



Russian LGBT Network  
Annual report  
2015



## Contents

➤	Foreword .....	4
➤	Our Team .....	6
➤	History of the Russian LGBT Network .....	8
➤	Our Mission .....	9
➤	Organizational Structure .....	10
➤	Organizational Development .....	12
➤	Advocacy .....	14
➤	Strategic Litigation .....	18
➤	Discrimination Monitoring .....	22
➤	Emergency Support Program .....	24

## Contents

➤	Hotline and Online Chat .....	26
➤	Psychological Support .....	28
➤	Legal Support .....	30
➤	Publications .....	32
➤	All-Russian Forum for LGBT-activists .....	33
➤	Acknowledgements .....	34
➤	Contact Details .....	36

## Foreword

Dear friends and allies!

You hold in your hands the Annual Report of the Russian LGBT Network for 2015.

Here you can find information about our main activities for the past year. Throughout 2015, we did our best to make the voice of the Russian LGBT community heard. For the sake of this, we initiated various advocacy events and tried to persuade international organizations and our donors to consider new challenges and risks that Russian LGBT Community faces.

Unfortunately, the human rights situation in Russia remains complicated. Moreover, according to our Monitoring Report (you can find this information in the brochure), it is getting worse. In order to change this situation, the state should be ready to cooperate with non-governmental organizations to solve the existing problems. As of now, one can see only interference and the “foreign agent” and “undesirable organizations” labels. Nevertheless, despite all the difficulties and obstacles, we managed to do a lot in 2015!



## Foreword

Last year, the Interregional Coordination Council (ICC) of the Russian LGBT Network laid a foundation for further regional activities: the Resource Support Program was reorganized, and new rules and procedures of work were adopted. The Russian LGBT Network became the member of NELFA and started to develop a parents' movement in the regions.

We supported many events and projects, organized by our regional divisions and collective members. We made a great step forward in terms of work to create resource centers for LGBT individuals in the regions; on December 1, the Community Center emerged in Moscow. Now it is the only community center for LGBT people in the capital of Russia.

I also have to mention the Forum for LGBT activists organized by the Russian LGBT Network in November 2015. At this Forum, we managed to gather 150 people from all parts of Russia, introduced activists to our donors and partners, and provided space to share experiences.

I am truly grateful to our activists, volunteers, and members. All our achievements were possible because of you. I am sure that together we will reach new heights.

*Tatiana Vinnichenko,  
Chairperson of the Russian LGBT Network*

## 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 activists from the Regional branches and Collective members and – of course – our volunteers, members, and supporters. These people are not afraid to fight for our future and they believe that change is possible. We are grateful to everyone who made an impact in 2015, and we hope that you will stay with us!*

*We asked some members and volunteers of the Network what this organization means for them and what they dream of...*



### Alya Luferova, Volunteer on the Hotline of the Russian LGBT Network

“For me the Network is a possibility for personal fulfilment and numerous opportunities. As a psychologist, I can learn a lot. When I applied to become a psychologist of the Network on the Hotline, I couldn’t even imagine how many revelations and opportunities were ahead of me. For me the Russian LGBT Network was the organization of my dreams and my dreams came true. What do I dream about now? It is naive to think that something valuable can be done fast and easily. So I am for action, for constant, small changes in my own environment. But, of course, we need dreams too”.

### Zoya Matisova, Psychologist for the Russian LGBT Network

“For me the Russian LGBT Network is strongly associated with the Hotline because that is how I got to know the Network. At first I was a volunteer on the Hotline. Then I become the psychologist of the Network. Maybe Hotline is not the most impressive project, but it is very precise. Every day we help real people. Many of them say that the Hotline is the



## Our Team

only place they can get support. For me it is an honor to be part of this team. Because I see how grateful our clients are and this means that we really help them. And I dream that these dark ages will be over in our country and humanism and reason will win”.

### Svetlana Zakharova, Communications Manager of the Russian LGBT Network



“For me the Russian LGBT Network is an opportunity to change this world for the better. I am proud of our team and of the fact that we manage to do so much despite everything that going on around us. I believe that the situation with LGBT rights in Russia will change soon. We should just believe and keep on with our work”.



# History



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

By now, the Network is the largest interregional LGBT organization in Russia. We render free-of-charge legal and psychological assistance for the LGBT community and support the survivors of hate crimes in court. The Week Against Homophobia, the Day of Silence, and the Rainbow Flashmob have been held in Russia for first time ever thanks 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 the consolidation of LGBT community, but also contributed to the visibility of LGBT people and of the problems they face among the general public.

