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Report on the Situation of LGBTQ+ Individuals in Russia

This report was prepared by Denis Oleinik, Director of the Comingout LGBTQ+ group, an organization with expertise in human rights that has collaborated with various Russian and international NGOs.

Introduction

This report was issued at the request of an LGBTQ+ individual from the Russian Federation and addresses the current situation of LGBTQ+ individuals in Russia.

Based on our research, as well as legal and psychological consultations, we can affirm the following: gay, lesbian, transgender, and bisexual people in Russia are at significant risk of persecution based on their sexual orientation and face ongoing discrimination, violence, and human rights violations.

This conclusion is supported by our annual reports on the status of the LGBTQ+ community in St. Petersburg and across Russia, needs assessments of the LGBTQ+ community, and analyses of current legislation and judicial practices.¹

Deterioration of the Situation Since 2022

Since February 24, 2022, the situation has significantly worsened and continues to deteriorate rapidly as of 2025. Although the above-mentioned reports and studies by "Comingout" primarily cover the period from 2021 to 2023, the situation has escalated so quickly that they no longer fully reflect the reality as of January 27, 2025.

Expansion of Administrative Legislation in 2022

In December 2022, administrative legislation prohibiting so-called "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations" was tightened.²

On December 5, 2022, a revised version of the Russian Code of Administrative Offenses came into effect. It introduced administrative liability for any public actions that could be interpreted as creating interest in non-heterosexual relationships or changing one's gender assigned at birth.

Penalties include:

- Fines of up to 400,000 rubles (approximately €5,000) for individuals;

¹ <https://comingoutspb.com/publications/doklad-o-polozhenii-lgbt-lyudej-v-rossii-v-2022-godu/>
<https://comingoutspb.com/publications/doklad-o-polozhenii-lgbt-lyudej-v-sankt-peterburge-v-2021-godu/>

https://comingoutspb.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/issledovanie_potrebnostej_lgbtk_2023_fin_rus.pdf

<https://comingoutspb.com/publications/messedzhi-rossijskoj-propagandy-tradiczionnyh-czennostej/>

<https://comingoutspb.org/en/books/lgbt-people-in-russia-2023-full-report/>

<https://comingoutspb.org/ru/publications/issledovanie-polozheniya-transgendernyh-lyudei-v-rossii-posle-zapreta-transgendernogo-perehoda/>

² <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/nov/24/russia-passes-law-banning-lgbt-propaganda-adults>

- Up to 15 days of detention;
 - Deportation for foreign nationals.
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Broader Interpretation of Propaganda

Since September 2023, authorities responsible for regulating communication have expanded the interpretation of "propaganda of non-traditional relationships" to include any information "justifying such relationships." Similarly, "propaganda of gender transition" now refers to any information "justifying the permissibility of gender transition."³

Targets of the Legislation

This legislation is currently used to prosecute LGBTQ+ individuals for a variety of activities, including:

- **Public Activities:** Managing LGBTQ+ communities on social media, running online channels or podcasts with any audience size, or other forms of public engagement.
- **Private Life:** Expressing one's sexual orientation or gender identity outside their residence, including in public places or private events, even without third-party witnesses.

Examples of prosecutable actions include:

- Posting personal advertisements seeking same-sex partners online;
 - Posting photographs with a same-sex partner on personal social media pages, even if those pages are private.⁴
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Censorship and Designation as Foreign Agents

The legislation has also been used to:

- Block social media accounts focused on LGBTQ+ topics en masse;
- Label organizations and individuals as "foreign agents," resulting in loss of rights, administrative fines, and criminal prosecution.

Criminalization of LGBTQ+ Movements as Extremist Organizations

On January 10, 2024, the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation issued a ruling⁵ designating the "International LGBT Movement" and its subdivisions as extremist organizations and ordering their dissolution within Russia.

Despite the fact that there is no formal public association called the International LGBT Movement, this decision of the Supreme Court has significant legal consequences on the territory of the Russian Federation, as well as for Russian citizens, regardless of their location.

