

# HUMAN RIGHTS ARE MY PRIDE

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL**



Amnesty International's Fight Discrimination in Europe campaign tackles most forms of discrimination including on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. Despite the considerable advances in recent years, LGBTI people in Europe continue to be bullied at school, excluded from employment and targeted with violence. In some countries, they cannot hold peaceful assemblies and struggle for equality and non-discrimination.

Well into 2014, concerns with Pride marches in several European countries including Serbia, Russia and Ukraine persist. In some countries, such as Russia, laws against the 'propaganda of homosexuality' will continue to negatively affect the organization of Pride marches.

## TAKE ACTION BY:

- Following and sharing our updates on Facebook: [Fight Discrimination in Europe and](#)
- Twitter: [@fightdiscrim](#)

Find out more at:

- [www.fightdiscrimination.eu](#)
- [www.amnesty.eu/en/news/blog/#:U1pV2IWSZik](#)

- Participating in your local Pride march and engaging in Amnesty International actions on Prides at Risk
- Showing your solidarity by signing our petition calling on the Bulgarian Minister of Justice to take immediate action to secure protection of LGBTI individuals against hate-motivated violence and discrimination.



**NOT EVERYTHING'S ROSY FOR PRIDES IN EUROPE**



Split Pride, Croatia, 6th June 2011 © Private



# NOT EVERYTHING'S ROSY FOR PRIDES IN EUROPE

## PRIDES IMPROVE THE RIGHTS OF LGBTI PEOPLE

Since the 1970s, Pride marches have been crucial for LGBTI organizations, communities and individuals to mobilize against homophobia and transphobia, to send clear-cut messages to policy makers and to take a stand against discrimination. Pride marches have also helped strengthen LGBTI organizations, building their capacity and establishing a dialogue between LGBTI people and mainstream sectors of the society.

In 2013, LGBTI Pride marches have taken place for the first time in a number of European countries including Moldova, Montenegro and Ukraine. Regrettably, LGBTI organisations and individuals continue to be discriminated against when exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

### BALTIC PRIDE

*"The Baltic pride has positively impacted on both the LGBTI community and wider society. One of its assets is that it gives a unique space to LGBTI people so they can raise awareness and visibility about their rights, and at the same time lets LGBTI-friendly people speak out in support, regardless of their own sexual orientation or gender identity. It's also a real unifying force that brings together all kinds of people under a unique set of common, political claims."*

Vladimir Simonko, Board Chair of the Lithuanian Gay League, the organizers of the Baltic Pride in Vilnius in 2010 and 2013

### SPLIT PRIDE

The organization of the LGBTI Pride march in Split, Croatia, has brought positive change at different levels. The first march took place in 2011 but it was not adequately protected by the police. At that time, there were no organizations explicitly aimed at promoting the rights of LGBTI people in the city and there were no public debates about discrimination experienced by them. In 2012 and 2013, the Pride march took place with adequate police protection.

*"The Split Pride made possible for the LGBTI community to come together publicly and unite in their demands for equality and dignity. With the help of Croatian LGBTI organizations, volunteers engaged in the organization of the Pride founded Rišpet, the first LGBT association in Split. The Pride triggered a discussion on LGBT rights in the media but also crucially in everyday life among friends, acquaintances, family members and colleagues."*

Ljubica Lipanović, Coordinator of Rišpet



### LITHUANIA

Authorities tried first, in 2010, to ban the Baltic Pride in Vilnius and then, in 2013, to prevent, ultimately without success, the Lithuanian Gay League (LGL) from organizing the Pride march in the city center. Since 2010 a law 'protecting' children from information that denigrate 'traditional family values' is in force. It may be used to restrict the right to freedom of expression. Several other homophobic and transphobic legislative initiatives are currently being discussed in Lithuania.

### UKRAINE

The first ever Kyiv Pride was held in 2013. Ukrainian authorities obliged organizers to hold the Pride march in an isolated location instead of the city center. Counter-demonstrators tried to disrupt the march. Lack of full commitment from the police to protect the march led to the cancellation of the Pride in 2012.

### PRIDE MARCHES IN 2013

- Countries where Prides were banned  
Serbia / Russia / Belarus
- Countries where Prides were not adequately protected or violence was not thoroughly investigated  
Montenegro / Georgia
- Countries where organisers faced barriers (Pride march took place but with restrictions or after authorities attempted to ban them)  
Ukraine / Moldova / Lithuania
- Countries where Prides were not organized, partially because of the very hostile environment  
Macedonia / Bosnia / Armenia

### RUSSIA

In 2013, Russia adopted a law which restricts the possibility for LGBTI people to organize and participate in Pride events. Several peaceful assemblies have been disrupted by the police on the basis of this law.

### GEORGIA

Police in the Georgian capital Tbilisi failed to protect Pride organizers and participants when thousands of people violently attacked the Pride event organized to mark the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHO) on 17 May. The ensuing violence resulted in 17 people being injured.

### MOLDOVA

The first ever Pride march in Moldova was held in 2013. The march had to be shortened because of security concerns due to the fact that counter-demonstrators found out where the march was taking place. Moldovan authorities had repeatedly banned the march in previous years.

### SERBIA

Public authorities have banned Pride marches since 2011. In 2010, a Pride march took place but it was overshadowed by around 6,500 counter-demonstrators. Only one other Pride march has taken place in Serbia; in 2001, when the police failed to protect participants from counter-demonstrations.

### HUNGARY

In 2011 and 2012 Pride organizers faced several barriers from authorities who tried to ban the march in Budapest on the basis of the disruption to the traffic that the event would have caused. Participants and organizers were eventually able to march in the city center.



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