

More articles on Tatjana in the 'Dossier', each with an English Version: <https://www.worldcitizens.de/dossiers/tatjana.html>



Picture: Ivan Romanov

## **Latvia. When a state takes revenge (Part 2)**

### **Tatjana: her crimes, her weapons, her friends**

[Original text: <https://www.worldcitizens.de/dossiers/tatjana/lettland-wenn-ein-staat-sich-raecht-teil-2.html>]

#### **A brief recap**

The case of student Tatjana Andrijeca, who faces a life sentence in Latvia<sup>1</sup>, reflects in a particular way the psycho-social catastrophe of this small country. Some are proud of this educated, talented young woman, verging on adoration; for others, she is public enemy number one, whose personality must be destroyed. The former are the powerless ethnic Russian minority in Latvia; the latter are the powerful majority of indigenous Latvians, together with the all-powerful State Security Service (VDD).

#### **Most remain nameless**

Tatjana has friends; she is not alone. Due to the pending, flimsily constructed legal case and the incomprehensible sentence she faces – 'life imprisonment' – she is well known in Latvia.

She describes herself as follows:

*"I think I'm known in certain circles, but Riga and Latvia are small overall, and besides, I was one of the first to be arrested after the war began [meaning: 2022, the Russian Federation's war against Ukraine, K.Sch.]. Many others followed me, and unfortunately people have grown accustomed to these arrests, as terrible as that sounds. And the fact that I am young also plays a part. When such young people are arrested, it provokes much more outrage."*<sup>2</sup>

Time and again, Tatjana experiences emotionally charged moments with people she does not know, yet to whom she is no stranger. As she is leaving after the Christmas service in January (Russian Orthodox Church), an elderly lady slips her €50: "For the legal fees." At the theatre, the ticket clerk leaves her post, comes out to Tatjana, hugs her, and cries. She gives her two free tickets for another play in a few weeks' time. Tatjana: *"This woman said she really wanted to help me, to ease my suffering and relieve me of my stress, and that she's always happy to see me at her theatre. 🥹 That's so sweet – she's such a warm-hearted person. 🤗."*<sup>3</sup>

It is also, and especially, these gestures of affection and solidarity from those who remain nameless that carry Tatjana through her anxiety-ridden daily life, keeping her going. Tatjana knows what these gestures mean to her:

*"Sometimes strangers approach me on the street, hug me and say something nice. When I came out of prison [meaning: autumn 2023, after eight months' detention without conviction, K.Sch.], several psychologists offered me their help free of charge, and I've now been working with one of them for two years – we talk once a week. I've also been offered the chance to learn to climb, and they don't charge me for that either, even though I tried to pay; the instructors understand my situation and refuse. Furthermore, various people regularly donate items for the prisoners, so I can regularly take parcels to the prison and help the inmates. Generally speaking, many people do something good for me (depending on their profession) and don't ask for money in return. For example, Ivan Romanov shoots all the music videos with me as the violinist for free, and a musician records me in the studio, also without payment. And that's actually a lot of work. All in all, so much good has been done for me over the years that I'll never be able to repay it in my entire life. 🙏"*<sup>4</sup>



Video: Ivan Romanov

[Click: Play video](#)

*The video was filmed in freezing temperatures of minus 18 degrees. It was almost impossible for both the people and the instruments – the violin and the film crew’s equipment – to cope with. With her fingers almost numb, Tatjana had to keep playing, otherwise the violin would go out of tune. For Tatjana, this joint experiment was an empowering experience of friendship, not just a superficial gimmick.*

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### **Social media – a necessary, virtual stage**

On Facebook alone, Tatjana has 5,280 friends, the vast majority of whom are significantly older than her. There are birthday wishes and greetings flying back and forth, for birthdays, public holidays – the usual. Insider tips on car polishing, holiday snaps, simply everything.

Scattered amongst the everyday posts on Tatjana’s Facebook account are repeated messages about people wrongfully imprisoned in Latvia and offers to help them. These are messages that could not be disseminated elsewhere in the country. Here, individual fates and the structures of communities bound by shared destiny come to the fore – things that are hard, or rather impossible, to imagine here in Germany.

### **Those who are always there**

As well as her family, the friends who are always there and always available for Tatjana are indispensable to her perseverance. Not thousands, as on Facebook. But there hasn’t been a single court hearing so far where at least six, eight or ten of them weren’t present.

They follow the proceedings, stand together afterwards, and take Tatjana home. And almost every time, they smuggle the typical weapons of the ethnic Russian 'enemies of the state' into the courthouse: flowers for Tatjana.

