Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
https://pace.coe.int

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Doc. 16100
27 January 2025

Preventing deaths in police custody

Written question No. 794 to the Committee of Ministers
by Ms Laura CASTEL, Spain, Group of the Unified European Left

In 13 EU countries, 487 people died in police custody between 2020 and 2022 (107 in France, 71 in Ireland, 66 in Spain and 60 in Germany).

In Spain, between 2015 and 2023, 179 people died in police custody, not including the 23 who died in Melilla in June 2022. Many of these people belong to vulnerable and destitute groups, such as irregular migrants or those with mental health problems.

In Spain, the cause of 'natural death' is the most recurrent in the data provided by the administration, with 65 people having died since 2015. Many of these deaths occurred during arrest and others in police cells. Some of the deaths were caused by injections of sedatives. There were also 34 deaths by suicide in police custody between 2015 and 2022. Security forces-related deaths are rarely publicly investigated, nor is there an independent body responsible for investigating these deaths. The protocols established by the European Union for deaths in custody are not applied. In 2021, Spain was condemned twice by the European Court of Human Rights for failing to investigate cases of torture or ill-treatment committed by police officers.

Ms Castel

To ask the Committee of Ministers:

What CPT recommendations should be implemented to prevent these deaths?