

Inspection of the Rakvere, Narva and Jõhvi cellblocks of the Detention Block of the Eastern Prefecture of the Police and Border Guard Board

On 26 May 2014 advisors to the Chancellor of Justice paid an unannounced visit to the Rakvere and Narva cellblocks of the Detention Block of the Law Enforcement Office of the Eastern Police Prefecture of the Police and Border Guard Board and visited the Jõhvi cellblock of the detention block of the same prefecture on 27 May 2014.

The Chancellor of Justice invited a rescue officer to join the inspection of the Jõhvi cellblock as an expert and his task was to inspect adherence to fire safety requirements in said building.

All of the inspected cellblocks are structural units of the Police and Border Guard Board where the persons in respect to whom criminal procedure has been initiated (arrested persons and the convicted persons in respect to whom a new criminal procedure has been initiated), detained persons, persons detained as suspects in criminal procedure, persons detained within the scope of misdemeanour procedure and persons taken in for detoxification are staying.

The number of places of detention (not including places for detoxification) is 16 in the Rakvere cellblock, 20 in Narva and 94 in Jõhvi. During the inspections the number of detainees was 9 in the Rakvere cellblock, 11 in Narva and 75 in Jõhvi.

The Chancellor of Justice had previously inspected the Jõhvi cellblock three times (13 May 2009, 7 January 2010 and 15 September 2011) and the building used by the Rakvere cellblock once (17 August 2011). The building used by the Narva cellblock at present was built in 2013 and the Chancellor of Justice had not inspected it before.

As the result of the inspection the Chancellor of Justice makes three recommendations to the Eastern Prefecture of the Police and Border Guard Board for guaranteeing fundamental human rights:

- to avoid the constant use of video surveillance in the premises used for the provision of health services in the Rakvere and Narva cellblocks and to assess the need and scope of the implementation of video surveillance in each specific area;
- to make sure that the documents related to detainees are filled in according to requirements;
- the Eastern Prefecture of the Police and Border Guard Board must give the Chancellor of Justice information about the arrangement of meetings between detainees and their defence lawyers in the Narva cellblock, incl. the position of the prefecture on whether the requirements set forth in § 62 of the Rules of Internal Procedure of the Detention Block are met during the meetings. In the event said requirements are not met in the Narva cellblock (the meetings are not private and direct), the Chancellor of Justice advises the Eastern Prefecture of the Police and Border Guard to immediately change the current practice and to immediately find options of arranging the meetings in such a manner that the requirements set forth in the legal procedure are met.