



**RUSSIAN
LGBT
NETWORK**

INTERREGIONAL
SOCIAL MOVEMENT

ANNUAL REPORT

2020

RUSSIAN LGBT NETWORK IS:



A group of people who work to protect the rights of LGBT+ community in Russia



A cross-regional social movement



The largest LGBT+ human rights organization in Russia

The Russian LGBT Network was founded in May 2006, and has been working for over a decade.



THE STRUCTURE OF THE RUSSIAN LGBT NETWORK



Individual Members



Collective Members



Regional Offices

The main governing body of the Russian LGBT Network is the **Conference**

At the Conference, the most important decisions are made. Between the Conferences, its functions are performed by

- ◀ The Interregional Coordinating Board

- ◀ The Board of the Russian LGBT Network



WHAT DO WE DO?

- ◀ Free psychological and legal counselling
- ◀ Emergency assistance for those in need
- ◀ Monitoring of violence, violations of human rights and discrimination against LGBT+ people
- ◀ Reports on LGBT+ rights in Russia
- ◀ Support for LGBT+ movement in various regions of Russia
- ◀ Annual forum for LGBT+ activists
- ◀ And much more!

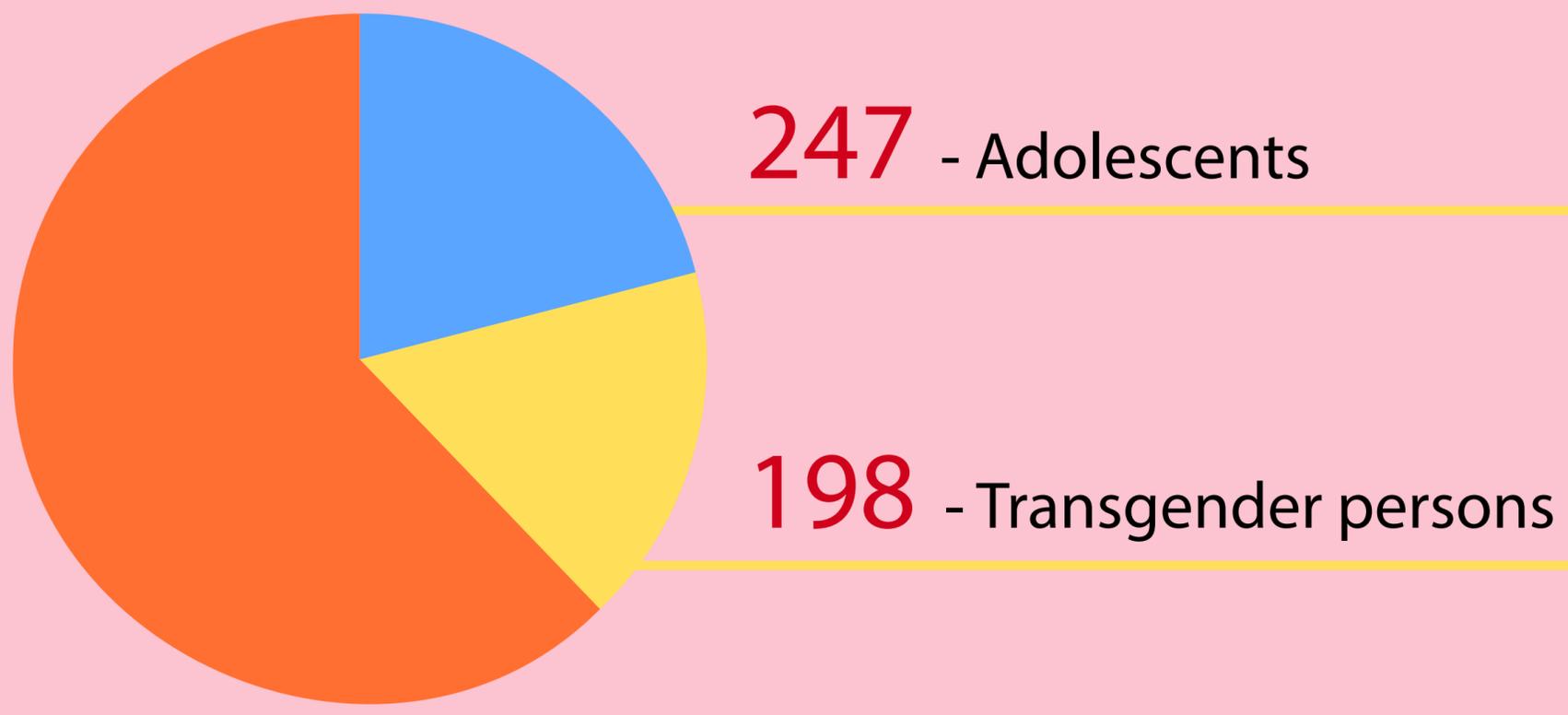
We work to build
a society free
of discrimination based on
sexual orientation,
gender identity,
gender expression
or sex characteristics.



PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSISTANCE

In 2020, our psychologists assisted **1179** people from **78** regions of Russia

Offline psychological assistance was available in **15** regions of Russia



PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSISTANCE

The most common issues:



Fears, depression, solitude, suicidal thoughts



Coming out



Coronavirus self-isolation



Relationships with partners



Homophobic environment



PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSISTANCE

We regularly organize trainings for our psychologists!

October 24-25, 2020

Online Scientific-Practical Conference for practical psychologists

October 10, 2020

Presentation at the online conference PSY TALKS in the section "Lecture course for the professionals" with the report "Ethics of rendering assistance to LGBTQ clients"

November 28-29, 2020

Psychological Webinar Training

We wanted to hold this event offline, so we scheduled it for the end of the year. Unfortunately, because of the second wave of the COVID-19, we also had to hold our training online.

In January-December 2020

We held 7 supervisory meetings with psychologists from different regions. We discussed changes in the organization of psychological work during the pandemic.



HOTLINE. PHONE CONSULTATIONS

The Russian LGBT Network's Hotline offers free psychological assistance for LGBT+ community and their loved ones throughout Russia.

THE HOTLINE IS:

THE HELPLINE
8 800 555 73 74

AN ONLINE CHAT WITH A PSYCHOLOGIST
CHAT.LGBTNET.ORG

Our Helpline has been running since 2010.
During this time we have answered over 28 000 calls.

- ◀ In 2020, **9 psychologists** worked on the Helpline. They answered **3257 calls**.
- ◀ From April 14 to October 31 2020, **the opening hours on the Helpline were extended**. At that time our Helpline was available from 9.00 am to 00.00 am.
- ◀ Now the Helpline is available **every day** from 15.00.
- ◀ The total quantity of calls to the Helpline **increased by almost 62%** compared to 2019.



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- ◀ The Online Chat has been running for 5 years. During that time we have received **13 000** requests for help.
- ◀ In 2020, **29** psychologists worked on the Chat. They received **2 357** requests for help.
- ◀ From April 14 to October 31, 2020, The Online Chat of the Russian LGBT Network **was available within 24 hours**. We have increased the working time by 8 hours by adding night shifts.
- ◀ The total quantity of requests for help in the Online Chat **increased by 121%** compared to 2019.



