



# RUSSIAN LGBT NETWORK ANNUAL REPORT

2014

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## FOREWORD

We are happy to present you with 2014 Annual report of the Russian LGBT Network. It was a hard, but interesting year. We learned a lot and grew stronger. And I hope that we helped other people to grow stronger too – those who are ready to fight for human rights and equality despite difficult situation in the country and all the risks.

The Russian LGBT Network represents only part of the movement for equal rights for everyone regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity. Each year this movement grow stronger. New organizations and initiative groups emerge all over the country, and we are proud to say that we support this process. In 2014, we initiated the emergency support program to back up the survivors of homophobic hate crimes and activists and organizations suffered because of their activities. We also started the program of providing resources to support the events held by the activists in the various regions of the country. Moreover, we helped to open new community centers in some regions of Russia. And the Interregional Coordination Council composed of the heads of the Regional branches and representatives of Collective members became the statutory body of the movement and was granted with an opportunity to participate fully in the decision-making process.

In 2014, we also continued our regular work: we provided free legal and psychological consultations for LGBT-community all over Russia, promoted advocacy work and strategic litigation, and cooperated with state officials and representatives of civil society.

In November 2014, the Conference of the Russian LGBT Network adopted new Strategic plan for 2015-2017. We will continue our work to enhance the opportunities of LGBT people to protect their dignity and rights. We will go on with supporting the development of LGBT movement in Russia and cooperating with civil society. We believe in rationality and justice, we know that we are on the right side. Together with our allies, we will keep moving towards the just world, world without hatred and violence, world of equal opportunities for everyone.

**Chairperson of the Russian LGBT Network,  
Mr. Igor Kochetkov**



## OUR TEAM

The Russian LGBT Network is a team of dedicated people ready to fight for equality for everyone regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity. These are the activists of the Regional branches and Collective members and – of course – our volunteers, members and supporters.

### Daniil Grachev, StopHate Project (Saint Petersburg)

*In 2013, the number of assaults against LGBT activists in St. Petersburg increased significantly. This is when the community center LaSky was attacked. Dima Chizhevsky who suffered the most that time proposed to establish an organization that would combat hate crimes. Dima left Russia, but his project stayed.*

*Nowadays, safety control and monitoring at all LGBT-related events is the core activity of our initiative group. We want people to be able to stand up for their rights on the streets of our city without fear of being beaten. We hope that our cooperation with the Network will help to piece out the shortage of experience and resources, which could hinder the achievement of our goals.*

### Dmitry Chuykov, Astrakhan regional branch of the Russian LGBT Network

*Four years ago, my friends and I realized that we could no longer live in the atmosphere of intolerance and aggression towards LGBT community. We decided to dissipate this bottomless darkness in our region. The first to help were the activists and volunteers of the Russian LGBT Network. The Network became the sliver of light that illuminated our path in LGBT activism. Constant support and care and permanent movement towards our common goals – that is what the Russian LGBT Network means for each of us.*

### Violetta Grudina, LGBT organization "Maximum" (Murmansk)

*Advocacy has become the meaning of my life. LGBT activists inspired me to know my rights and to defend them.*

*The Russian LGBT Network is a consolidation center for LGBT organizations in Russia. Thanks to the events and activities organized by the Network, I met many dedicated people who believe in the primacy of human rights.*

*Why I do advocacy work? It is because I want to be free, equal and protected in my own country. And one of my goals is to share this information with others. I believe that one day the supremacy of human rights will become the basic value in Russia.*



## PARTNERS' FEEDBACK

### Nina Tagankina, Executive Director of the Moscow Helsinki Group

Dear friends and colleagues,

I can proudly say that I stood at the origins of the Interregional Social Movement "Russian LGBT Network", which was created to protect LGBT rights and to promote their social adaptation.

The Network was established in May 2006. On October 19, 2008, it was transformed into interregional social movement, the first and the only interregional LGBT organization in Russia.

The movement was established to eliminate all forms of discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, to spread the ideas of tolerance in the Russian society and to promote participation of lesbians, gays, and bisexual and transgender people in public life.

The Moscow Helsinki Group has been supporting the Russian LGBT Network for the last eight years. I was a member of the Board of the Movement all these years. I believe that the MHG managed to share its experience of advocacy work with the Network. Many members and volunteers of the Network studied at the Human Rights Schools set up by MHG.

Today, the Russian LGBT Network consists of sixteen regional branches and eight collective members. It is a member of the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA).

Keep it up! And remember that MHG is always ready to support you.