Previously, there was a practice of recognizing fictitious associations as extremist, if they have an ideology which is perceived by Russian authorities as common and destructive. The practice of applying anti-extremism legislation in such cases consists of recognizing any group of individuals who, in the opinion of Russian law enforcement authorities, share this ideology as a structural unit of an "extremist organization." Following this, any individuals demonstrating allegiance to such a "movement" may face criminal liability for participation in extremist activities.

Based on the provisions of Russian legislation, specifically Articles 282.2 and 282.3 of the Russian Criminal Code, and the practice of enforcing anti-extremism laws, leaders, participants of

³ <http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/Document/View/0001202304170032>

⁴ According to data of Monitoring program of "Comingout" publications in media and requests for legal assistance

⁵ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/11/30/russia-supreme-court-bans-lgbt-movement-extremist>

such associations, employees, volunteers, members, attendees of events and support groups, as well as individuals who made donations of any amount, are subject to criminal prosecution for leading, participating in the activities of an extremist organization, or financing extremist activities. The most extensive judicial practice in this area, which can serve as a reference, is represented by court rulings in cases involving individuals connected in any capacity to the activities of the Anti-Corruption Foundation, which was also previously designated as an extremist organization.⁶

Broad Definitions of Extremist Activities

The Supreme Court’s ruling defines extremist activities broadly, including:

1. Creating artistic works that mention same-sex relationships involving minors.
2. Producing any content promoting equality of rights or the equal value of same-sex relationships compared to heterosexual ones.
3. Providing psychological, social, or legal support to LGBTQ+ individuals.

Additional Activities Classified as Extremist:

- Hosting or participating in LGBTQ+ events.
- Managing online LGBTQ+ communities.

Penalties:

Under Article 282.2 of the Russian Criminal Code:

- Participation in the activities of an extremist organization is punishable by 2–6 years of imprisonment.
- Organizing such activities carries a penalty of 6–10 years of imprisonment.

Criminal Prosecutions Under Anti-Extremism Legislation

Currently, there is a growing practice of using Article 282.2 of the Criminal Code to prosecute any activity related to the LGBTQ+ community, including: operating gay clubs and bars; LGBTQ+ activism.

Examples:

- A criminal case was initiated solely because the accused allegedly offered sexual relations to someone of the same gender.⁷
- In another case (Andrey Kotov), the defendant was accused not only of providing services to LGBTQ+ individuals under Article 282.2, Part 1, but also of participating in events he organized (Article 282.2, Part 2).⁸

That outlaws not only providing services for LGBT persons but also receiving them.

Currently, 10 criminal cases have been initiated under this article, and there are 15 defendants in criminal cases. Many suspects and accused are in custody, some are under house arrest, and a person involved in one of the criminal cases died in a pre-trial detention center.⁹ Based on the detailed information we have, there is no effective verification of the circumstances of his death by law enforcement agencies. The actual number of criminal cases may be significantly higher than what is currently known. Information about some criminal cases only becomes available after a verdict has been issued.

Legal

The criteria for what constitutes a criminal offense under Article 282.2 remain vague. LGBTQ+

Ambiguities:

⁶ <https://meduza.io/news/2024/04/09/holod-figurantami-ugolovnyh-del-svyazannyh-s-fbk-stali-kak-minimum-53-cheloveka-dela-vozbuzhdali-dazhe-za-donat-v-200-rublej>

^{7 7} https://ovd.info/express-news/2024/10/07/glavvracha-iz-ulyanovskoy-oblasti-otpravili-v-sizo-po-delu-o-mezhdunarodnom?utm_source=tg&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=news&utm_term=07_10_24

⁸ <https://parniplus.com/lgbt-movement/discrimination/klienty-men-travel-ekstremisti/>

⁹ <https://www.bbc.com/russian/articles/cj91v7gzmeno>

individuals cannot predict whether their public or private actions might lead to criminal prosecution.

Impact on Freedom of Assembly and Expression: Anti-extremist legislation is increasingly being used to interfere with the freedom of assembly. Police raids on LGBTQ+ parties and events have been accompanied by physical violence, humiliation, and the forced outing of attendees.¹⁰

Administrative Offences¹¹

The decision of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation dated November 30, 2023, also establishes administrative liability for the display of LGBTQ+ symbols under Article 20.3 of the Russian Code of Administrative Offenses (CAO RF).

