



Georgia - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 1 February 2012

Information on prison conditions

A report published in January 2012 by *Human Rights Watch* commenting on events of the previous year states:

“Overcrowding in prisons remains a problem, leading to poor prison conditions. The Ombudsman’s Office documented numerous cases of ill-treatment in prisons”
Overcrowding in prisons remains a problem, leading to poor prison conditions. The Ombudsman’s Office of ill-treatment in prisons. (Human Rights Watch (22 January 2012) *World Report 2012, Georgia*, p.4).

A publication released in January 2012 by the *Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe* comments on an individual prison stating:

“The conditions in the prison in Batumi, which is seriously overcrowded, are outright bad and have been the issue of a number of reports of the CPT, as well as the Georgian Public Defender (Ombudsman) (Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (26 January 2012) *Honouring of obligations and commitments by Georgia: Information note by the co-rapporteurs on their fact-finding visit to Tbilisi and Batumi*, point 29).

A report released in December 2011 by *Human Rights Georgia* reports that:

“Public Defender of Georgia has published National Prevention Mechanism Special Report. It describes the results of the monitoring in penitentiary establishments and temporary detention isolators carried out over the first half of 2011. According to the Report, the rate of mortality among prisoners has increased and inmates are still ill-treated in custodies” (Human Rights Georgia (15 December 2011) *Public Defender: “Mortality Rate among Prisoners Increased”*).

In November 2011 a report published by the *European Parliament* calls:

“...for the Georgian Government to further improve the physical conditions in prisons and detention centres...” (European Parliament (17 November 2011) *European Parliament resolution of 17 November 2011 on the negotiations of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement*, q).

A report issued in November 2011 by the *Council of Europe: Committee for the Prevention of Torture* notes:

“This fourth periodic visit by the CPT to Georgia confirmed that the situation as regards the treatment of persons detained by the police has considerably improved. Nevertheless, the persistence of some allegations of ill-treatment clearly indicates that

the authorities must remain vigilant (Council of Europe: Committee for the Prevention of Torture (10 November 2011) *21st General Report of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT)*, 24).

This document also states:

“Overcrowding remained a problem in the prisons visited, notwithstanding a major prison-building programme. The CPT’s delegation found that the continuing increase in the prisoner population (which stood at 21,532 in February 2010, as compared to some 7,000 at the time of the CPT’s periodic visit in 2004) was undermining the efforts made to create a humane penitentiary system (ibid, p.25).

A document commenting on events of 2010 issued in April 2011 by the *United States Department of State* points out that:

“Conditions in many prison and pretrial detention facilities remained poor and did not meet international standards. The PDO, the CPT, and many NGOs including Human Rights Watch (HRW) continued to report that while newly constructed facilities met international standards, old facilities still in use were inhuman and exposed detained persons to life-threatening conditions, including poor facilities, overcrowding, and inadequate health care. Most prison and pretrial detention facilities lacked adequate sanitary facilities” (United States Department of State (8 April 2011) *2010 Human Rights Report: Georgia*, Section 1c Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment/ Prison and Detention Center Conditions).

In 2011 a report issued by *Human Rights Centre* reviewing events of 2010 states:

“The penitentiary system remained one of the most problematic areas in Georgia through 2010 as well. An ever growing number of prisoners cannot be addressed simply by building new facilities. Lack of adequate preventive measures, medical facilities, medications and care often lead to death. The ill-treatment of prisoners from the side of the prison administration is further encouraged by the syndrome of impunity” (Human Rights Centre (2011) *Restricted Rights: Annual Human Rights Report for 2010*, p.32).

This report also notes:

“Verbal and physical abuse in prison facilities has been the issue ever since Georgia gained independence” (ibid, p.34).

References

Council of Europe: Committee for the Prevention of Torture (10 November 2011) *21st General Report of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT)*
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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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