### Jasmine O'Connor, Head of International Campaigns, Stonewall, UK

At Stonewall, we are deeply inspired by the work the Russian LGBT Network do. Network activists do not just work at the frontlines of LGBT human rights defense worldwide, they set the pace. In a context where civil society is under assault, they continue to create space for people to speak out and foster dialogue. It is a privilege to be considered as their partner and we stand ready to help however we can.



### Peter Tatchell, Director, Peter Tatchell Foundation, London, UK

The Peter Tatchell Foundation is proud to support and publicize the important LGBTI human rights work being done by the Russian LGBT Network (RLGBTN). We admire the commitment, determination, bravery and achievements of its members, who operate in repressive legal and political circumstances. They seek to defend and effect the freedoms and rights guaranteed in the Russian Constitution. In an often-homophobic social atmosphere, the work of the RLGBTN is vitally important to support vulnerable LGBT people, educate the public and challenge anti-gay repression. We salute their human rights initiatives.





**Yana Ziferblat (Knopova), Integral Change Center (HOME)**

*This summer I had joy and honor to facilitate two groups of volunteers and staff members from the organizations, which are part or partners of the Russian LGBT Network.*

*The two weeks of trainings, co-organized with the great team of the Network have met me with dozens of beautiful souls struggling to make this world better, against all of the odds and in conditions of discrimination and oppression. I was struck by their wisdom, kindness, optimism and complete devotion to the course and to the community. You all you are beautiful souls on your wonderful unfolding ways, I miss you and looking forward to seeing you all very soon!*



**Vladimir Averin, Head of the LGBT Project "PULSAR", Omsk**

*Changes for the best take place thanks to people who change the world by gaining confidence and inner strengths, making this world a better place. These people are united by social activism, commitments to the principles of democracy and aspiration for equality.*

*The Russian LGBT Network is a striking example of such unification of ideas, people and initiatives. PULSAR project is the partner of the Russian LGBT Network. We support and promote consolidation of efforts of LGBT activists in the fight for LGBT rights.*

**The Russian LGBT Network** is an organization with its own history. It started in *April 2006* when the Network was established. The first all-Russian Conference of organizations supporting LGBT movement took place in 2008, and the Network was transformed into interregional social movement.

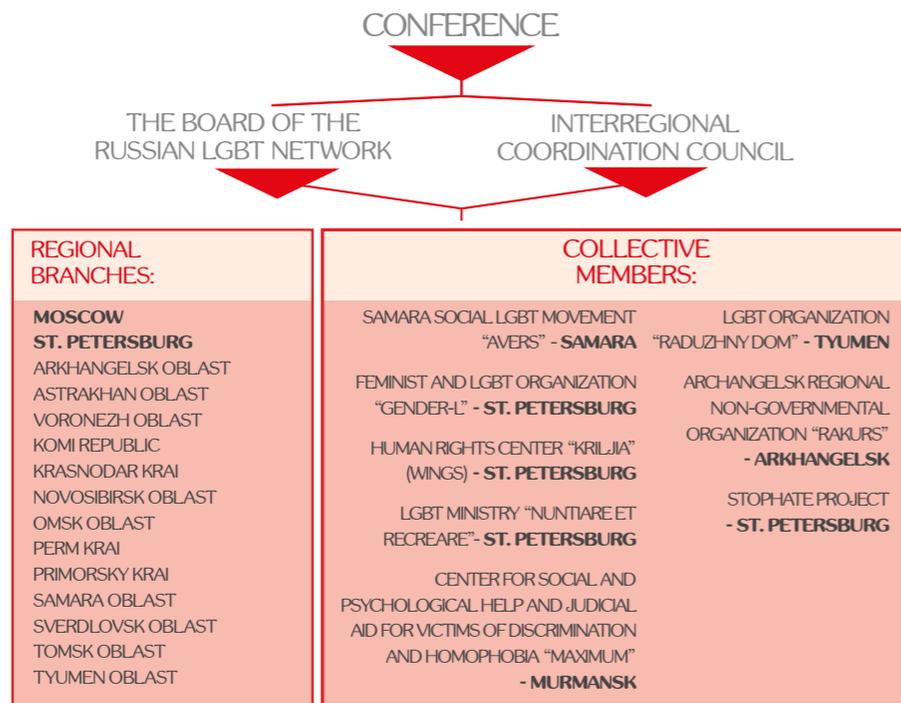
By now, the Network is the largest and the only interregional LGBT organization in Russia. We render free-of-charge legal and psychological assistance for LGBT community and support the survivors of hate crimes in the courts. The Week against Homophobia, the Day of Silence and the Rainbow flashmob have been held in Russia first time ever due to the Russian LGBT Network. We managed to come into contact with international and domestic human rights organizations including the United Nations, European Commission and European Court of Human Rights. We also supported the establishment and development of LGBT organizations and initiative groups in more than 20 regions of the country.