However, neither the Supreme Court's ruling nor Russian legislation defines what constitutes such symbols. Judicial practice interprets the content of this symbolism in the broadest possible terms

For example, there have been instances of individuals being held administratively liable for wearing items displaying the seven-colored rainbow, symbols of the trans* community, even though the Supreme Court's decision explicitly states that the symbol of the LGBT movement is a flag consisting of six stripes: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple.¹²

Article 20.3 of the CAO RF provides for a punishment of up to 15 days of detention.

As of now, based on the data available to us, there have been at least 61 cases under Article 20.3 of the CAO RF specifically related to the display of symbols deemed to be LGBTQ+ symbols.

At the same time, repeated offenses of this kind result in criminal liability under Article 282.4 of the Russian Criminal Code, which provides for up to four years of imprisonment.

The prohibition extends not only to wearing or displaying LGBTQ+ symbols on the Internet or in any other manner but also to anything law enforcement agencies might interpret as such. The application of Russia's criminal anti-extremism laws has created a situation in which LGBTQ+ individuals cannot sufficiently predict the consequences of their actions to avoid criminal liability. For example, if a person at any point in the past uploaded an image to the Internet that can be interpreted as LGBTQ+ symbolism and that image is still accessible, they can be held administratively liable at any time.

If such an image (e.g., a rainbow emoji) was posted more than once, whether before or after the Supreme Court's ruling, the person can face criminal charges after being held administratively liable. As a result, no LGBTQ+ person in Russia today can feel safe.

¹⁰ <https://www.24liveblog.com/live/UVydX?n=3518183141075559098>; <https://parniplus.com/news/v-lenoblasti-politsiya-nakryla-lgbt-den-rozhdeniya/>; <https://parniplus.com/news/chita-lgbt-extremism/>; <https://parniplus.com/news/yaroslavl-rejd/>; https://ovd.info/story/vecherinki-v-noske-i-goryaschie-pasporta-gosudarstvennoe-davlenie-po-soobrazheniem-morali?news_id=65057&utm_source=telegram&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=news&utm_term=02_12_24; <https://www.24liveblog.com/live/UVydX?n=3520479816108450494>; <https://ovd.info/express-news/2024/05/18/policiya-zaderzhala-uchastnikov-dvukh-meropriyatij-v-otkrytom-prostranstve>; <https://t.me/lentachold/77857>; https://ovd.info/story/khronika-davleniya-na-lgbtk?news_id=65041&utm_source=telegram&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=news&utm_term=30_11_24; <https://t.me>

¹¹ The information was gathered from monitoring media and social networks, publicly available court data, and the work on specific cases by the LGBTQ+ group "Comingout"

¹² <https://zona.media/news/2024/01/31/serezhki>; <https://activatica.org/content/b82a3c0b-0b79-425d-8289-edda7428396c/sud-naznachil-shtraf-za-flag-transgendernyh-lyudej-v-socsetyah>

Financial Monitoring Registry

The initiation of a criminal case under any anti-extremism article—regardless of the court's verdict—or being held administratively liable under Article 20.3 of the CAO RF results in the individual being added to the list of persons involved in extremist and terrorist activities, maintained by the state agency overseeing financial operations in the Russian Federation.

Being added to this list leads to severe restrictions on rights, including the inability to manage one's financial assets. Such individuals are only allowed to withdraw up to 10,000 rubles (approximately 100 euros) per month in cash from their bank accounts, and only if the funds were received as wages. These individuals are also prohibited from selling or otherwise disposing of their real estate without the consent of state authorities. If permission is granted, they cannot access the proceeds from the sale without restrictions.

Being included in this list pushes individuals to the brink of poverty and survival, effectively preventing them from leaving Russia due to their inability to purchase tickets.

