudsperson offers personal consultations to residents.

Awareness Campaigns and Surveys

In 2025, the Ombudsman's Office implemented public awareness campaigns by publishing information on its website and social media accounts.

Of particular significance in terms of public awareness is the November campaign against violence, “Vardarbība nav ģimene!” (Violence is not a family!). This campaign includes a practical guide entitled “[“Upura tiesību ceļvedis” \(A Guide to Victims Rights\)](#)” and a series of Q&A videos in which Ombudsman's Office experts explain how to [recognize violence, what to do if it occurs at home](#), and how to [practically exercise your rights to protect yourself and your children](#).

In cooperation with the State Data Inspectorate, the Office issued the “[Vadlīnijas par amatpersonu datu apstrādi audiovizuālā veidā un šo materiālu publicēšanu](#)” [Guidelines on the Audiovisual Processing of Official Data and the Publication of Such Materials]. Furthermore, in collaboration with the Ministry of the Interior and the Procurement Monitoring Bureau, it developed the “[Vadlīnijas cilvēku tirdzniecības un darbaspēka ekspluatācijas risku novēršanai publiskajos iepirkumos](#)” [Guidelines for Preventing Human Trafficking and Labour Exploitation Risks in Public Procurement]

For residents living in social care centres (nursing homes), the Office provides an easy-to-read guide titled, “[Kas tev jāzina par dzīvi sociālās aprūpes centrā](#)” (What You Need to Know About Living in a Social Care Centre). This guide covers daily life in such facilities, individual rights and responsibilities, and available support in various situations.

Key Events and International Cooperation

Events Organised

To mark International Human Rights Day on December 10, a representative from the Ombudsman's Office presented the results of a survey on the rotation of civil servants during a [dedicated discussion](#) on that subject. A key finding from both the survey and the discussion was the need for guidelines to establish standardized rotation practices.

In December, as is customary, the Ombudsman's Office organizes events dedicated to people with disabilities and accessibility issues. On 3 December, the ombudsman, in collaboration with TET, organized a [discussion on the accessibility of media content for people with disabilities](#), bringing together media representatives and service users with a range of needs.

In October, in collaboration with the Child Protection Centre and Riga Stradiņš University, an online seminar was held entitled [“Vardarbības un neiecietības izskaušana veselības aprūpē: iesaistīto tiesības un pienākumi” \(Eliminating Violence and Intolerance in Healthcare: The Rights and Responsibilities of Stakeholders\)](#). The seminar served as a refresher for professionals in health and social care regarding their rights and responsibilities in combating violence and intolerance.

Regional seminars on combating domestic violence and protecting victims' rights were held in Liepāja, Daugavpils, and Valmiera, in collaboration with representatives from the judiciary, the police, social services, and the Orphan and Custody Courts.

Participation in Events

Throughout the reporting year, specialists from the Ombudsman's Office participated in over 400 events, including conferences, seminars, and discussions.

[At the “LAMPA” Conversation Festival held in Cēsis](#) experts from the Ombudsman's Office participated in discussions on sexual harassment in the workplace and the protection of patients' rights.

As part of the 'Dzīvei gatavs' ('Ready for Life') school program, specialists from the Ombudsman's Office delivered guest lectures at general education schools across Latvia. These sessions covered topics such as human rights, civic participation, the rule of law, the interpretation of legal texts, freedom of expression, and hate speech.

Meanwhile, during the traditional [“Ēnu dienas” \(Shadow Days\)](#), 12 pupils from various towns across Latvia visited the Ombudsman's Office to learn about the day-to-day work and responsibilities of lawyers, as well as communications and public relations specialists.

International Cooperation

The most significant international event of 2025 was the Ombudsman's Office receiving re-accreditation with the highest 'A' status from the UN Subcommittee on Accreditation in November. This status confirms the Office's full compliance with the Paris Principles, as well as the institution's robust operational standards and alignment with relevant national regulations.