We have a lot of work ahead. Nevertheless, we can state that the Network not only managed to create stable infrastructure that promotes consolidation of LGBT community, but also contributed to the visibility of LGBT people and of the problems they face among the general public.

The Russian LGBT Network is an interregional nongovernmental human rights organization promoting equal rights and respect for human dignity regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity through unification and development of regional initiatives, advocacy and rendering of social and legal services.



# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



Center for Social and Psychological Help and Judicial Aid for Victims of Discrimination and Homophobia "Maximum" - *Murmansk*



LGBT Ministry "Nuntiare et Recreare" - *St. Petersburg*



Samara Social LGBT Movement "AVERS" - *Samara*



LGBT Organization "Raduzhny Dom" - *Tyumen*



StopHate Project - *St. Petersburg*



Archangelsk Regional non-governmental Organization "Rakurs" - *Arkhangelsk*



Human Rights Center "Krilija" (Wings) - *St. Petersburg*



Feminist and LGBT Organization "Gender-L" - *St. Petersburg*

The Russian LGBT Network regularly monitors hate crimes against LGBT. The analyzed data are shared in the public domain and included into various alternative reports. It is of great importance to show that hate crimes against LGBT take place in Russia despite the official position of the authorities, which did not mention a single homophobic hate crime in the official reports of the Russian Federation to various international institutions.

- In April 2014, special report on hate crimes against LGBT in 2013 was prepared to be included in the OSCE annual report. Information regarding 31 cases of homophobic hate crimes was presented in the report.

- In April 2014, the report to the UN Human Rights Committee was prepared (in cooperation with LGBT organization "Coming Out" and Transgender Legal Defense Project "Rainbow Foundation"). The report included information on: violence against LGBT individuals and human rights activists; hate speeches delivered by state officials and religious leaders in mass media; violation of the right to freedom of assembly and associations; the law prohibiting the so-called "propaganda of homosexuality", its implementation and effects; legal recognition of gender identity of transgender people; prosecution of LGBT activists and human rights defenders under the law on "foreign agents".

In 2013-2014, the Coalition of LGBT organizations consisting of the Russian LGBT Network, LGBT organization "Coming Out", Side by Side International LGBT Film Festival, Russian LGBT Sport Federation, LGBT organization "Rakurs" and Out Loud project, worked together to make the Olympic values part of the Olympic Games in Sochi, and to make the Olympics promote human rights and freedoms, principles of equality and nondiscrimination. When the Olympics were over, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) recommended to mention non-discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation in "Agenda 2020" aimed at reforming the Olympic movement. On December 8, 2014, the IOC Executive Board adopted this recommendation.

The roundtable discussion "Combating Discrimination in Russia" took place in St. Petersburg on May 29-30, and gathered 30 human rights activists from all over the country. Participants of the Roundtable not only familiarized themselves with the best practices of fight against discrimination, but also discussed some Russian legislative initiatives and laws, successful campaigns for legal change and advantages and disadvantages of work in coalitions.



## ROUNDTABLE "PRINCIPLES OF OPEN DIALOGUE REGARDING SOCIAL AND LEGAL SITUATION OF LGBT IN RUSSIA"

The roundtable discussion "Principles of Open Dialogue regarding Social and Legal Situation of LGBT in Russia" took place in the Sakharov Center (Moscow) on February 27. LGBT activists, representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church, secular and Orthodox communities and politicians gathered for the first time ever to discuss problems and position of LGBT in Russia.

Among the participant of the Roundtable were the Chairperson of the Russian LGBT Network Igor Kochetkov; the archpriest of the Russian Orthodox Church Vsevolod Chaplin; the representative of Russian Human Rights Ombudsman Grigory Bondarev; the Chairperson of the Gender Faction of the political party "Yabloko" Galina Mikhalyova; journalist and TV anchor Olga Bakushinskaya; journalist and psychologist Vladimir Shakhidzhanyan.

The participants discussed possible ways of cooperation to combat violence and to continue productive dialogue about the position of LGBT in Russia. In addition, certain proposals devoted to the principles and forms of cooperation between various societal forces were made.



## STRATEGIC LITIGATION

In 2014, legal advisors of the Network continued the strategic litigation work on cases initiated in 2012 and 2013. New lawsuits were also commenced in Samara, Nizhny Tagil and St. Petersburg.