HOTLINE

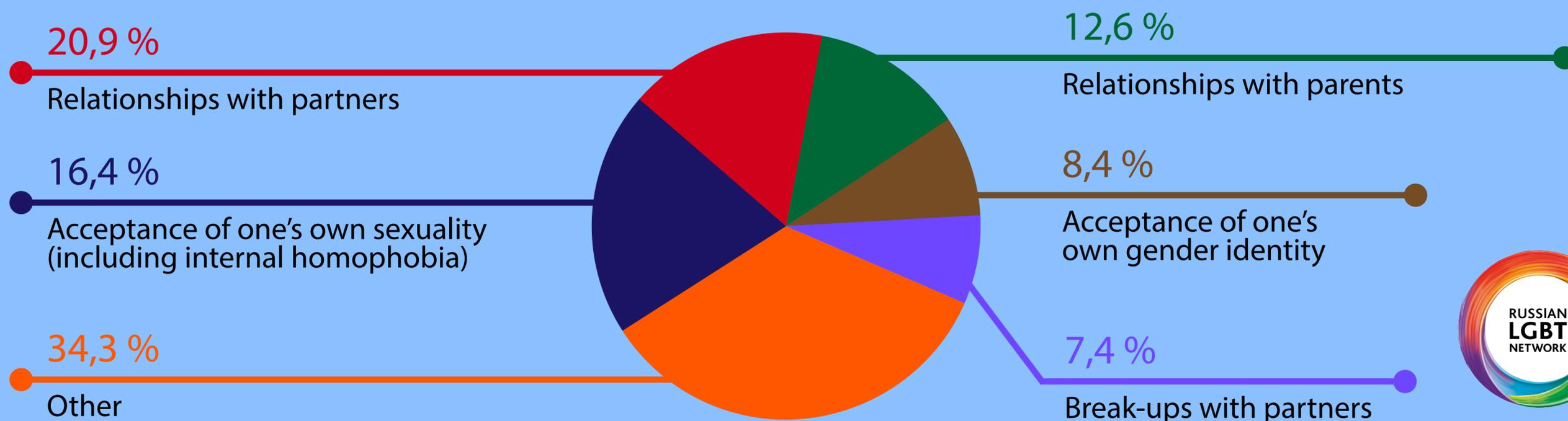
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The most common issues in 2020

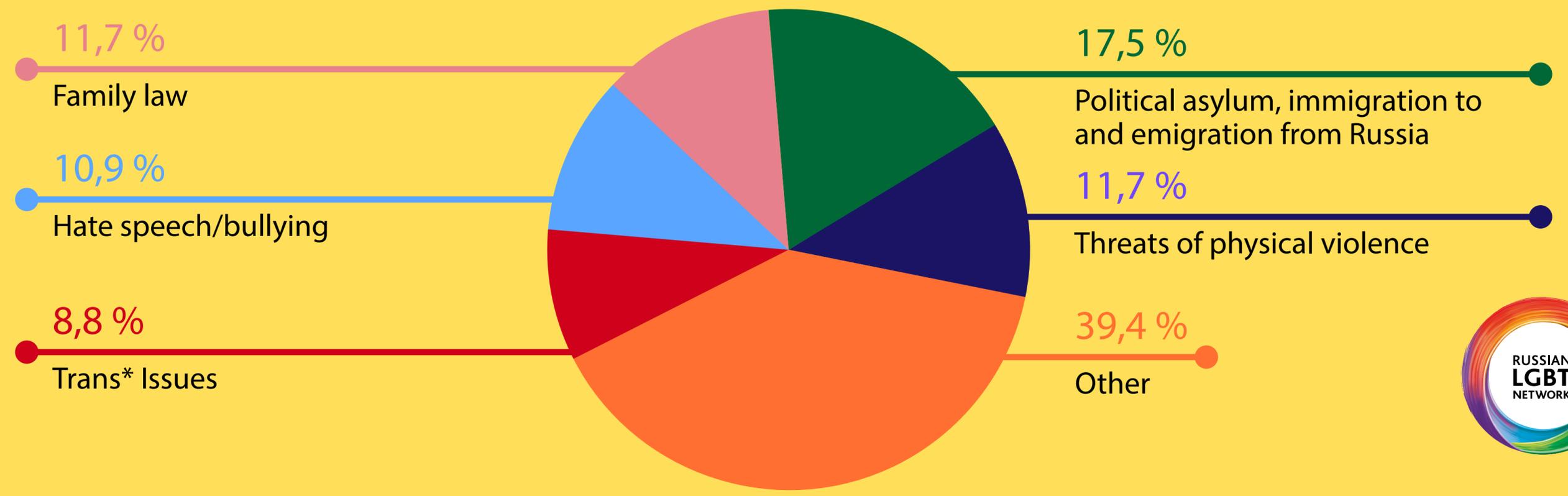


LEGAL ASSISTANCE

In 2020, our lawyers held **406** free consultations for people

- ◀ We switched to a new system of automatic distribution of consultations (help-desk). It helped us to speed up the work of legal assistance.
- ◀ Our team consisted **20** lawyers.

