

HELP online course on CPT STANDARDS

Background and aim

The prohibition of torture is at the forefront of the human rights protection systems, due to its absolute character. If torture and other forms of ill-treatment by public officials remain unchallenged by the criminal justice system, such conduct can easily become an accepted practice within the state services concerned.

The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (**CPT**) is the Council of Europe monitoring body tasked with visiting places of detention and assessing how persons deprived of their liberty are treated, in order to strengthen their protection from torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Since its inception in 1989, the CPT has visited thousands of such places of deprivation of liberty.

After each visit, the CPT sends a detailed report to the State concerned. This report includes the CPT's findings, and its recommendations, comments and requests for information. Over decades, in its reports, the CPT has developed abundant standards in various areas (e.g. creating a culture of "zero tolerance" of ill-treatment, developing legal safeguards against ill-treatment, , carrying out effective investigations into alleged ill-treatment, ensuring suitable detention conditions, providing appropriate health care, etc.).

Preventing ill-treatment of persons deprived of their liberty requires that all actors involved are properly trained and well equipped to prevent or address unacceptable treatment and conditions.



The purpose of the **Council of Europe HELP course on CPT standards** is to familiarize you with the CPT's key standards concerning the five most important places of deprivation of liberty: police stations, prisons, immigration detention facilities, psychiatric establishments and social care homes.

The topics are explored in a practical way, by using presentations, interactive screens, knowledge tests and reflective exercises. **The course was published on the Council of Europe HELP online platform in September 2019.**

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Target audience

The course is primarily intended for the following categories of professionals in the CoE member States and beyond:

- Judges, prosecutors and lawyers
- Prison management and frontline staff
- Senior and other law enforcement officials
- Management and frontline staff of immigration detention centres
- Management and frontline staff of psychiatric and social care establishments
- Staff working for national preventive mechanisms (NPMs) and other bodies monitoring places of deprivation of liberty
- Staff from central administrations (e.g. relevant ministries, prison services, migration and asylum services, law enforcement, etc)

It can also be used by national human rights institutions, as well as civil society organisations, university lecturers and students, etc.

Course outline (6 modules)

1. **Introduction** (what is the CPT and how does it work?; CPT visits; interaction between the CPT and other Council of Europe bodies; the CPT and other preventive mechanisms; general principles; how to use CPT resources)
2. **Law enforcement** (apprehension; arrival at a police station; safeguards; police interviews; material conditions of detention; appearance before a judge)
3. **Prisons and other penal institutions** (admissions procedure; ill-treatment; conditions of detention; health care in prisons; special categories of prisoners; other issues)
4. **Immigration detention** (detention as a last resort; safeguards during detention; conditions of detention; children; staff; good order and means of restraint; health care; removal of foreign nationals)
5. **Psychiatric establishments** (ill-treatment; patient's living conditions; psychiatric treatment; staff; means of restraint; safeguards)
6. **Social care homes** (de-institutionalisation; ill-treatment; resident's living conditions; care; staff; means of restraint; safeguards)

Development of the course

The course was developed by the European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (**HELP**) of the Council of Europe in close cooperation with the CPT's Secretariat and with the support of the Project "[Strengthening the application of the European Convention on Human Rights in Georgia](#)", under the EU/CoE Partnership for Good Governance.

Acces the free online course

The course is publicly available on the HELP online platform <http://help.elearning.ext.coe.int/>. To access the course, you will need to open a HELP account if you have not yet done so (2 minutes).

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