*“Strategic litigation establishes law enforcement practices in the Russian and international courts. Later it will bring about positive changes regarding the proceedings on hate crimes and cases of discrimination against LGBT individuals.”*

**Maria Kozlovskaya, Senior lawyer of the Russian LGBT Network**

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### ***The case of Vasily Ivanov.***

On June 12, 2012, an activist Vasily Ivanov and other members of the Alliance of Heterosexuals for Equality of LGBT were assaulted on the streets. In December 2013, one of the assaulters was found guilty (under the article Hooliganism) and sentenced to five months of correctional labor. Despite all efforts of the lawyers, the court refused to take into account the homophobic motive of the crime. This is why on November 5, 2014, an appeal was filed to the European Court of Human Rights.

### ***The case of Dmitry Chizhevsky.***

On November 3, 2013, two unknown attacked the participants of the “Rainbow Coffee-drinking” in St. Petersburg. Two people were injured. One of them, Dmitry Chizhevsky, suffered partial loss of vision. The aggressors were never found. Despite all the efforts of the lawyers, neither the victims, nor their lawyers were granted access to the materials of investigation. That is why Olga Tseytlina, the legal representative of Dmitry Chizhevsky, filed an appeal to the Leninsky district court of St. Petersburg in October 2014. The materials for the European Court of Human Rights were prepared. Dmitry Chizhevsky left the country and requested political asylum in the USA.

### ***The case of Elena Klimova.***

On January 31, 2014, a case against Elena Klimova, journalist and creator of “Children-404” project, was initiated under the article 6.21 of the Code of Administrative Offences of the Russian Federation. She was accused of the creation of a group in the social network that “propagates nontraditional sexual relations”. On February 21, Dzerzhinsky district court of Nizhny Tagil found Klimova not guilty due to the absence of a legally defined crime. Maria Kozlovskaya, legal advisor of the Russian LGBT Network, was Klimova’s legal representative in the court.

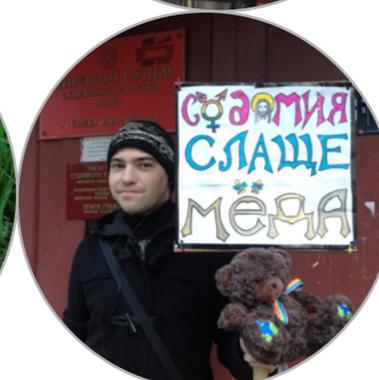
In spite of that, new charges were pressed against Elena Klimova in November 2014: Roskomnadzor (Federal Service for Supervision of Communications, Information Technology, and Mass Media) detected dissemination of “information carrying the signs of propaganda of nontraditional sexual relations among minors” in the group “Children-404”. The first hearing took place in December 2014. Dmitry Bartenev defends Elena Klimova in the court.

### ***Persecution of LGBT activists in Samara.***

Activists of AVERS LGBT organization ran the Day of Silence campaign dedicated to discrimination, violence and hate crimes against LGBT on April 11, 2014. Despite the fact that this rally took place in the local "Hyde Park", the police required its termination. The rally was terminated. However, all the participants were later charged with participation in an unauthorized demonstration, distribution of promotional materials and disobedience to demands of police officers. Four of five participants of the rally were found guilty and fined. An appeal to the court was compiled and filed (in cooperation with Interregional Association of Human Rights Organizations together with AGORA). The law of Samara region was also contested. Relevant materials were filed to the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation. Oksana Berezovskaya, legal advisor of the Russian LGBT Network, represented the participants of the rally in the court.

### ***Case of Evgeny Pirozhkov.***

Evgeny Pirozhkov raised a poster saying "Sodomy Is Sweeter than Honey" on July 24, 2014, during the Fifth St. Petersburg Pride, which was approved by the authorities. Pirozhkov was detained immediately. He was taken to the police office and charged with "homosexual propaganda among minors". Seven court hearings were held, some of them lasted longer than six hours. On October 23, the court decided to dismiss the case due to the absence of a legally defined crime. Maria Kozlovskaya, legal advisor of the Russian LGBT Network, represented Evgeny Pirozhkov in the court.



## DISCRIMINATION MONITORING

	Physical violence		Psychological violence		Sexual violence	
	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013
Yes, it happened more than once	2,2	3,1	20,2	20,4	0,7	0,5
Yes, it happened once or twice	12,8	12,3	27,1	32,8	3,2	2,6
No, it never happened	85,0	84,6	52,8	46,8	96,1	96,9
Total	100,0		100,0		100,0	

**Figure 1. Experienced violence (% of the total number of respondents)**

Since 2007, the Russian LGBT Network has conducted an annual anonymous survey on the violation of human rights and discrimination against LGBT. Each year from one to three thousand people take part in the survey. In 2014, the survey was being conducted from the beginning of August until the end of September and there were 1092 people surveyed.