# OUR MISSION

**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

The Conference is the supreme governing body of the Movement

The Board of the Russian LGBT Network is a governing body in charge of the strategic management of the Movement

Interregional Coordination Council is the permanent managing collegiate authority

Individual members

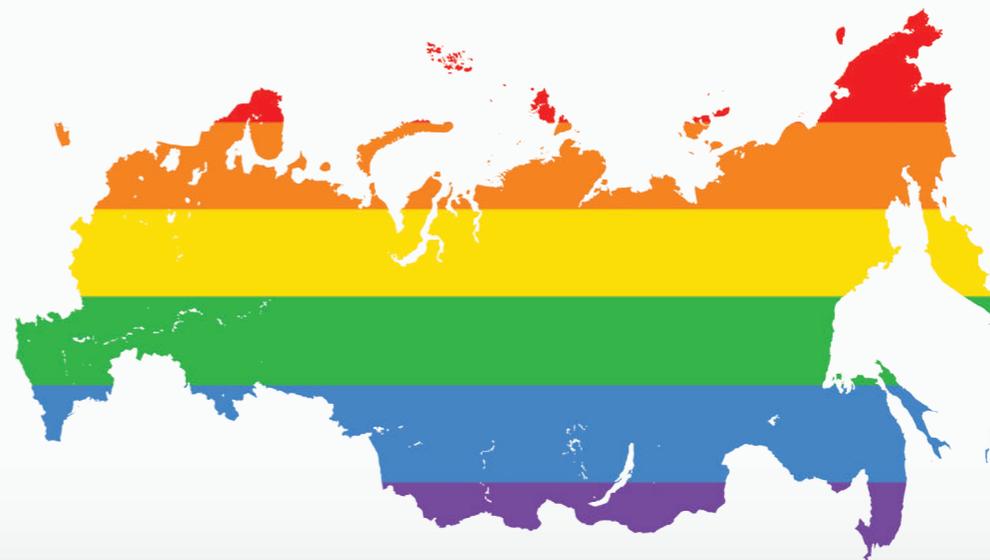
Regional Branches

MOSCOW  
ARKHANGELSK OBLAST  
ASTRAKHAN OBLAST  
VORONEZH OBLAST  
KOMI REPUBLIC  
KRASNODAR KRAI  
NOVOSIBIRSK OBLAST  
OMSK OBLAST  
PERM KRAI  
PRIMORSKY KRAI  
SAMARA OBLAST  
SVERDLOVSK OBLAST  
TOMSK OBLAST  
TYUMEN OBLAST

Collective members

ARCHANGELSK REGIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION "RAKURS" – ARKHANGELSK  
CENTER FOR SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL HELP AND JUDICIAL AID FOR VICTIMS OF DISCRIMINATION AND HOMOPHOBIA "MAXIMUM" - MURMANSK  
FEMINIST AND LGBT ORGANIZATION "GENDER-L" - ST. PETERSBURG  
HUMAN RIGHTS CENTER "KRILJIA" (WINGS) - ST. PETERSBURG  
KRASNODAR SOCIAL LGBT MOVEMENT "REVERS"  
LGBT ORGANIZATION "RADUZHNY DOM" - TYUMEN  
SAMARA SOCIAL LGBT MOVEMENT "AVERS" - SAMARA

# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



# 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 seminar and training session programs. Starting in 2014, the Russian LGBT Network went on to conduct seminars and training sessions upon request of the regional branches or collective members.

In 2015, we continued our work under the program “Resource Centers of the Russian LGBT Network”. Resource Centers did work in Ekaterinburg, Krasnodar, and Perm. On December 1, the Moscow Community Center opened its doors for various LGBT initiative groups and activities. The opening of the Moscow Community Center became possible due to the collaborative work of the Moscow regional branch of the Russian LGBT Network, the Center for sociological, psychological and cultural projects “Resource LGBTQIA Moscow”, Congregation “Light of the World”, Phoenix PLUS, the Rainbow Association and the Russian LGBT Sports Federation.

In 2015, we continued to support our regional divisions and collective members. Last year we received 30 requests, and managed to support 21. Different events were organized in



# Organizational Development

Krasnodar, Murmansk, Omsk, St. Petersburg, Samara, Tomsk, Tyumen, and Vladivostok. 246 people participated in these events, and 27 invited experts and trainers gave their speeches and shared their knowledge and experience. 18 other organizations and initiative groups participated in and supported these events.