The most common issues in 2020



EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

The Emergency Assistance program has been operating since 2014. It was designed to support victims of hate crimes and LGBT+ activists who suffer from discrimination or hate crimes because of their work.



Decisions are made within 24 hours.

Our teams of Emergency Assistance received **91** requests.
And we were able to support **20** of these requests for help.



Why only 20?

53% - requests for emigration from Russia.

And migration issues are not within the competence of the Emergency Assistance.

21% - requests that didn't comply with the requirements of the Emergency Assistance.

4% - requests from people who realized that they actually don't need emergency help.

In 2020, the program expanded its geography. The teams of Emergency Assistance started working in 6 new federal districts of Russia: Yekaterinburg, Samara, Nizhny Novgorod, Vladivostok, Omsk and Krasnodar.



EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

HOTLINE FOR TRANSGENDER PEOPLE

In April 2020, we rapidly launched a hotline for transgender people due to the pandemic

The main goal is to provide financial assistance to those who lost their jobs due to the pandemic.

From April to December 2020, as a part of the project we received **55 requests**

51

We support 51 requests for financial assistance in rental payment, grocery shopping and hormone therapy.



EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

WE SUCCEEDED IN HELP

January 2020, Krasnoyarsk

The girl informed us that her partner **was taken by deceit** to Baku and was forcibly detained. Moreover, some heavy-handed methods were used against her by her relatives. The program of Emergency Assistance got in touch with their colleagues and addressed the embassy of Russia in Azerbaijan in this regard. With common efforts **we managed to free the girl**. Local activists helped ensure safety before the Russian lawyer arrived. All in all, we transported the girl to Moscow and helped her move to St. Petersburg. We provided social assistance to her for two months.

March 2020, Moscow

A couple from Kazakhstan fled to Moscow, as one of the partners **was persecuted**. He was kidnapped several times, forcibly treated and forcibly detained. We made a decision to help the man in moving from Russia to Europe. For this, it was necessary to issue a foreign passport. The couple didn't have the opportunity to do this, so they had to return to Kazakhstan. They were literally locked in Kazakhstan due to the pandemic. In July 2020, one of the partners was kidnapped by his father's mercenaries. We retained an attorney, International organizations, but the man **is still forcibly held** by his relatives and the police refuse to resolve the situation. His partner went public with his homosexuality and therefore constantly receive threats now. We hope the men will have been handed over to human rights defenders in Europe as soon as possible.



EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

WE SUCCEEDED IN HELP

May 2020, Kurgan region

The man from the Kurgan region requested for help after **a transphobic attack**. He had gone to the police and after it he was threatened with murder. We helped the man to leave for another region and found a lawyer for him. We also **succeeded in opening a criminal case** and provided social assistance to the man for 3 months.

August 2020, Chelyabinsk

A homosexual man from Chelyabinsk asked us for help. His relatives **forced him to lodge a statement** with the police about sexual violence by his partner. They also threatened him with bodily harm. We helped the man to leave for another region and provided social assistance to him. Then we found a lawyer for him in Chelyabinsk. **The case was closed**. He returned to his region.



LGBT+ PERSECUTION IN CHECHNYA

What did we do?



We helped people to leave Chechnya



We provided food and housing



We provided medical, legal and psychological assistance



We helped people to find sanctuary outside of Russia

In 2020

We received **74** requests for help, most via the Hotline kavkaz@lgbtnet.org

57 persons received assistance and support

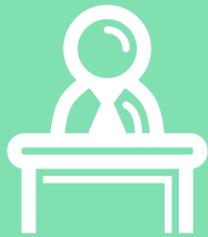
On April 1, 2017, the world found out that LGBT+ people in Chechnya were illegally detained, tortured and even killed.

We started to assist the victims immediately, and continued to do so in 2018, 2019 and 2020.



LGBT+ PERSECUTION IN CHECHNYA

ADVOCACY



There are 4 cases at different levels of court proceedings now, federal and International: the cases of Maxim Lapunov, Arbi Altemirov, Aminat Lorsanova and the case of a person whose name we can't disclose.