Criminal Prosecution for Sexual Orientation Unrelated to Anti-Extremism Legislation

There have been cases where individuals were prosecuted for manifestations of their homosexual orientation without any connection to anti-extremist laws. For instance:

1. A criminal case was initiated under Article 148 of the Russian Criminal Code (offending religious sentiments) for posting a video on the Internet that included a kiss between two men with part of a church building visible in the frame.¹³
2. In September 2024, two young homosexual men were sentenced to five years of imprisonment for “indecent acts against minors.” The charges were based on the fact that the two men were naked in their own apartment, and they were seen through a window facing the courtyard.¹⁴

Violation of the Right Not to Be Subjected to Torture or Inhumane Treatment

Until 2024, instances of torture and cruel treatment by state authorities against LGBTQ+ individuals in Russia were largely confined to the North Caucasus region, with sporadic cases in police departments in other regions. However, the designation of the International LGBT Movement as an extremist organization has extended this practice to other regions of the country.

For instance, Andrey Kotov reported to his lawyer and in court during the hearing on pretrial detention that he was subjected to violence by police officers to gain access to his laptops and phone, which qualifies as torture.

The detention of a gay man in Tula in January 2025 was accompanied by degrading treatment, as evidenced by a video that was disseminated in the media.¹⁵

According to monitoring conducted by the LGBTQ+ group “Coming Out”, at least 19 raids¹⁶ on LGBTQ+ clubs and events, including those held in private spaces, were recorded in

¹³ <https://newprospect.ru/news/aktualno-segodnya/sud-v-peterburge-prinyal-reshenie-po-delu-ob-oskorblenii-chuvstv-veruyushchikh-iz-za-foto-potseluya/>

¹⁴ <https://meduza.io/feature/2024/09/12/dvuh-studentov-v-moskve-posadili-na-srok-do-pyati-s-polovinoj-let-po-delu-o-razvratnyh-deystviyah-deti-zhivuschie-po-sosedstvu-yakoby-uvideli-ih-v-okne-obnazhennymi>

¹⁵ <https://71.ru/text/incidents/2025/01/22/75010679/>

¹⁶ <https://www.24liveblog.com/live/UVydX?n=3518183141075559098>; <https://parniplus.com/news/v-lenoblasti-politsiya-nakryla-lgbt-den-rozhdeniya/>; <https://parniplus.com/news/chita-lgbt-extremism/>; <https://parniplus.com/news/yaroslavl-rejd>; <https://ovd.info/story/vecherinki-v-noske-i-goryaschie-pasporta-gosudarstvennoe-davlenie-po-soobrazheniem->

2024. During each raid, between 10 and 40 people were subjected to physical violence, humiliation, threats, and abuse by law enforcement officers. Victims were forced to perform physical exercises, sing, or assume specific poses.

In some raids, all male attendees were issued draft notices for military service. Additionally, participants were photographed, and these images were later published online or sent to their workplaces.

Non-state violence and access to state protection

LGBTQ+ people in Russia face significant risks of non-state physical violence.

In 2023, 43.5% of the people who participated in the study experienced hate violence, which is 13% more than last year. At the same time, the risk of encountering hate-motivated violence depends on the region of the country.

In 2023, only 4% of cases were effectively investigated. Contacting law enforcement agencies in a large number of cases not only does not entail an effective investigation, but also leads to humiliation and discrimination on the part of police officers, and may also entail checking whether there are grounds for bringing the victim to administrative responsibility for "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations", for "participation in extremist activities." or interference with privacy through verification of mobile communication facilities. So, in 2023, 44% of LGBTQ+ people who contacted the police in connection with homophobic and transphobic crimes against them were subjected to pressure from police officers. 73% of the respondents reported that they would not contact the police because of fear of police officers.¹⁷

In 2024, a new trend emerged that further complicates access to legal protection from the Russian state. The ban on the "International LGBT Movement" has been perceived by the population as the criminalization of sexual orientation. Consequently, there has been an increase in cases where victims of violence have faced counterclaims from their attackers, alleging that the victims were engaged in extremist activities or "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations" (Article 6.21 of the Code of Administrative Offenses).