## What kinds of events were supported?

-  Seminars and trainings for the LGBT community regarding social and psychological aspects of sexual orientation and gender identity.
-  Various events to establish contacts with regional Ombudspersons and human rights organizations.
-  Educational events for journalists, psychologists, lawyers and human rights defenders on sexual orientation and gender identity.
-  Educational seminars and trainings for LGBT community on human rights and interaction with various governmental bodies.

## Advocacy

On March 27, 2015, a roundtable “Discrimination in the Sphere of Employment: Legislation and Tactics of Work” took place in St. Petersburg. Twenty-five people from different regions of the country participated: representatives of the regional branches of the Russian LGBT Network, Human Rights Ombudsman for Saint Petersburg, Moscow Helsinki Group, Omsk Regional Public Organization “Center for Health and Social Support “SIBALT”, Archangelsk branch of the All-Russian public movement “For Human Rights”, Center for social and labor rights, Legal service-center “Spartak”, Charity organization Nochlezhka (Flophouse), Non-governmental partnership E.V.A., and Komi Human Rights Commission “Memorial”.

The roundtable facilitated the start of wide discussion on existing problems and the ways to solve them, on informational and service cooperation, advocacy and methods of work with governmental bodies and civil society.

The Russian LGBT Network and the Equal Rights Trust organized the roundtable.



## Advocacy

On May 25, 2015, the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Russia Ella Pamfilova met the members of the Russian LGBT Network Board Tatiana Vinnichenko and Igor Kochetkov.

It was the first time when the representatives of the Network met the new Ombudsperson appointed in March 2014. Among other issues, ineffective investigation of homophobic hate crimes, the so-called “propaganda law” concerning freedom of expression, and persecution of LGBT teachers were discussed. The High Commissioner’s official report on human rights for 2014 and comments on the report by the Russian LGBT Network were also discussed.



As the member of the Board Igor Kochetkov pointed out, “The meeting went really well. We agreed on some specific ways of cooperation. In particular, Ella Pamfilova asked us to send her our Discrimination monitoring reports, and requested information on negative consequences of the adoption of the “propaganda law”.”

## Advocacy

The Russian LGBT Network regularly monitors hate crimes against LGBT individuals. The analyzed data are shared in the public domain and included in various alternative reports. It is of great importance to show that hate crimes against LGBT people 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 2015, the data of the Monitoring program were used to prepare reports to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

In 2015, the Russian LGBT Network, together with the LGBT Initiative Group “Coming Out”, submitted to the OSCE a report «Hate crimes motivated by victim’s gender identity or sexual orientation committed in the Russian Federation in 2014”. OSCE analyzed the information received from various Russian NGOs and it turned out that 73 out of 336 reported hate crimes in Russia were committed against LGBT people. As of now, the Russian Federation does not provide any information on hate crimes to OSCE, as the last time such information was officially reported was in 2014.



## Advocacy

On October 27th there was a Constructive Dialogue for the Russian Federation with the UN Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, where experts and Russian officials discussed the status of women in Russia and measures to achieve gender equality. These representatives and representatives of the Committee considered an alternative report, discussing discrimination and violence against LBT women, prepared by the Union of Independent LGBT Activists in Russia. Data from three Russian LGBT organizations were used: LGBT Initiative Group “Coming Out”, Legal Help Project for Transgender People and MOD “Russian LGBT Network”.

On November 20, 2015, the UN Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women presented their recommendations for Russia. The Committee noted that regional and federal laws, prohibiting “propaganda of non-traditional sexual relationships among minors,” is likely to increase the level of homophobia in the country and worsen the situation of women. Above all, this applies to hate speech, attacks, and discrimination against lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and intersex women. The Committee also expressed concern about the dismissal of teachers belonging to the LBT community.



# Conducting strategic cases

## The Case against Elena Klimova and Project “Children-404”



Beginning in **January 2014**, a few administrative cases were initiated against Elena Klimova and Project “Children-404”, all of them – through Article 6:21 of the Administrative Offences Code of the Russian Federation. Every time the journalist from Nizhny Tagil was accused of creating a network of online resources “propagandizing non-traditional sexual relationships among minors”. The very first trial Elena Klimova won – on February 21st 2014 the court presented a decision dismissing the case for lack of evidence.