As a full [member](#) of the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC), and in its capacity as the authority for children's rights, the Ombudsman's Office participated in the 29th ENOC Annual Conference, which focused on children's rights to physical health. Additionally, the Office attended the General Assembly meeting, where the ENOC [position statement](#), 'Protecting and Promoting Children's Rights to Physical Health,' was adopted.

In its capacity as the body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Ombudsman's Office reported to the UN Committee on the challenges regarding the Convention's implementation in Latvia. Following the meeting with the above committee, the Ombudsman's Office encouraged Latvian organisations representing persons with disabilities to prepare and submit independent shadow reports to the UN, assessing the implementation of the Convention within the country.

The Ombudsman's Office actively contributed to the legislative process regarding the AI Act by submitting its proposals and objections regarding the European Commission's proposed amendments to the AI Act. Furthermore, in collaboration with Equinet, ENNHRI member organizations, and other EU national human rights institutions, a joint statement was drafted and addressed to EU institutions regarding the [draft amendments to the AI Act](#), calling for the maintenance of high standards of fundamental rights protection in the field of AI.

The Ombudsman's Office prepared a [comprehensive report](#) on the rule of law in Latvia, highlighting key aspects of human rights, and submitted a [shadow report for the fourth cycle of the UN Universal Periodic Review](#).

The Ombudsman's Office participated in the European Commission's pilot project on testing indicators for the Directive on Standards¹⁴ for Equality Bodies, as well as in the Commission's working group on the development of these indicators.

¹⁴ Directive (EU) 2024/1500 (14 May 2024) on standards for equality bodies in the field of equal treatment and equal opportunities between women and men in matters of employment and occupation, and amending Directives 2006/54/EC and 2010/41/EU and Council Directive (EU) 2024/1499 (7 May 2024) on standards for equality bodies in the field of equal treatment between persons irrespective of their racial or ethnic origin, equal treatment in matters of employment and occupation between persons irrespective of their religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, equal treatment between women and men in matters of social security and in the access to and supply of goods and services, and amending Directives 2000/43/EC and 2004/113/EC.

Financial Resources and Institutional Performance



The activities of the Ombudsman's Office, dedicated to the protection of individual human rights, are funded through the state budget programme 01.00.00, "Ombudsman's Office". The objective of this programme is to advance the protection of human rights and to ensure that the exercise of state power is lawful, effective, and consistent with the principles of good governance, as well as with the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia and all international treaties binding upon Latvia.

[A detailed breakdown of the Ombudsmans Offices 2025 state budget is publicly available on the Ministry of Finances website.](#) Furthermore, information regarding the "[Ombudsmans Offices budget implementation for 2025](#)" is available through the State Treasury's official portal.

Overview of State Budget Allocations and Utilization (Euros)

No.	Financial indicators	Previous Year (Actual Expenditure)	Reporting year	
			Approved by law	Actual expenditure
1.	Financial Resources for Expenditure (total)	3 218 245	3 389 443	3 403 210
1.1.	Subsidies	3 174 854	3 386 443	3 386 443
1.2.	Fee-based services and other own-source revenue	750	3000	11 774
1.3.	Foreign financial assistance	42 641	0	4993
1.4.	Donations and gifts	0	0	0
1.5.	Budgetary transfers	0	0	0
2.	Expenditure (total)	3 243 173	3 389 443	3 403 398
2.1.	Maintenance expenditure (Total)	3 217 700	3 389 443	3 357 316
2.1.1.	Current expenditure	3 205 694	3 377 437	3 345 310
2.1.2.	Interest expenditure	0	0	0
2.1.3.	Subsidies, grants and social benefits	0	0	0
2.1.4.	Current payments to the EU budget and international cooperation	12 006	12 006	12 006
2.1.5.	Budget transfers for maintenance expenditure	0	0	0
2.2.	Expenditure for capital investments	25 473	0	46 082

During the reporting year, the Ombudsman's Office utilized the previous year's balance of foreign financial assistance amounting to EUR 4,993 under sub-program 70.07.00 'Implementation of World Regional Cooperation Fund projects and activities' to cover expenses incurred during the European Economic Area and Norway Grants project 'Support to National Human Rights Institutions in monitoring fundamental rights and the fundamental rights aspects of the rule of law'.

