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<http://www.rsf.org/latvia-cameraman-held-on-spurious-30-01-2015,47548.html>

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Europe/Ex-USSR - Latvia

Arbitrary arrest

## Cameraman held on spurious littering charge

30 January 2015

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Reporters Without Borders condemns TV3 Latvija cameraman Sergejs Medvedevs' detention for several hours in Riga on 26 January on a charge of littering.

He was arrested while covering a demonstration near the Russian embassy in protest against the shelling of Mariupol and the fighting in other parts of Ukraine's Donbas region.

The police accused him of a littering because he picked up flyers critical of Russian President Vladimir Putin in order to film them, and one fell from his pocket.

Latvia's laws make no provision for the arrest of those caught littering. The usual penalty is a fine ranging from 5 to 20 euros. Medvedevs was released after three hours, the maximum period that someone not suspected of major offence may be held.

Riga mayor Nils Ušakovs, who is in charge of the city's police force, has publicly [refused in the past to break off ties with the Russian elite](#). His party, Saskaņa, has a cooperation agree with Putin's party, United Russia.

Latvia is ranked 37th out of 180 countries in the [2014 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#).

*Photo: Latvijas Radio / Laima Baumanė*

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