However, new charges were already put forward against her in **November of 2014** – the office of the Federal Service for the Supervision of Mass Communication in the Central Federal District found “information containing signs of propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations among minors” in the organization “Children-404”. Throughout the end of 2014 and in 2015 different trial and appellate courts declared Elena Klimova innocent, then fined her for “propaganda”, then made the decision to block the resources of the Project “Children-404”, and then canceled these decisions.

**On January 23rd, 2015**, the Dzerzhinsky District Court of Nizhny Tagil declared Elena Klimova guilty of “homosexual propaganda” and fined her 50000 rubles.

**On March 25th, 2015**, the Dzerzhinsky District Court of Nizhny Tagil reversed the decision of the Magistrate Court, which declared Elena Klimova guilty of “homosexual propaganda”. The case of Elena Klimova was forwarded to another Magistrate Court for consideration.

# Conducting strategic cases

**On March 25th, 2015**, the Oktyabrsky District Court of Saint Petersburg accepted the decision to block the group “Children-404” on the social network “VKontakte”. Lawyer Dmitry Bartenev filed an appeal to overturn the decision of the Oktyabrsky District Court and send the case for retrial, as Klimova, the administrator of the group, knew nothing about the data process, and the court’s decision directly effects her right to freely disseminate information.



**On July 28th, 2015**, the Magistrate Court of Nizhny Tagil again declared Elena Klimova guilty of “propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations among minors” and fined her 50000 rubles. Her lawyer filed an appeal of the court’s decision.

**On August 7th, 2015**, the Central District Court of Barnaul declared the information on pages of the group “Children-404” “propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations” among adolescents, on the basis of which the group “Children-404” was blocked at the end of September. On October 1st, 2015, the lawyer Dmitry Bartenev filed an appeal, in which was specified that Klimova appeared as an interested party in the case, but did not know anything about the process before the moment the decision was made.

**On October 1st, 2015**, the City Court of Saint-Petersburg reversed the decision of the Oktyabrsky District Court on the introduction of the group “Children-404” into the list of prohibited sites in the Russian Federation and discontinued the proceedings, since the decision on the analogous case had already been made in Barnaul on August 7th. The Russian LGBT Network continues to work on this case.

# Conducting strategic cases



## The Case of the Attack on the office of the LGBT Organization “Maximum”

On April 13th, 2015, unknown assailants conducted an attack on the office of the Murmansk LGBT organization “Maximum”. They sprayed pepper spray inside the community center, located on the ground floor of a residential building. At that moment two people were located inside, including LGBT activist Violetta Grudina. On the same day, Grudina made a precise statement to the police about the crime. The two injuries did not result in the initiation of criminal proceedings, despite the fact that the Murmansk Oblast Human Rights Commissioner Aleksandr Patrikeyev intervened in the process.

In November of 2015, a criminal case was filed in court against the decision to reject the first complaint. The court had already rejected the redress by December. At that time an appeal was filed, which was also rejected. In the stated decision was filed a cassation appeal, which stated that, based on the specifics of the work of the organization and with objective data, the act was done out of hatred for LGBTI individuals, which was confirmed by the testimony of the victims and witnesses of the criminal act – the gassing of the office. The Russian LGBT

Network continues to work on this case.

## The Case of the Attack on Aleksandr Ermoshkin

On May 17th, 2015, Aleksandr Ermoshkin, organizer of the annual LGBT action “Rainbow over Cupid”, was attacked. According to witnesses, an unknown man struck the LGBT activist with several serious blows and disappeared. Doctors diagnosed Aleksandr Ermoshkin with internal brain trauma.

Despite the fact that the activist was publicly beaten, Police Department No. 6 of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia in Khabarovsk found that the actions of the suspect did not constitute a crime and refused to initiate criminal proceedings. Thanks to the work of a lawyer, on June 22nd, 2015, a case was filed through Chapter 2, Section 116 of the



# Conducting strategic cases

Criminal Code (beatings or other violent acts that cause physical pain). On September 23rd, 2015, the police suspended the investigation on the grounds of no designated suspect. The Russian LGBT Network continues to work on this case, as Aleksandr Ermoshkin was forced to leave the country.