The documentary 'Welcome to Chechnya' about the persecution of the LGBT+ community in Chechnya was released. The film became a platform for discussions about the situation in Chechnya and around the world.



In October 2020, we took part in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. We discussed the human rights situation in Chechnya.



In May 2020, we met the representatives of 16 OSCE participating States. We summed up the measures taken to improve the situation in Chechnya and how the pandemic affected what was happening in Chechnya.



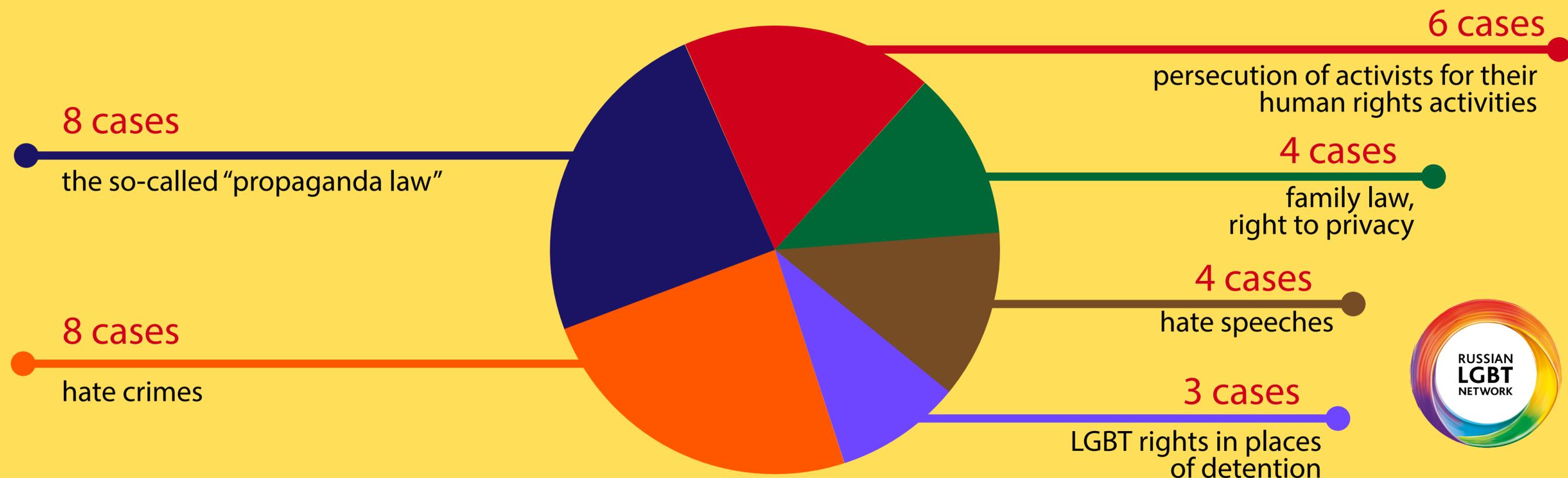
STRATEGIC LITIGATION

The goal of strategic litigation is not only to solve an individual's problem, but also to initiate systemic changes.

In 2020, the number of cases in the Strategic Litigation program **increased by 65%**.

In 2018, we had 10 such cases, in 2019 – 20, and in 2020 - 33.

Each strategic litigation case leads to gradual change of legislation, its implementation or even of public opinion.



STRATEGIC LITIGATION

OUR VICTORIES

Registration of a tax deduction for a spouse in a same-sex marriage

We helped Igor Kochetkov and Kirill Fedorov get a tax deduction as spouses in Russia although their marriage is registered in the USA.

Termination of the case 'on propaganda' in Arkhangelsk.

There is an LGBT center in the Arkhangelsk region, which the police didn't like, so they opened an administrative case 'on propaganda' against it. We succeeded in the termination of this administrative case.

Restriction on parental rights

We have obtained justice for a woman with 3 children in one of the regions of Russia. Her husband tried to take two children away from her because of the unconventional orientation of the third. He thought the third child is a bad influence on others.