As the survey showed, in 2014, 47% of LGBT individuals experienced psychological violence and 15% suffered from physical violence; 21% of the surveyed faced violations connected with the unlawful disclosure of personal data and 37% of the respondents stated that their sexual orientation or gender identity led to difficulties finding work or to problems in personal relationships with employers. At the same time, only 7% of the surveyed confirmed their trust in police officers and declared their being ready to file an official complaint with the police.

However, the survey revealed a positive change connected with the LGBT community's awareness of the support services offered by the Russian LGBT Network. For example, at the time of the survey, 23% of the respondents knew about the Hot Line and 28% of the surveyed were informed of the free psychological and legal support.

Furthermore, in 2014, with the input of the sociologist Veronica Lapina the report "Human Rights Violation and Discrimination on Grounds of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Monitoring" was prepared. This report analyses cases of discrimination and human rights abuses described in the media, cases of appeal to the legal support service and enquiries received by the Hot Line of the Russian LGBT Network. Thus, the research tackles the topic of media representations of the LGBT community and offers insights into the socio-economic situation and the needs of the community.

### ***The research revealed the following consistencies:***

- there are indirect indicators of the unfavorable situation of LGBT citizens in the Russian Federation being exacerbated (for example, the increase in the number of enquiries concerning emigration on the part of LGBT citizens in the years of 2013-2014);
- the structure of the cases of discrimination and human rights violation was transformed: apart from physical violence and extremist vigilante groups' attacks, the top positions in the structure are taken by cases of employment discrimination against people working at various levels of educational system;
- there was an increase in the number of references to cases of discrimination against LGBT teenagers, both in the form of individual appeals and in the media coverage;
- compared to the year of 2013, there was less media coverage of the cases of physical violence, whereas the coverage of hate speech, activist movements, emerging problems (for example, the project "Children-404") and cases of hounding teachers and university professors became more prominent.

## ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The regional development program aims to support new initiatives in the Russian regions, as well as to boost the potential of the existing groups and organizations. This program is constantly developing. Back in 2012 and 2013, the regions were only offered programs of seminars and training sessions. In 2014, the Russian LGBT Network went on to conduct seminars and training sessions upon requests of the regional branches or collective members.

Another 2014 innovation was the program of providing resources to support the events held by the regional branches and collective members of the Russian LGBT Network. This program was designed in cooperation with the Interregional Coordination Council. Within the framework of this program, regional activists can independently decide which events are a top priority for them and apply for additional funding in order to launch them.

Moreover, 2014 was the start of the implementation of the program "Resource Centers of the Russian LGBT-Network". The first resource centers were set up in Krasnodar, Yekaterinburg and Perm.



### ***In terms of organizational development, we regularly hold:***

- *training sessions for initiative groups on management, human rights, creating coalitions, mobilizing the community, taking measures against the emotional burnout;*
- *regular consultancy (upon request);*
- *traineeship for activists;*
- *assistance in regional events (upon request).*



## COURSE OF REHABILITATION FOR ACTIVISTS

In July 2014, 38 LGBT activists from various regions of the country took a course of rehabilitation in Budapest. The purpose of the course was for the activists to feel better, to restore energy, as well as to develop the skills of restoring their psychological forces by themselves. The project was carried out in partnership with the Hungarian organization "Home".

*"The working conditions of LGBT activists in Russia cause a critical deep burnout, psychological exhaustion and energy losses. This project aimed to help activists in terms of burnout, to guarantee profound rehabilitation and to teach activists the basic skills of self-help in the hard circumstances of their life and work. It was important not only to eliminate the symptoms of burnout as such, but also to provide the participants with the tools to help themselves and other activists in the future".*

**Maria Sabunaeva, coordinator of the psychological support service of the Russian LGBT Network.**



## EMERGENCY SUPPORT PROGRAM

*In February 2014, the Russian LGBT Network designed a new program. Under this program, we help the survivors of hate crimes and LGBT activists who suffered because of their work. Thanks to the program, those in trouble can receive legal, psychological, financial and other types of support. There is an important condition according to which help is offered only to those, who with our support agree to file an official complaint with public authorities. Here are but a few stories of those whom we helped.*