Within the Ombudsman's Office budget program 01.00.00 'Ombudsman's Office', own-source revenue was increased by EUR 10,470 to utilize the previous year's funding balance for the Danish Institute for Human Rights project 'Business and Human Rights', as well as the balance of other own-source revenue funds totalling EUR 188 as of 1 January 2025.

Expenditure was reduced by EUR 27,225 for the 2023–2025 priority initiative 'Research and situation analysis in the field of human rights' (Minutes No. 2 of the Cabinet of Ministers meeting of 13 January 2023, § 1, Paragraph 2) and by EUR 4,468 in one-time expenditure for the 2024–2026 priority initiative 'Establishment of a non-discrimination unit in accordance with the national position' (Minutes No. 47 of the Cabinet of Ministers meeting of September 26, 2023, § 43, Paragraph 2).

In 2025, the actual amount of state budget funding executed was EUR 3.4 million.

Budgetary changes for the Ombudsman's Office, compared to the previous year's plan, amounted to EUR 211,300, due to additional funding allocated for the priority initiative 'Implementation of the legal framework for the Artificial Intelligence Act. Ombudsman' (Minutes No. 38 of the Cabinet of Ministers meeting of 19 September 2024, § 2, Paragraph 2) and increased expenditure for the 2024–2026 priority initiative 'Strengthening the capacity of the Ombudsman's Office' (Minutes No. 47 of the Cabinet of Ministers meeting of 26 September 2023, § 43, Paragraph 2). As a result of the reallocation of budgetary resources, expenditure on goods and services was reduced by EUR 46,100, with funds redirected to capital investments for the purchase of computer equipment, a presentation system, furniture, and an archiving module.

Performance Indicators for the Ombudsman's Office in 2025

Performance Indicator	Implementation of the Reporting Period Plan
<i>Outcome: an informed public and timely resolution of infringements</i>	
Inspections at state and local government institutions organised (closed and semi-closed institutions, Orphan and Custody Courts, educational establishments, etc.)	64
Educational seminars, discussions and other events organised	110
Participation in events organized by other institutions – lectures on matters falling within the ombudsman's mandate	415
Media publications produced	9413
<i>Outcome: Adherence to the principle of good governance</i>	
Opinions provided to the Constitutional Court	9
Conclusions provided to state institutions regarding draft legislation	51
Participation in working groups and commissions	147
<i>Outcome: implementation of the ombudsman's policy</i>	
Submissions received (processed)	2499
Responses to submissions prepared	1138
Responses to submissions without initiating a verification procedure	824
Verification procedures initiated on the basis of submissions	75
E-mail responses prepared regarding matters within the mandate of the Ombudsman's Office	1182
Consultations provided:	3059
Correspondence	1349
By phone	1710
Verification procedures initiated on the ombudsman's own motion	14
Surveys of foreign nationals to be repatriated	13

Additional Funding Allocated to Priority Measures

1. Funding for the priority initiative “Strengthening the capacity of the Ombudsman’s Office” (Minutes No. 47 of the Cabinet of Ministers meeting of 26 September 2023, § 43, Paragraph 2) was increased by EUR 211,293.
2. Funding for the priority initiative “Implementation of the legal framework for the Artificial Intelligence Act. Ombudsman” (Minutes No. 38 of the Cabinet of Ministers meeting of 19 September 2024, § 2, Paragraph 2) was increased by EUR 28,686.

