

From: "jeffrey E." <jeevacation@gmail.com>

To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re:

Date: Sun, 17 May 2015 15:16:29 +0000

Following the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia liberalized some of its anti-LGBT laws. Most notably, homosexual relationships were decriminalized in 1993. Transgender Russians have also been allowed to change their legal gender on identity documents since 1997, although there are many obstacles to the process and invasive surgical requirements remain in place. Despite these liberalization trends during the immediate post-Soviet period, in recent years, Russian authorities have routinely denied permits for Pride parades, intimidated and arrested LGBT activists and condoned anti-LGBT statements by government officials. [ILGA-Europe](#), the European section of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, [rates Russia](#) as the least protective country in Europe for LGBT citizens, ranking it 49th out of the 49 European countries rated in its annual survey.

In June 2013, the [Russian дума in Moscow passed a new law banning the “propaganda of non-traditional sexual relationships”](#) to minors. The new federal law is closely related to several regional laws that were already on the books, all of which seek to penalize “propaganda” of homosexuality, generally with the intent of “protecting” minors. The city of Sochi, which is the site of the upcoming Winter Olympics, has one of those regional laws in place. And while the regional laws are not uniform, like the new federal law, they all tend to advance vague definitions of propaganda that lend themselves to the targeting and ongoing persecution of the country’s LGBT community. The language of this new law focuses on “non-traditional” sexual relationships, to contrast with “traditional values” or “traditional family” language that Russia is promoting at the UN to oppose positive statements supporting the human rights of LGBT people.

The federal anti-LGBT propaganda law, as signed by President Putin on June 29, entered into force in Russia on June 30 of this year. (The official version in Russian is published [here](#).) In the federal law, propaganda is defined as: “distribution of information that is aimed at the formation among minors of nontraditional sexual attitudes, attractiveness of non- traditional sexual relations, misperceptions of the social equivalence of traditional and non-traditional sexual relations, or enforcing information about non-traditional sexual relations that evokes interest to such relations”

The new law sets administrative fines for LGBT propaganda at 4,000 to 5,000 rubles for individuals (about \$120 - \$150 U.S. dollars) and up to 800,000 to 1 million rubles for NGOs, corporations or other legal entities (about \$24,000 - \$30,000 U.S. dollars). More severe administrative fines are allowed for propaganda transmitted via the Internet or other media networks or by a foreign citizen. **Foreigners are also subject to 15 days of prison and deportation from Russia.**

It is too early to tell how aggressively the new federal law will be enforced, but several government officials have warned of a robust intent to enforce the legislation, including during the upcoming Sochi Olympics, and LGBT activists are themselves intent on challenging the law on human rights grounds. Moreover, while the law suggests that only information directed at children should expose an individual or an organization to liability, prosecutions under similar laws in the regions have not dwelled on this nexus to children and the federal law’s heightened focus on the internet, where minors have an opportunity to view such information, suggest that the law could be applied broadly and with little regard to any notion of child protection. LGBT citizens and activists in Russia are increasingly concerned, as this law is being implemented at a time and in an environment of

increasing violence and hatred of LGBT individuals and as LGBT defenders are being subjected to fines and prosecutions as “foreign agents.”

A group of [extremist organizations in the United States have signed a joint statement](#) supporting the law, and the conservative, U.S.-based Catholic Family & Human Rights Institute has been [promoting it at the United Nations](#).

On Sun, May 17, 2015 at 9:39 AM, [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Hi, I will have my class until 11.. I'm not gonna come to the gym.
If you need a bike, a can drive it for you

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please note

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