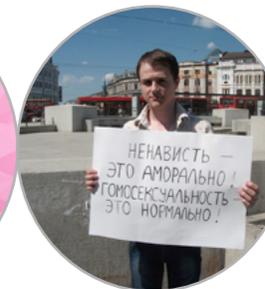
**Moscow.** On 11 June 2013, Valery Sozaev took part in the event “Day of Kisses” protesting against the enactment of the law banning so-called “propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations”. Many of the participants of this event, including Valery Sozaev, were arrested. Valery was charged with breach of the “statutory procedure of holding public gatherings, meetings, demonstrations, marches and pickets”. The Tverskoy District Court of Moscow and the Moscow City Court found the activist guilty and penalized him with a fine. The Russian LGBT Network provided financial support to pay the large fine.

**Northern Caucasus.** In autumn 2013, the Russian LGBT Network with the assistance of the human rights organizations “Amnesty International” and “Memorial” helped Marina, a transgender woman, to relocate from a town in the Northern Caucasus to Saint Petersburg. Marina went through many hardships, through years of pain, suffering and fear. Nevertheless, she says that she is very lucky and has high hopes for the future. Marina was offered medical and financial support, assistance in job search and psychological help.

**Saint Petersburg.** On 1 April 2014, Yekaterina and Karina were attacked when using the underground service. Apart from the girls’ being seriously injured (they were beaten up and one of them got her nose broken), the company where the girls worked forced them to quit their jobs “on their personal request”. The Russian LGBT Network financed a one-month accommodation rent.

**Kazan.** Dmitry Isakov took part in a one-man picket supporting LGBT rights in Kazan in June 2013. Upon the magistrate’s decision, Dmitry was fined for “propagating non-traditional sexual relations among minors”. The Russian LGBT Network provided Dmitry with financial support for paying the fine.

**Saint Petersburg.** In March and April 2014, the Week of Unified Action against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia was held in Saint Petersburg. The organizers of the Week (the projects “Rainbow Coffee Party” and StopHate) turned to the Russian LGBT Network asking for help in providing security measures at the events. Following the request, the Network covered the expenses of hiring additional security guards at the entrance into the club where the opening of the Week took place.



## THE HOT LINE

The Hot Line, which was set up in 2010, is one of the key projects of the Russian LGBT Network. It enables people across Russia to get primary legal or psychological help free of charge. Initially the project was focused on offering psychological support to the community, but now the Hot Line is mostly used to collect requests for professional psychological and legal help.

In 2014, the team of the Russian LGBT Network's Hot Line included 50 volunteers.

There were held two training sessions on calling in new volunteers – one in Moscow and one in Saint Petersburg. 16 people joined the team as a result of the training.

In 2014, the Russian LGBT Network's Hot Line received **5298** calls and **383** requests for consultancy were filed, among which:

- **273** psychological enquiries;
- **84** legal enquiries;
- **26** organizational enquiries.

In 2014, **63%** of the clients were men, **25%** of the callers were women and **12%** - transgender people.

In autumn 2014, the work of the Hot Line was optimized and the working hours were changed. As of November, the Hot Line works from 8 a.m. until midnight on weekdays and 24 hours at weekends.



ГОРЯЧАЯ ЛИНИЯ РОССИЙСКОЙ ЛГБТ-СЕТИ  
8-800-555-08-68

\*ЛГБТ - лесбиянки, геи, бисексуалы, бисексуалки и трансгендерные люди

*"In July 2015 it will be exactly 5 years since the start of the "Hot Line" project. The results achieved during the time of its work are inspiring. More than 50000 calls, more than 1700 hours of consultancies, more than 6000 subscribers and more than 100 volunteers: this is the key evidence of the project performance throughout the time of its existence.*

*To me the "Hot Line" is a unique project of a kind. We are making a difference, we are there to help when the person has nowhere else to go, and we are bringing the community together. For some volunteers it is the only opportunity to make a personal contribution to our difficult work. I hope, the project will continue developing and the specialists working on it will be able to help many more people. And I am delighted to have spent three years of my life with this project"*

**Andrey Petrov, coordinator of the Russian LGBT Network's "Hot Line" project.**



## PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT

*“The program “Psychological support” is one of the oldest in the Russian LGBT Network. We started offering help to the LGBT community in the Russian regions as early as in 2009 and we consider it of vital importance: whatever happens in this country, whatever pressure is exerted on the community, the LGBT of this country has somewhere to turn for help. We help in a range of situations: in case of homophobic pressure, violence, violation of rights; in what concerns self-assertion and aspirations to know who you are; in the issues of gender identity; in establishing relationships with parents, families, friends and children; in relationships with partners, etc. The amazing team of the Russian LGBT Network’s voluntary psychologists (together with our specialist on transgender issues) work 365 days all the year round and try to help everyone in need. We believe that our work can make the life of LGBT a little easier and the world around us – a better place; and the longer we work, the more we will learn to help each other!”*

**Maria Sabunaeva, coordinator of the program “Psychological support” of the Russian LGBT-Network.**



In 2014, the psychologists of the Russian LGBT Network processed more than 330 requests for psychological support from various regions of Russia. In comparison with 2013, the number of requests increased by 150%.