Examples of Such Cases:

- **Case 1:** In one instance documented by the LGBTQ+ group “Comingout,” a person in the Krasnodar region reported a robbery to the police. The attacker countered with an accusation that the victim was engaging in “propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations.” Despite the involvement of a professional lawyer, the case resulted in no investigation into the attacker, a guilty verdict against the victim, a significant fine, and the victim’s deportation from Russia.
- **Case 2:** In January 2025, in St. Petersburg, an LGBTQ+ person was a victim of domestic violence and reported it to the police. The victim's father informed law enforcement that the person was engaged in “propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations” and financing LGBTQ+ organizations. With the help of a lawyer, the victim managed to avoid prosecution, but the police made dropping charges against the perpetrator of the violence a condition for dismissing the case against the victim.

[morali?news_id=65057&utm_source=telegram&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=news&utm_term=02_12_24](https://morali.news/id=65057&utm_source=telegram&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=news&utm_term=02_12_24);
<https://www.24liveblog.com/live/UVydX?n=3520479816108450494>; <https://ovd.info/express-news/2024/05/18/policiya-zaderzhala-uchastnikov-dvukh-meropriyatiy-v-otkrytom-prostranstve>;
<https://t.me/lentachold/77857>; https://ovd.info/story/khronika-davleniya-na-lgbtk?news_id=65041&utm_source=telegram&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=news&utm_term=30_11_24;
https://t.me/parni_plus/15401;

¹⁷ [Report on the life of LGBTQ+ people in Russia in 2023 – LGBTQ+ Group Coming Out](#) pages 54-55

- **Case 3:** Also in January 2025, a homosexual individual refused to resign from their workplace at the request of their employer. In response, the employer filed a report with the Federal Security Service (FSB) alleging that the individual was engaged in extremist activities

Widespread Distrust in Law Enforcement:

A growing number of LGBTQ+ individuals who are victims of non-state violence, outing, extortion, or blackmail are choosing not to contact the police. This is due to a well-founded fear that disclosing their sexual orientation could lead to charges of “propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations” or, in some cases, accusations of extremist activities if their personal communications are inspected.

Obtaining professional legal assistance is also a challenge. Those lawyers who are not affiliated with human rights organizations often refuse professional assistance to LGBT people for fear of being accused of participating in extremist activities. There is no open work of LGBT organizations. The provision of legal assistance to LGBT persons by organizations creates risks of bringing both the lawyer and the client to criminal responsibility.

Discrimination at the work place

LGBTQ+ people in the Russian Federation are often subjected to systemic discrimination regarding the right to education and the right to work, especially representatives of the teaching profession, who are at constant risk of dismissal due to accusations of "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations"¹⁸ which can be expressed, for example, by posting personal photos on their own private pages in social networks. In 2023-2024, cases of dismissal of homosexual persons from public service motivated by homophobia became more frequent.¹⁹ The level of discrimination against LGBTQ+ people in the field of work remains high, however, after the recognition of the International LGBT Movement as an extremist organization and the introduction of a legislative ban on changing the gender marker in documents introduced in the summer of 2023, additional factors of violation of the right to work have emerged.

Challenges Related to Military Registration:

Under Russian law, employers are responsible for maintaining military registration for employees. If an individual with a male gender marker is not registered with the military, the employer faces administrative liability. After the ban on gender marker changes, military registration offices now require transgender men to undergo mandatory psychiatric Under Russian law, employers are responsible for maintaining military registration for employees. If an individual with a male gender marker is not registered with the military, the employer faces administrative liability. After the ban on gender marker changes, military registration offices now require transgender men to undergo mandatory psychiatric evaluations in inpatient facilities as a prerequisite for registration²⁰. Similarly, transgender women must meet the same requirement to be removed from military registration.

As a result, transgender individuals are forced to undergo compulsory medical evaluations to access their right to work. In most regions, these evaluations are accompanied by degrading treatment from medical personnel. Only in Moscow is there a specialized department for psychiatric evaluations of transgender individuals directed by the Ministry of Defense, where

¹⁸ <https://www.sibreal.org/a/uchitelya-vynudili-uvolitsya-iz-za-propagandy-lgbt-v-surgute/32615400.html>

¹⁹ <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/6611663>;

<https://www.24liveblog.com/live/Usumo?n=3557467213647816404>

²⁰ According to data gathered from attorneys working in the field, requests for legal assistance to “Comingout’

patients are not subjected to additional violations of their rights beyond the fact of mandatory evaluation itself.