## The Case of Refusal to Hire

On November 3rd, 2015, in Novosibirsk, lesbian Anna Balash tried to get a job in the company “Sib-Alliance” for the position of manager for the sale of wood products. They refused her, explaining that her homosexuality would hinder the company’s image. Such a refusal is direct discrimination in labor relations. In November 2015, the court refused to proceed with the case on formal grounds. The requirements of admission have been exposed for this job, as she still wants to work at this company. The Russian LGBT Network continues to work on this case..

## The Case of the Attack on Dmitry Chizhevsky

On November 3rd, 2013, two unknown assailants attacked visitors to the computer center “La Sky” in Saint Petersburg during an event named “Rainbow Coffee Party”. Among the victims was Dmitry Chizhevsky, who was shot in the eye with an air gun. At the beginning of November 2013, criminal proceedings were begun under Article 213 of the Criminal Code – hooliganism, but in March 2015 the case was suspended for failure to identify a suspect liable to prosecution. Neither the lawyer nor the victim received full information about the progress of the investigation. Moreover, despite all efforts, the motive of hatred against LGBT people was not taken into account as an aggravating circumstance in the case. On August 17th, 2015, the case was sent to the European Court for Human Rights.



# Monitoring Discrimination

## The Documentation of Cases of Discrimination and Violence Against LGBT People

In 2015, the monitoring program of the Russian LGBT Network has undergone significant changes – activists in 10 Russian cities joined the program and were able to contribute to documenting cases of violence and discrimination against LGBT people. Also, monitoring was conducted on the basis of reports received from the legal and emergency assistance program of the Russian LGBT Network.

284 cases of violence and discrimination were documented for all of 2015: Physical Violence (52), Threats of Violence (80), Hate Speech and Incitement to Violence (47), Violation of the Right to Freedom of Assembly (26), Violation of Labor Rights, such as illegal dismissal, discriminatory denial of employment, or harassment in the workplace (21), Violation of Parental Rights and Violence against Families (9), and Other (Murder, Robbery, Harassment, Illegal Use of Personal Data).

Also, the monitoring program documented 29 cases of civil rights violations against transgender people. It is important to note that interviews with transgender people show the extreme vulnerability of the transgender community; many transgender people are compelled to preemptively restrict themselves in many areas of life where they might confront discrimination. These include freedom of movement, freedom in the workplace, removal of property, and in fact any sphere where there is a requirement to present documents, and thus the threat of outing.

## Annual Online Survey

Beginning in 2007, the Russian LGBT Network conducts an annual anonymous survey about human rights violations and discrimination against LGBT people. One to three thousand participants are polled every year. In 2015, the survey was conducted from the beginning of August through the end of September, in which 1092 people were polled.

In 2015, more people had been exposed to violence, as compared to the previous year. 17% responded that they had been exposed to physical violence, 60% - to psychological abuse, and 5% - to sexual violence. These indicators rose for the first time in 4 years.

# Monitoring Discrimination

In general, the percent of victims of all types of discrimination fell in 2015, with the exceptions of cases of housing rights violations (the percentage doubled, as 64% of young people under the age of 25 faced discrimination in this area, as well as 84% of people under the age of 30) and problems with receiving medical care. 8% of those who filled in the questionnaire faced restrictions in the provision of medical care, and 41% of these cases involved refusal to provide care to transgender people.

Mathematical analysis of the data received from the survey also showed that women, transgender people, and gender non-binary people face violence and discrimination more often than cis-gender men.

	2014	2015
Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace owing to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity		32%
Illegal Use of Personal Data	21%	21%
Violation of Housing Rights	7%	15%
Theft and Destruction of Property	15%	12%
Restrictions on Access to Goods and Services	10%	9%
Restrictions on the Provision of Medical Care	5%	8%
Violations of Parental Rights	3%	3%

## The Program for Emergency Assistance

In February of 2014, a new program was created in the Russian LGBT Network. Under this program, we are helping the victims of hate crimes and LGBT activists who have suffered as a result of their activities. Thanks to this program, people who have gotten into trouble can receive legal, psychological, financial, and other assistance.

Note: Help is provided only if the victim is ready, with the support of our organization, to apply to the authorities for the protection and restoration of their rights through the legal process.

In 2015, the Russian LGBT Network received 36 requests for emergency assistance, of which 20 were supported. The requests concerned assistance for LGBT activists and victims of attacks, as well as assistance to pay fines for “propaganda” and violations of the law on “foreign agents” and help to ensure the safety of participants in various LGBT events.