STRATEGIC LITIGATION

OUR VICTORIES

Blocking the site of the LGBT network

On August 28, the prosecutor of the Central District of St. Petersburg lodged a lawsuit with the Smolinsky District Court. He **demanded to block the website** of the Russian LGBT Network. The reason was the posting on the website of the information about a survey on the bullying of LGBT+ adolescents in schools. On September 17, judge Tatyana Chistyakova left the case without progress. On October 21, she returned the case to the prosecutor's office **due to uncorrected errors in the case**.

State service for changing the passport

In October, some news appeared on the Internet that since the beginning of the month, **the opportunity to apply for a passport replacement due to a gender change has disappeared** on the website of state service. The Russian LGBT Network has made an official request to the Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media. We received the following answer: "The changes will also affect the service of issuing or replacing a passport of a citizen of the Russian Federation. In addition to the most common reasons for replacing a passport due to age or due to loss, there are other reasons, for most of which the line "Other" **will be provided** in the new user interface of State Service".



STRATEGIC LITIGATION

ECHR

“Propaganda” in Naberezhnye Chelny

On July 30, the administrator of an LGBT dating group from Naberezhnye Chelny on the Vkontakte social network, **found guilty** of ‘propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations’, appealed to the ECHR. Alexei Pavlov left the group in 2010, but this didn’t stop either the FSB officers who drew up the protocols, or the judges. In Autumn 2019, the World Court of Naberezhnye Chelny and then the Naberezhnye Chelny City Court **found the young man guilty** of ‘promoting non-traditional sexual relations’ and imposed a fine of 50.000 rubles.

Anti-LGBT group "Pila" ("Saw")

In December, 6 LGBT activists **appealed to the ECHR** with complaints about the ineffective investigation of Pyla’s threats. Complaints were sent by Mikhail Tumasov, Oksana Berezovskaya, Igor Kochetkov, Alexander Belik, Ekaterina Sokol, Georgy Timofeev. They had previously filed allegations of a crime with the FSB, but **the service refused to investigate** the facts indicated in the statement.



DISCRIMINATION MONITORING

We constantly gather information on discrimination, human rights violations and hate crimes in Russia. We analyze this information and prepare reports, papers, analytical notes and other materials.

As a result, anyone can learn about the most severe problems of LGBT+ community.



Our monitoring team in 2020 – **26 volunteers** from **16 regions** of Russia.



In 2020, we documented **184 cases** of discrimination, violence or human rights violations in **24 regions** of Russia.

