

HUMAN RIGHTS ARE MY PRIDE

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



**NOT EVERYTHING
IS ROSY FOR
PRIDES IN EUROPE**



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Split Pride, Croatia, 6th June 2011
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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 freely express their opinions purely because of prejudices and stereotypes voiced by politicians and upheld by some sectors of society. Since 2007, Amnesty International, together with local partner organizations, has worked to support the rights to freedom of expression and assembly of LGBTI people, and their 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:

- Participating in your local Pride march and engaging in Amnesty International actions on Prides at Risk
- Following and sharing our updates on Facebook: **Fight Discrimination in Europe** and Twitter: **@fightdiscrim**

Find out more at:

www.fightdiscrimination.eu



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NOT EVERYTHING IS 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.

For the first time since 2010, the Belgrade Pride went ahead in September 2014 with adequate police protection against potential violence by counter-demonstrators. Regrettably, in some European countries including Russia and Ukraine, LGBTI organizations and individuals continue to face discrimination when exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

BALTIC PRIDE GOES EUROPRIDE!

"After a decade since the first Pride in Riga, Baltic Pride has turned into EuroPride to make a bigger impact where it is needed most. EuroPride on the European Union's eastern border is an opportunity to draw global attention to this region, solicit international support for the promotion of LGBT rights, and stand in solidarity with those struggling to fight oppression of LGBT rights just across the border."

Kaspars Zalitis, Board Member Association of LGBT and their friends (MOZAIKA)

BELGRADE AND MONTENEGRO PRIDES

Pride organisers in Belgrade and Montenegro have grown in confidence following their successful Pride marches. Their success has also had a positive impact in neighbouring countries and resulted in increased collaboration between LGBTI activists across the Balkans.

"The main result of our work between 2013 and 2014 was that Montenegro Pride 2014 went ahead without any incidents. That was the result of coordinated action between us, police and prosecutors. We noticed that the LGBT community is now more encouraged to participate in the Pride. Local football fan groups from Podgorica decided not to attack anyone last year and that can also be considered a success. We are going step by step and already started preparing for Montenegro Pride 2015, especially in cooperation with public prosecutors."

Danijel Katežić, President Governing Board Queer Montenegro



LITHUANIA

The 2010 Baltic Pride took place in an isolated location in Vilnius, after the authorities tried unsuccessfully to ban it altogether. In 2013, authorities tried to prevent the Pride from taking place on one of Vilnius' main streets, Gediminas Avenue, again without success. Since 2010, a law supposedly protecting children from information denigrating family values is in force. This law has been used to restrict freedom of expression on several occasions. Several other homophobic and transphobic legislative initiatives are currently being discussed in Lithuania.

SERBIA

For the first time since 2010, the Belgrade Pride went ahead in September 2014 with adequate protection by the police from potential violence by counter-demonstrators. Approximately 1,000 people marched through central Belgrade. Local authorities had cancelled the event between 2011 and 2013 due to alleged security threats. Before and after the Pride, several demonstrations against the rights of LGBTI people took place, and a number of incidents were reported elsewhere in the city, resulting in a small number of injuries.

MONTENEGRO

Podgorica's first Pride march was held in October 2013 but it was marred by violence between a 2000-strong police force and counter-demonstrators who had tried to force their way through security cordons. A year later, the Pride in Podgorica took place in November 2014 without violence, after the organizers had cancelled an earlier march in June 2014 amid security concerns. An attempt to hold a Pride march in Niksic, the second largest town in Montenegro, was stopped by police by banning the assembly twice, in April and May 2015, due to its high security risk and the increased threats of disturbances to public order and peace.

PRIDE MARCHES IN 2014

Countries where prides were banned by local authorities or cancelled because of fear or violence
Russia / Ukraine / Georgia

Countries where organisers faced barriers (Pride march took place but with restrictions or after authorities attempted to ban them)
Serbia / Moldova / Montenegro / Lithuania

Countries where Prides were not organized, partially because of the very hostile environment
Armenia / Bosnia / Belarus

UKRAINE

The first Kyiv Pride was held in 2013, having been cancelled in 2012 due to the failure of the police to guarantee adequate protection to participants. In 2013, the authorities obliged organizers to hold the march in an isolated location instead of the city centre and counter-demonstrators tried to disrupt the march. In 2014, Kyiv Pride was cancelled again due to lack of full commitment from the police to protect the march.

RUSSIA

In 2013, Russia adopted legislation restricting the possibility for LGBTI people to organize and participate in Pride events. Applications to hold Pride marches are routinely rejected by authorities. In 2013, a rally for gay rights went ahead in St. Petersburg on the Field of Mars, an area where no specific permission to hold public events is needed. Opponents of gay rights violently attacked participants of the rally and the police briefly detained activists as well as their opponents. A similar event took place in 2014.

GEORGIA

In 2012 and 2013, police in the Georgian capital of Tbilisi failed to protect Pride organizers and participants when marchers were violently attacked during an event organized to mark the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia on 17 May (IDAHOT). The ensuing violence resulted in many injuries. No Pride events were held in 2014 due to fear of violence, and for 2015 Pride organizers are still waiting for security guarantees from the authorities.

MOLDOVA

The first Pride march in Moldova was held in 2013, although the march had to be shortened because of security concerns arising from counter-demonstrators. A Pride march was organized successfully in 2014 by GenderDoc-M. Having banned Pride marches prior to 2013, local authorities have repealed laws that restrict LGBTI people from holding Pride events, in a bid to fulfil conditions to join the European Union.