Threats and Coercion in the Workplace:

The right to work for LGBTQ+ individuals is also hindered by the lack of legal protection in cases of discrimination by employers. For instance, based on consultations with the LGBTQ+ group "Comingout," it has become increasingly common for homosexual and transgender employees, including civil servants, to be pressured to resign "voluntarily" under the threat of being reported to law enforcement for engaging in extremist activities or "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations and gender transition."

Private life and lack of protection from the state

LGBTQ+ people in Russia often face outsourcing by homophobic movements and groups who illegally collect information about the private lives, names, addresses, place of work or study of LGBTQ+ people, after which they either extort money from them or simply disseminate this information, which leads to LGBTQ+ people receiving numerous threats to life and health or stalking. There is no effective investigation of these hate crimes by the law enforcement agencies of the Russian Federation. Contacting law enforcement agencies carries the risk of bringing the victim himself to justice for "promoting non-traditional sexual relations" or accusing him of extremism.²¹

In 2023, 14% of people surveyed by the LGBTQ+ group "Comingout" faced blackmail or extortion because of their sexual orientation or transgenderism.²²

Also, LGBTQ+ people, including minors, have recently regularly faced threats of denunciations in the form of "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations" or anti-extremist crimes from homophobes, colleagues, neighbors, relatives or even parents.

LGBTQ+ and access to medical assistance

Most often, LGBTQ+ people face refusals to provide medical care, to be admitted by a doctor in medical institutions where medical care is provided under the compulsory medical insurance program. Obtaining care in private medical institutions is challenging in many regions of the country due to the lack of such facilities locally and financial constraints.

In 2023, 20% of transgender people and 9% of other LGBTQ+ people experienced refusals to access medical care unrelated to gender affirmative therapy or surgery.

LGBTQ+ people in Russia are frequently subjected to discriminatory or violent behavior by medical professionals. In 2023, 19% of LGBTQ+ people and 39% of transgender people reported discrimination from doctors. It included punitive medical practices, such as performing procedures without adequate anesthesia, or the refusals to prescribe necessary therapies, such as psychiatric medications. These refusals were justified by the doctors on the grounds of the patient's perceived "abnormality," such as homosexuality or "transgenderism."

The compulsory medical insurance program in Russia does not cover gynecological care for transgender men.

As a result, transgender men face significant barriers in obtaining medicines for the treatment of urogenital diseases.

Accessing private gynecological care is also challenging in many regions due to the unavailability of such facilities and financial limitations.

²¹ According to data gathered from attorneys working in the field, requests for legal assistance to "Comingout"

²² <https://comingoutspb.org/en/books/lgbt-people-in-russia-2023-full-report/>

LGBTQ+ and War

LGBTQ+ individuals in Russia face additional risks and vulnerabilities tied to the war in Ukraine and military conscription in general. Homosexual and bisexual men, as well as transgender women in Russia, are obligated to perform military service on the same basis as others, which puts them at risk of being sent to participate in combat operations in Ukraine.

If an LGBTQ+ individual refuses to participate in such combat operations due to anti-war beliefs, they may face criminal prosecution and imprisonment. For LGBTQ+ individuals, particularly transgender women, imprisonment in modern Russia inevitably results in cruel treatment, humiliation, and violence, including sexual violence, within detention facilities. Typically, such treatment is inflicted by other inmates with the full support of the administration of penitentiary institutions.

In cases where prison administrations take steps to ensure the safety of LGBTQ+ individuals, these measures often involve prolonged solitary confinement, which can last indefinitely and constitutes a form of cruel treatment in itself. In certain cases, the administration may forcibly change the documents of transgender men to reflect female gender markers.

Forced Military Contracts in the North Caucasus

According to the Crisis Group "SK SOS," reports from 2024–2025 indicate that homosexual men in the North Caucasus regions of Russia are being coerced into signing military contracts for service in Ukraine. This coercion is achieved through prolonged unlawful detention in prisons without formal charges, coupled with torture.