**Murmansk.** On May 17th, 2015, head of the LGBT Initiative ‘Maximum’ Sergei Alekseyenko participated in the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia. Together with a group of activists he went out on the streets of Murmansk to release rainbow balloons into the sky. Sergei Alekseyenko was found guilty for the organization and execution of an “unsanctioned street demonstration” and was fined 25000 rubles. The Russian LGBT Network covered the costs associated with the fine and provided a lawyer to represent Sergei Alekseyenko’s interests in court.



## The Program for Emergency Assistance

**Krasnodar.** In July 2015, in Krasnodar Oblast, a sports-tourist rally was held for the LGBT community, organized by the Krasnodar branch of the LGBT Sports Federation of Russia and the social movement “Reverse”. Learning of the rally, several city and regional organizations formed a coalition to prevent the event. The media called upon the authorities and citizens to stop the rally. In the case that the authorities did not cooperate with them, members of the coalition stated that “we intend to demonstrate our desire in other ways”. The Russian LGBT Network paid the costs of organizing protection. The sports-tourist rally was held without incident.



**Arkhangelsk.** On May 17th, 2015, the Solombalsky District Court of Arkhangelsk upheld the decision of February 12th, 2015, according to which the LGBT organization “Rakurs” was found guilty of committing an administrative offense under the first section of Article 19.34 (“activities of non-profit organizations, which serve as foreign agents without inclusion in the register of non-profit organizations that may perform the functions of foreign agents”). In accordance with this decision, “Rakurs” was fined 300000 rubles. The Russian LGBT Network provided assistance to pay this massive fine.

# Hotline and Online Chat

The Hotline – this is one of the key projects of the Russian LGBT Network, created in 2010. It allows people across the country to receive psychological consultation. Calls to the hotline are free in Russia, in order to provide help to people from all regions of the country.

In 2015, the operators of the hotline received around 15000 calls. More than 2000 of these calls were from people who were seeking help for the first time on the hotline of the Russian LGBT Network. Despite the fact that from June 15th, 2015 onwards, the working time of the hotline had been reduced from 128 to 42 hours per week, the duration of the conversations made up more than 500 hours.

On June 1st, 2015, a new channel for psychological assistance began work – Online Chat. Over six months, the chat operators handled about 400 unique appeals for assistance.

In 2015, 45 psychologists worked on the Hotline and the Online Chat – 12 on the phone and 33 on the online chat.

## The Most Popular Topics for Discussion on the Hotline and Online Chat:

- Difficulty in relations with a partner, cheating, breaking up;
- Acceptance of their own homo/bisexuality, transgender identity;
- Coming Out to family, difficult relations with parents, with other relatives;
- Requests for information about transgender identity;
- Experience of homophobia, discrimination.



Training sessions and seminars were regularly held for psychologists working on the Hotline and Online Chat.

# Hotline and Online Chat

“When I came to work on the Hotline as a volunteer in 2013, I was already aware of the importance of providing assistance to LGBT people in Russia, because this group is one of the most socially vulnerable in our country. Then I became the volunteer coordinator in Saint Petersburg, and in 2015 – the coordinator of the whole project. This project is very important because LGBT people, especially in small cities, do not have any other resources for receiving professional psychological assistance. Our project is in step with the times – in the modern world more and more people prefer to communicate through the Internet; therefore, we launched the Online Chat in addition to the Hotline. This is another opportunity for people from all over Russia to receive professional help.”

*Evgeniya Manina, Coordinator of the Hotline Project*



“Several million LGBT people live in the very different regions, cities, and also towns and villages of our country. At a time when homophobia and transphobia are widespread, it might be difficult to find a qualified professional psychologist in your area. The “Hotline” project is an opportunity to get support by phone or over the Online Chat without fear of an inadequate response from a specialist. For me, taking part in this project is an opportunity to work with a team of professionals who are interested in improving the quality of life for LGBT people throughout Russia. I’m glad that the project is progressing, and I hope that thanks to this work, we will make the world better!”

*Ekaterina Petrova, Coordinator of the Online Chat*

# Psychological Assistance

The Russian LGBT Network's program of psychological assistance has been working since 2009.

***“A special thanks goes to our fellow psychologists, the majority of whom have been providing support to the LGBT community on a volunteer basis by virtue of their beliefs and values. In the past year, you were close to those who need help – thank you all for that!”***

*Maria Sabunaeva, Coordinator of Psychological Service, Ph.D. Candidate in Clinical Psychology*

In 2015, more than 50 psychologists worked in the Psychological Assistance Program of the Russian LGBT Network. The majority of these specialists provided assistance on a volunteer basis.

