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## **Nils Muižnieks from Latvia elected new Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights**

Strasbourg, 24.01.2012 – Nils Muižnieks (Latvia) was today elected third Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights by the Organisation's Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) at its plenary session in Strasbourg.

Mr Muižnieks was elected for a non-renewable term of six years starting on 1 April 2012.

Mr Muižnieks obtained 120 of the votes cast in the first round, an absolute majority. Frans Timmermans (Netherlands) obtained 92 votes and Pierre-Yves Monette (Belgium) 27.

From November 2002 to December 2004, Mr Muižnieks held the post of Special Assignments Minister for Social Integration Affairs in the Latvian Government. Since 2005 he has been the member for Latvia of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) and became its Chairman in January 2010. He is currently Director of the Advanced Social and Political Research Institute (ASPRI) at the Faculty of Social Sciences in Riga.

The Office of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights is an independent, non-judicial institution within the Council of Europe; its function is to foster greater awareness of human rights, support national human rights institutions, identify shortcomings in law and practice concerning human rights and promote full enjoyment of human rights in all forty-seven member states of the Council of Europe.

The Commissioner makes regular visits to the member states to engage in dialogue with governments and civil society and draw up reports on issues falling within his mandate.

[Result of the vote](#)

[Audio clip of an interview with Nils Muiznieks](#)

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The Assembly brings together 318 members from the national parliaments of the 47 member states.  
President: Jean-Claude Mignon (EPP/CD) - Secretary General of the Assembly: Wojciech Sawicki.  
Political groups: EPP/CD (Group of the European People's Party); SOC (Socialist Group);  
EDG (European Democrat Group); ALDE (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe);  
UEL (Group of the Unified European Left).