Risks of Conversion Therapy

LGBTQ+ individuals in Russia also face risks of being subjected to conversion therapy, which operates outside any form of government oversight.

At the request and expense of their relatives, LGBTQ+ individuals are often placed in so-called rehabilitation centers for drug and alcohol addiction treatment²³, where they are subjected to cruel treatment and forced labor intended to "cure" their sexual orientation and gender identity.

When such individuals refuse to comply, they face threats of involuntary hospitalization in psychiatric institutions. Attempts by partners or human rights organizations to appeal to law enforcement in such cases rarely lead to investigations or the release of the individual. Police usually rely solely on the testimony of family members who arranged for the person to be placed in the "rehabilitation center."

Increased Incidents of Conversion Therapy in 2023

In 2023, cases of conversion therapy during visits to psychiatrists increased significantly. These therapies often involve the use of religious rhetoric.

In Muslim regions, conversion therapy may take the form of so-called "exorcism of jinn." In the North Caucasus region, there are even dedicated "Muslim hospitals" where LGBTQ+ individuals are held and "treated." Similar practices are also found in other Muslim regions of Russia.

Special Risks Faced by Transgender Individuals in Russia

Physical Violence Due to Document Mismatches

Transgender individuals are particularly at risk of physical violence due to discrepancies between their appearance and the gender markers in their official documents.

Ban on Gender Marker Changes in Documents

²³ <https://cherta.media/story/lgbt-conversion-therapy/>

As of July 24, 2023, changing gender markers in official documents is no longer possible in Russia. This not only violates the right of transgender individuals to legal recognition but also significantly increases their risk of encountering physical violence.

Prohibition of Gender-Affirming Surgery

Gender-affirming surgical procedures are prohibited in Russia, making it impossible for individuals who have already changed their gender markers to align their physical appearance with their documents. This violates their right to access medical care.

Prohibition of Hormone Therapy

Gender-affirming hormone therapy is also banned, posing significant health risks for individuals who have already begun such therapy, regardless of the gender markers in their documents. This ban represents a denial of access to essential medical care.

Vulnerability of LGBTQ+ Parents

LGBTQ+ parents in Russia constitute a particularly vulnerable group. The situation in this area significantly worsened in the summer of 2024.

Threats of Losing Custody

LGBTQ+ parents frequently face threats from child protection services to remove their children from their families. These threats are often followed by legal actions toward this end.

Child protection authorities interpret a child's residence in a same-sex family as "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations," equating it to abuse of parental rights. This serves as a basis for revoking parental rights.

Particular Vulnerabilities of Transgender Parents

Transgender parents, especially those who have previously changed their gender markers, are especially unprotected. Current legislation prevents them from being listed as parents on their own children's birth certificates.

Risks When Reporting Crimes

LGBTQ+ parents are also particularly vulnerable when they become victims of crimes or other violations. Reporting such incidents to the police places their parental rights at risk.

Risks for Families of Transgender Minors

In 2024, families of transgender minors entered a new high-risk category.

Examples of Legal Actions Against Parents:²⁴

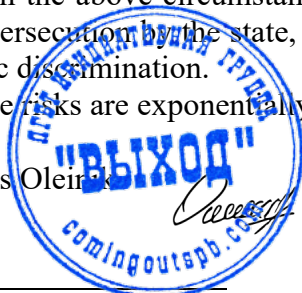
- A father of a transgender schoolgirl lost his parental rights.
 - Another parent of a transgender teenager was held administratively liable for "failure to fulfill parental duties." This administrative action creates legal grounds for future revocation of parental rights.
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General Climate of Risk for LGBTQ+ Individuals in Russia

Given the above circumstances, virtually any LGBTQ+ individual in Russia lives under the risk of persecution by the state, violence without the possibility of an effective investigation, and systemic discrimination.

These risks are exponentially higher for individuals who are openly LGBTQ+.

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²⁴ <https://www.24liveblog.com/live/UVydx?n=3556738207306720979>; <https://www.dp.ru/a/2024/10/08/sud-v-peterburge-lishil-roditelskih>