Our opening image of this article is striking 'proof' of this. In the courtroom, Tatjana has her 'weapon' – the bunch of flowers someone has 'slipped' her – within easy reach beside her.

Two of these friends have their say here in more detail. Their contributions make the picture of Tatjana Andriječa and her case appear even more authentic.

### **Andrey**

A long-standing, close friendship binds Tatjana to Andrey Pagors, a lawyer and deputy (comparable to a local councillor). He has written us a letter<sup>5</sup> which, on the one hand, corroborates much of what we have said in our previous articles about Tatjana, and on the other, adds new aspects to Tatjana's case.

He emphasises at the outset:

*"In peaceful times, without wars and political pressure, something like this [Tatjana's imprisonment in 2023 and her ongoing trial, K.Sch.] would probably never have happened. But we live in different times, and Tanja has become the heroine of this drama – though I hope that in the end it will be a story of victory: the victory of a young woman over an entire system."*

Andrey, like other friends of Tatjana, sees her 'fall from grace' in this: *"She initially attended a Russian school and later switched to a Latvian one. One day, she was asked to appear in the Saeima (Parliament) and say that the transition to lessons in Latvian was going smoothly. But Tanja did not meet this expectation – she remained true to her conscience and spoke the truth openly, despite pressure from the school administration. That was, in my opinion, her first act of courage."*

The background details highlighted by Andrey are indispensable for understanding Tatjana's plight. Namely, among other things, how the State Security Service simply fabricates individuals in order to convict Tatjana of founding an organisation threatening the state, or to muster a legally relevant number of alleged members of Tatjana's alleged 'organisation'. The truth, as Andrey's revelations suggest, plays abso-

lutely no role in this court case against Tatjana and her co-defendant Alexander Z.

A grim vision weighs heavily on Andrey:

*"If this machinery isn't stopped – this machinery of the secret services that organises trials out of thin air and simply lock people up, ruining their lives, just to deter everyone else from fighting, taking to the streets and standing up against this system."*

### **Alla**

Alongside Andrey, the journalist Alla Berezovskaya is one of Tatjana's closest confidantes. It was striking that the first thing Tatjana told us about Alla was her nickname: "Mother Teresa of political prisoners". This upright freelance opposition journalist, a member of the Latvian Journalists' Union, certainly seems to be just that. Among other things, she runs a dedicated information page on social media for and about political prisoners in the Baltic states.<sup>6</sup>

It was courageous and unusual that Alla published her witness statement in the current court proceedings against Tatjana in August 2025 on Facebook. We reproduce her statement in full in German translation in our library.<sup>7</sup>

Her testimony focuses on the offence Tatjana is charged with: founding a terrorist organisation, for which Tatjana faces a life sentence. Precisely and step by step, Alla helps not only to refute this accusation, but to reduce it to absurdity.

But let us first look at a few brushstrokes of the portrait Alla paints of Tatjana.

*"During the Covid epidemic, Tanja set up a group in Riga via social media to support elderly people who were unable to go to the shops themselves. She cycled across the city to do the shopping and carried the groceries up to the 5th floor. I know that dozens of elderly people prayed for Tanja's health."*

Alla does not mince her words when describing the damage caused to Tatjana by the eight-month "pre-trial detention" in 2023 – ultimately ordered by the State Security Service (VDD).

*"Soon afterwards, [following her release from detention, K.Sch.] amidst her nightly nightmares, Tanja stopped eating. She collapsed on the street, fainting from hunger, and had to vomit. She was just*

*one step away from severe anorexia. That is why I have no doubt that a trial against Tatjana Andriječa in her current condition would mean subjecting her once again to severe psychological stress that is life-threatening for her. Especially at a time when she urgently needs careful and comprehensive treatment."*

The conclusion of Alla's detailed testimony – according to a reliable source, the judge conducting the hearing via video link interrupted Alla several times and urged her to be brief – is a wake-up call, a cry of alarm:

*"As for the allegations against Tatjana, that at the age of 22 she was the organiser and leader of a fictitious political criminal organisation, my opinion as a journalist who has written extensively on criminal cases is this: These are the results of the shameful and dishonest work of a State Security Service investigator who, apparently to please his superiors, sacrificed an innocent, naive girl – essentially a defenceless child – because he could not prosecute the true culprits, who live in Russia."*

### **Graveyard silence as a "reason of state" – not only in Latvia**

There are countries where outcries and wake-up calls are stifled, are being stifled. Latvia is clearly one of them. The term 'cemetery silence' seems to have fallen out of fashion in German. Yet this word captures exactly what those in power in Latvia desire: cemetery silence, where human rights are presumably long since and permanently buried.