	2024 actual	2025 actual	2026 project	2027 forecast	2028 forecast
Key Performance Indicators					
Implementation of ombudsman's recommendations, %	61,6	66,8	72	72	72
Client service growth index (base value 1.0 = 8,727 clients; target value 1.1 = 9,600 clients)	0,9	1,1	1,1	1,1	1,1
Quality Indicators					
Evaluation of educational events organized by the ombudsman (participant ratings, scale 1–5)	4,4	4,5	4,5	4,5	4,5
Claims upheld by the Constitutional Court, %	0*	0*	94	94	94

* As in the previous reporting period, one application was lodged with the Constitutional Court, which remained pending examination at the end of the reporting period.



56

Number of
employees as at
31 December 2025

57

Average number
of employees
in 2025

4

Recruited

5

Dismissed

0,16

Personnel
turnover

Breakdown by Gender



6

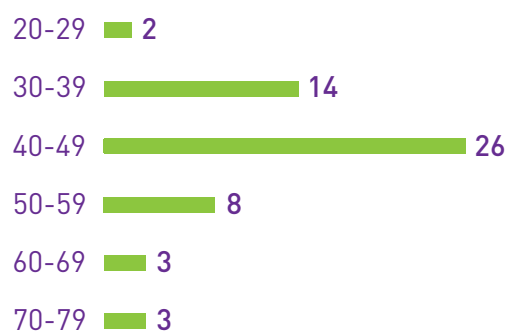
Men



50

Women

Breakdown by Age Group



Areas of Employment



42

Legal analysis and
advisory services
(including prevention)



3

Communication
and international
cooperation



1

Data analytics,
sociology



7

Human Resources
and Financial
Management



3

Procurement
and Management

Administration, Document Management

Education

1

Doctors of Science

51

Master's degree holders
(including two
PhD candidates)

2

Bachelor's
degree holders

2

First level professional
higher education

Key Priority Areas of the Ombudsperson for 2026



In light of the above, it can be concluded that the public maintains a high level of confidence in the Ombudsman's Office. This is demonstrated by the sustained growth in both the number of submissions received and consultations provided. However, the frequent provision of informative responses by the Ombudsman's Office may suggest an underlying deficit of trust in the authorities directly responsible for resolving these matters. This is further confirmed by the marked increase in complaints concerning breaches of the principle of good governance, highlighting an urgent need to strengthen adherence to this principle across state and local government institutions.

Given the significant volume of submissions and the broad spectrum of child rights concerns, priority must remain on reforming the child protection system and strengthening violence prevention, thereby ensuring more robust safeguards for children.

Access to healthcare is a fundamental right that exerts a profound impact on an individual's quality of life and the overall state of social justice. Latvia still faces challenges regarding access to healthcare services. It is therefore imperative to monitor the state's obligation to guarantee accessible, high-quality healthcare that upholds human dignity for all residents.

Age-based discrimination remained among the most prevalent forms of discriminatory practice during the reporting period. This is particularly concerning given that an ageing population represents one of the most significant demographic trends facing both Latvia and the wider European region. This poses challenges in the areas of social protection, healthcare and fundamental rights.

Concurrently, the evolving geopolitical landscape must not be overlooked. Heightened security threats, the proliferation of disinformation, and increasing societal polarization present significant risks to democratic stability and the enjoyment of fundamental rights. Similarly, the rapid evolution of technology — most notably artificial intelligence — can both strengthen and undermine fundamental rights, particularly the rights to freedom of expression and equality.

In light of the above, the **ombudsperson has identified the following five priority** areas for action **2026:**

- Protection of fundamental rights in the context of geopolitical and technological challenges;
- Children's right to a safe and emotionally supportive environment;
- The right to health protection;
- Good governance as an integral component of state and municipal services;
- Enhancing the quality of life for older adults.

At the same time, the high proportion of explanatory responses provided by the Ombudsman's Office to both residents and public sector institutions points to a clear need for information regarding rights and their practical implementation. It is a priority to continue and expand educational campaigns, lectures, and the development of information materials to strengthen the legal literacy of both residents and public sector employees, and to facilitate the timely resolution of problems.