In 2015, the opportunity to receive an in-person psychological consultation was available to LGBT individuals in the following regions of Russia: Arkhangelsk, Vladivostok, Yekaterinburg, Krasnodar, Moscow, Murmansk, Omsk, Perm, Petrozavodsk, Samara, Saint Petersburg, Tomsk, Tyumen.

In 2015, the psychological help service of the Russian LGBT Network received and treated almost 400 requests from different regions of the country. More than 50 requests were received from transgender people.



# Psychological Assistance

More requests for psychological help were received from Moscow (about 100), Saint Petersburg (more than 70), Krasnodar, Novosibirsk, and Yekaterinburg than anywhere else. The most common requests were related to self-acceptance, coming out, relationships, and relations with parents and families.

In 2015, the additional service of “peer to peer” consultations from T\* consultants was realized for transgender people; also, the Russian LGBT Network offered the opportunity to apply for remote assistance from psychotherapists who specialize in matters of sex reassignment.

**In 2015, the Russian LGBT Network held two training sessions for psychologists, one in May and the other in November.**

In May 2015, an interregional professional training session was held for psychologists who are working with LGBTI “Provision of Psychological Assistance to LGBT Youth”. 35 people took part in this session from 12 Russian cities: Arkhangelsk, Vladivostok, Yekaterinburg, Krasnodar, Moscow, Murmansk, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Perm, Saint Petersburg, Tomsk, and Tyumen.

In November 2015, at the Forum of LGBT Activists, the second training session was held for psychologists. Its main goal was to prevent emotion exhaustion among the psychologists of the Russian LGBT Network and to exchange better working practices. 31 people from 12 regions of Russia took part in the training session.

It is important for us that in every region LGBT people have the opportunity to reach a psychologist. That is why in 2015, in addition to the Hotline and Online Chat, consultations by a psychologist have been available to clients by email and Skype, which can be applied for through a form on our website or writing directly to our program's email: [psychology@lgbtnet.org](mailto:psychology@lgbtnet.org).

# Legal Assistance

In 2015, 15 qualified specialists worked on the Russian LGBT Network's program for legal assistance. They provided 211 free consultations to people around the country. As it turned out, in 2015 those who applied for legal assistance were most interested in family law (including parental rights and marriages abroad), immigration and political asylum, hate crimes and threats, and labor law.

The legal specialists of the Russian LGBT Network regularly participate in legal seminars and training sessions.

**Seminars for the exchange of experience between legal specialists who are engaged in counseling LGBT people:** *“Special Aspects of Legal Consultation for Transgender People” – Tatiana Glushkova, “Special Aspects of Legal Consultation for Teenagers” – Anna Plyusnina, “The Basics of Work with Teenage Clients” – Olga Amirova, “Political Asylum for LGBT People” – Sofia Vasileva.*

**Legal Seminars** that took place in the framework of the Russian LGBT Network's Forum: *“Document Changes for Transgender People in Russia” – Ksenia Kirichenko, “The Conclusion of Same-Sex Marriages for Russian Citizens Abroad” – Maria Sheveleva.*

Also in 2015, the Russian LGBT Network began a **program to prepare legal specialists who have just**



# Legal Assistance

**begun to work with the subject of LGBT rights.**

In 2015, 2 seminars were held to prepare new specialists.

On June 27th in Krasnodar, a training session was held **тренинг “Legal Aspects of Activist Actions in the Framework of Existing Legislation”** Artem Zimin and Daniil Grachev. The session focused on such issues as special applications to the police in the case of an attack, the organization of LGBT events by taking into account all risks, and the organization of security.

From September 24th to the 26th, a large **legal seminar was held in Saint Petersburg dedicated to the issue of discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.** Artem Zimin, Karolina Chernysh, Grigory Vaipan, and Daniil Grachev organized the seminar.

**Online Legal Reader of the Russian LGBT Network**

In 2015, the Russian LGBT Network launched a new resource – an online legal reader for the LGBT Community and for anyone who might be interested in this subject. The Online Reader is a structured collection of legal articles relating to the LGBT community. It is possible to find articles in the reader on all different subjects: family and marriage, civil matters, and legal matters with governmental bodies. Also, there are two sections in the manual, which will be especially useful to LGBT activists and transgender people.