Fans of cemetery silence, creeping about with reverence, are to be found everywhere, including in Germany.

In a letter to the editor published on 12 February 2026 in 'junge Welt', the writer here comments on a similar case of arbitrary justice against a German national in Hungary and draws a parallel with Tatjana. Addressing the question of why the scandal surrounding Latvia's political justice system is virtually never covered in the German media, he speculates in the letter:

*"On 2 September 2025, 'junge Welt' was the only media outlet in Europe to report on this threat to Tatjana's very existence. Why are news agencies, MPs in Berlin and Brussels, human rights organisations, foundations, lawyers' associations and European institutions remaining silent? I have written countless letters. Quite simply, they follow the logic of the conformist: because what must not be cannot*

*be. The Baltic states are a NATO staging ground. In Estonia the British 'rule', in Latvia the Canadians; Lithuania is a German military colony. In such a 'war-ready' environment, one can easily turn a blind eye to human rights and other 'romantic nonsense'."*<sup>8</sup>

May Andrey's heart-warming words come true: **"that in the end it will be a story of victory: the victory of a young woman over an entire system."**

Until then, the task will be to continue organising public support for Tatjana 'from below'. This support will not come from anywhere else. "Who, if not us?"<sup>9</sup>

Tatjana is no heroine, nor does she wish to be one. She simply wants to live in a country where neither her language nor her way of life, nor her interests or preferences, potentially brand her a criminal.

Incidentally, Tatjana has approved our brief analysis in the first part of this two-part piece; she has authorised it: **"Tatjana's crime is her personality – flowers are her weapons ."**



Picture: Alla Berezovskaya – private archive

*The journalist and author Alla Berezovskaya and her books: \*Essays from Various Years (2001–2016)\* – two volumes. If another were to be added, Alla says, it would probably be titled \*Letters from Prisoners at BaltLag\*.<sup>10</sup>*

## Addendum

Just as this article was about to go online a letter arrived – a remarkable one. A letter that shows that people – without knowing one another – can be close to one another to an extent that touches upon fundamental questions of the human condition. We are talking about Alla Berezovskaya, whom we have just reported on. The writer here had asked her to tell us something about herself; the result was a self-portrait that stays with you. We reproduce it in full in our library<sup>11</sup> – to shorten it would be to shatter a mirror.

Her father is a Jewish journalist in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Arrested in 1937 for 'anti-Soviet activities', he spent a total of around 18 years in Stalinist camps and in exile. In Siberia, he met her future mother – a deported Volga German. Alla was born in 1956 in Kazakhstan, where the entire German family had moved after their deportation. Such is the introduction to a cosmopolitan life story that gradually deepened into a lifelong struggle for justice and righteousness.

Today, Alla fights against the injustice suffered by political prisoners in the Baltic states. Her self-portrait is a precious gift to all those who still believe in the universal validity of human rights, who have not yet given up. Just like Alla herself.

## Notes

1 See Article Part 1, [English Version, as a PDF](#) and further articles in the dossier with English Versions: <https://www.worldcitizens.de/dossiers/tatjana.html>, accessed on 24 February 2026.

2 Email 5 January 2026.

3 Email 19 January 2026,

4 Email 19 January 2026,

5 Available as a [PDF in the library](#)

6 a) Facebook: ТЮПЕМНЫЙ ВЕСТНИК (PRISON NEWSPAPER) / Example of an issue: <https://www.facebook.com/alla.berezovskaya.73/posts/pfbid06M8gxK9WwGLxRCBjaC4zK27eBaUXxZ2kxFDhhWyYi-Q2B5cv4qveYc4UM63QHskS4I>, accessed on 24 February 2026.

b) Telegram channel "Gefängnisbote": <https://t.me/freedomtolinderman>.

7 Available as a [PDF in the library](#).

8 Translation into English available as a [PDF in the library](#).

9 See, among others, [Rio Reiser in the video](#), link accessed on 24 Fe-

bruary 2026.

10 With reference to "Gulag" [ChatGPT: "*Gulag*" was the term used for a vast network of forced-labour camps in the Soviet Union, particularly during the reign of Joseph Stalin. There, millions of people – political opponents, alleged enemies of the state and criminals – were interned and forced to perform hard labour, often under extreme and life-threatening conditions"].

11 Available as a [PDF in the library](#).