In 2014, face-to-face consultancy was available to people who live in the following cities: Arkhangelsk, Vladivostok, Yekaterinburg, Moscow, Murmansk, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Perm, Petrozavodsk, Samara, Saint Petersburg, Tomsk and Tyumen. For the rest of the regions our team of consulting psychologists offered distant consultancy via e-mail and Skype.

In 2014, Alexander Shmik offered distance “peer-to-peer” consultancy on transgender issues. Throughout 2014, 55 transgender clients received support, which was by 160% more than in 2013.

At least once a year the Russian LGBT Network holds a training seminar for psychologists. In April 2014, the seminar “Psychological Support for Victims of Hate Crimes, Violence and Homophobic and Transphobic discrimination” took place in Saint Petersburg, with 23 psychologists from 10 regions participating.

In 2014, a group of psychologists of the Russian LGBT Network published a brochure “Psychological Support for Victims of Homophobic and Transphobic hate crimes”.

2015 is full of promises for our program: we want to introduce new technical features in order to make psychologists’ help easier to apply for and more accessible for the LGBT community. In a year, we will be happy to tell you about the results!

## LEGAL SUPPORT

In 2014, the team of lawyers of the Russian LGBT Network included 16 qualified specialists. They offered free advice to 241 people across the country. It appears, the most popular questions among those who sought legal advice in 2014 were the ones that concerned hate crimes, family issues and emigration.

*“Legal work is the basis of any human rights organization. It is its essence.*

*In the Russian LGBT Network, we work in two directions: we help individuals and protect public interests. Both are highly important for the LGBT community in Russia.*

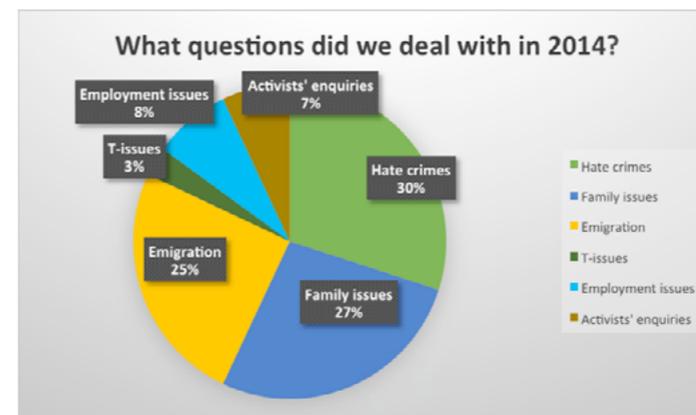
*First, each gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender person, as well as a LGBT activist or organization can get our help upon request. Second, the strategic litigation establishes law enforcement practices in the Russian and international courts. Later it will bring about positive changes regarding the proceedings on hate crimes and cases of discrimination against LGBT individuals.”*



**Maria Kozlovskaya, coordinator of the legal support service of the Russian LGBT Network.**

Apart from that, the lawyers of the Russian LGBT Network take a regular part in law seminars. Among others, the following topics were chosen for the seminars:

- “Methods of Public Investigation” with the expert lawyer Dmitry Utukin from the “Committee against Torture” (Nizhny Novgorod);
- “Material and Procedural Aspects of Legal Acknowledgment of Gender Identity in Russia” with the expert Kseniya Kirichenko, head of the Transgender Legal Defense Project “Rainbow Foundation” (Moscow);
- “The Basics of Psychological Consultations for Victims of Hate Crimes and Preventative Measure against Emotional Burnout” with the expert psychologist Olga Alexandrova (St. Petersburg);
- “Family Rights of Same-Sex Families”, conducted by the expert Tatyana Glushkova, (Moscow).