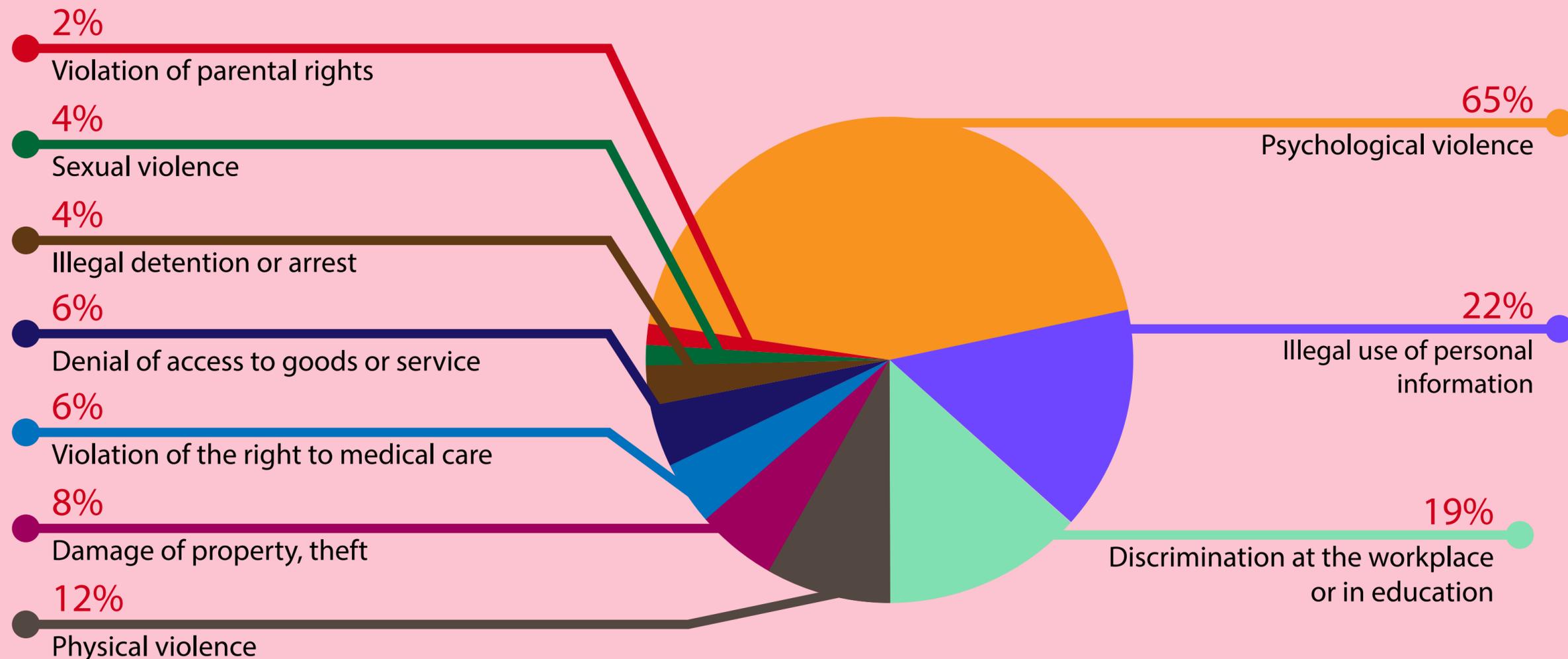


ANNUAL ONLINE SURVEY

In 2020, 3 430 people participated in our survey.

2 689 of those surveyed faced discrimination, violence or violation of their rights. 78,4% of all respondents.

What did LGBT+ faced in Russia in 2020?



ADVOCACY

In 2020, the Russian LGBT Network:

- ◀ Together with 11 other human rights organizations prepared an alternative report on human rights in Russia for the UN Human Rights Committee
- ◀ Prepared a report for consideration on Russia's implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- ◀ Submitted a report on hate crimes committed in 2019, motivated by homophobia and transphobia to the OSCE/ODIHR
- ◀ Took part in coordination the efforts of the advocacy group on amendments to the Family Code: as a result of the work of human rights defenders, the amendments were withdrawn
- ◀ Took part in a meeting with the consuls of European countries and presented a report on the situation with the violation of the LGBT+ rights during the pandemic

Our advocacy involves various activities aimed at changing the situation with LGBT+ rights in Russia to the better. The goal is to achieve systemic changes.



SUPPORT FOR LGBT+ MOVEMENT

The Russian LGBT Network provides financial and other resources to support LGBT+ movement in Russia.

28

In 2020, we received 28 applications

13

We managed to support 13 applications

to the total value of

1 512 008

rubles

Any initiative group that has at least one Individual Member of the Russian LGBT Network can apply.



SUPPORT FOR LGBT+ MOVEMENT

In 2020, we supported 13 applications – from St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg, Murmansk, Moscow, Omsk, Tomsk, Krasnodar, Rostov-on-Don, Vladivostok, Arkhangelsk.



Among the supported projects, there were seminars, training, lectures, and media projects



We supported initiatives to help the LGBT+ community during the COVID-19 pandemic



YOUR SUPPORT

We are grateful to each and every person who supported our work in 2020!

In 2020, we collected

4 559 194
rubles

3 171 358
rubles

to help LGBT+
from Chechnya

1 089 474
rubles

for the Hotline

20 961
rubles

for the Program of Emergency
Assistance of the Resource
Center in Yekaterinburg

277 401
rubles

for the statutory
activity

In 2020, **273** people signed up for a monthly subscription and now support our work every month!

In 2019, there were **143** such people, in 2018 - **30**, and in 2017 - **none**.





WE ARE ON THE MAP