## PUBLICATIONS

**Hate Crimes against LGBT in Russia: Theory and Reality.** – Dmitry Dubrovsky, Maria Kozlovskaya

**Guide to Organizing Psychological Services for LGBT. Advice on Methods.** – M.L. Sabunaeva

**Guide for LGBT Activists.** – Balyaeva P., Bondarenko S., Yefremov D., Kozlovskaya M., Petrov A., Sabunaeva M.

**Russian LGBT Network. Annual Report (in Russian).** – 2013

**Russian LGBT Network. Annual Report (in English).** – 2013

**Psychological Support for Victims of Homophobic and Transphobic Hate Crimes. Advice on Methods.** – Ed. M.L. Sabunaeva

**Manual for Volunteers of Russian LGBT Network's Hot Line.** – E. Manina, A. Petrov, M. Sabunaeva. K. Tchernysh, E. Yamaeva



## THE SEVENTH CONFERENCE OF THE RUSSIAN LGBT NETWORK

*The Conference is the supreme managing body of the Movement. Up to November 2014, the Conference of the Russian LGBT-Network had been annual. The Seventh Conference made the decision to arrange further conferences at least once every three years. When the Conference is not in action the Board of the Movement and the Interregional Coordination Council will perform its functions).*

From 1 November to 4 November in Peterhof the Seventh Conference of the Russian LGBT Network took place. It was the third reporting and election conference in the history of the organization. It gathered more than 70 LGBT-activists from all around Russia.

During the work of the Conference, many important decisions were made. The representatives of the regional branches and collective members elected the new supreme managing body of the Russian LGBT Network – the Board. It included Igor Kochetkov, Tatyana Vinnichenko, Yelena Shakhova, Kseniya Kirichenko, Anna Guizullina, Polina Balyaeva and Mikhail Tumasov. Tatyana Vinnichenko, the head of the Arkhangelsk LGBT organization “Rakurs” was elected the Head of the Board of the Russian LGBT Network.

During the conference, it was also decided that as of now the Conference would gather once every three years. Between the conference sessions, its functions will be performed by the Interregional Coordination Council (ICC), which consists of delegated representatives of collective members and regional branches. The advantage of the ICC, to which the Conference granted the status of one of the managing bodies, consists in the fact, that, unlike the Conference, it gathers at least twice a year. Thus, this change will help raise the input of the regional branches and collective members in the decision-making process.

The Conference also approved the Strategic Plan of the Movement for 2015 – 2017. In accordance with this plan, in the next few years one of the main priorities for the Russian LGBT Network will be recruiting new supporters, including trade unions and non-profit organizations that deal with various social problems.

Like in the previous years, the Conference was not only the place where the key Movement decisions were made, but also the ground for LGBT activists and human rights defenders to share experiences. This year, alongside the Conference there were organized workshops participated by 30 activists from Yekaterinburg, Krasnodar, Moscow, Murmansk, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Perm, Samara, Saint Petersburg and other cities.

The Conference was held with the assistance of “Freedom House”.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, we want to thank all the activists from the regional branches and collective members of the Russian LGBT Network, as well as our volunteers and supporters. We thank everyone who supported our work in 2014!

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We also want to thank all the people around the globe who supported us, wrote us letters, offered help, gave us hope for a better world in the future!

### *Russian human rights organizations:*

- Anti-Discrimination Center "Memorial" (St. Petersburg)
- Centre for Health and Social Support «SIBALT» (Omsk)
  - Citizens Watch (Saint Petersburg)
- Interregional Association of Human Rights Organizations "Agora" (Kazan)
  - The Human Rights Resource Centre (Saint Petersburg)
    - The Moscow Helsinki Group (Moscow)
    - The NGO Development Centre (Saint Petersburg)
- JURIX "Lawyers for Constitutional Rights and Freedom" (Moscow)



### LGBT organizations:

- “Coming Out” LGBT Group (Saint Petersburg)
  - Rainbow Association (Moscow)
- Side by Side International LGBT Film Festival (Saint Petersburg)
- Transgender Legal Defense Project “Rainbow Foundation” (Moscow)
  - The LGBT Sport Federation (Moscow)



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### International Organizations:

- International Youth Human Rights Movement
- Amnesty International
- Civil Rights Defenders
- Cultuur en Ontspanningscentrum (COC)
- Equal Rights Trust
- Freedom House
- Home (Integral Change Center)
- ILGA-Europe
- IREX Europe
- Lesben- und Schwulenverband in Deutschland (LSVD)
- Oak Foundation
- Open Society Foundation
- Peter Tatchell Foundation
- Sigrid Rausing Trust
- Stiftung Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft (EVZ)
- Stonewall



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- **Archangelsk Regional non-governmental LGBT Organization "Rakurs" (Arkhangelsk):** AROORakurs@yandex.ru
- **StopHate Project (Saint Petersburg):** dannyrhumb@gmail.com

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