# Publications



## How to live and work in Russia for LGBT teachers, and for all teachers, regardless of LGBT identity (recommendations of a legal specialist) Artem Zimin

This text is highly recommended. It examines legal matters strictly within the framework of existing legislation, and it does not call for influencing decision-making, aimed at changing public policy or for shaping public opinion in a specified order, by public authorities.

## “How to talk to LGBT teens and about what” Rita Westfall, Artem Zimin

This booklet was written by a lawyer and a psychologist and is designed for professional psychologists who meet with LGBT teens. It provides legal commentary for understanding the possibilities and limitations of work with adolescents on questions of sexual orientation and gender identity, and also gives methodological recommendations from a psychologist for work with LGBT teens.



## Monitoring of human rights violations and discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and/or gender identity in 2014

## Hate crimes motivated by a victim's gender identity or sexual orientation committed in the Russian Federation in 2014

## Annual Report of the Russian LGBT Network – 2014



# The Forum for LGBT Activists



From November 7th to the 9th, the LGBT Activist Forum was held in the Moscow Region. 150 people took part in this from 26 cities in Russia: Aleksandrov, Arkhangelsk, Astrakhana, Belomorsk, Vladivostok, Voronezh, Yekaterinburg, Irkutsk, Kazan, Krasnodar, Krasnoyarsk, Moscow, Murmansk, Nakhodka, Nizhny Novgorod, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Orel, Perm, Rostov-on-Don, Samara, Saint Petersburg, Syktyvkar, Tomsk, Tyumen, Khabarovsk.

Organized by the Russian LGBT Network, the forum became a platform for the exchange of experiences and communication between very different LGBT orientations, initiative groups, and activists, and was an important step on the road of development for the LGBT movement. The Forum showed that despite the uneasy situation with LGBT rights in the country, the movement lives on, developing and becoming stronger.

Beginning in 2008, when the All-Russian Conference of Civil Organizations in support of the LGBT movement was held in the Moscow Region, the Russian LGBT Network has annually provided activists a platform for communication and experience exchange. However, in 2015 the Forum was held for the first time as a separate event, unassociated with the leadership election of the organization (until this point, the forums were held in tandem with the Conference, which is the governing body MOD “Russian LGBT Network”).



# We would like to thank those who supported our work in 2015

We want to give a huge thank you to all the activists of the regional offices and the member-organizations of the Russian LGBT Network, and also to our volunteers and supporters! To those who supported our work in 2015, we thank you with all our hearts!

We also want to say thank you to those people around the world, who supported us, wrote us letter, gave their help, and inspire us to hope that this world will definitely change for the better!

## Russian Public Advocacy Organizations:

- Autonomous Non-profit Organization for Informational and Legal Services "Public Advocacy Resource Center" (Saint Petersburg)
- Autonomous Non-profit Organization "Lawyers in Support of Constitutional Laws and Freedoms" (Moscow)
- Anti-discrimination Center "Memorial" (Saint Petersburg)
- Informational-Analytical Center "SOVA" (Moscow)
- Committee "Civil Assistance" (Moscow)
- Interregional Association of Public Advocacy Organizations "AGORA" (Kazan)
- Interregional Social Charity Organization "Center for the Development of Non-profit Organizations" (Saint Petersburg)
- Omsk Regional Social Organization "Health and Social Welfare Center "SIBALT" (Omsk)
- Public Advocacy Counsel of Saint Petersburg
- Regional Social Organization "The Moscow Group for Assistance in Executing the Helsinki Accords" (Moscow)
- Saint Petersburg Public Advocacy Organization "Civil Control" (Saint Petersburg)

## ЛГБТ-организации:

- Heterosexual-LGBT Alliance for Legal Equality (Saint Petersburg)
- LGBT Organization "Rainbow Association" (Moscow)
- Autonomous Non-Profit Organization of Social-Sports Programs "LGBT Sports Community" (Moscow)
- International LGBT Film Festival "Side by Side" (Saint Petersburg)
- LGBT Initiative Group "Coming Out" (Saint Petersburg)
- Project "LaSky" (Moscow)
- LGBT Project "PULSAR" (Omsk)

# Мы благодарим тех, кто поддержал нашу работу в 2015

## International Organizations:

- Международная Сеть – Молодежное Правозащитное Движение
- Amnesty International
- Civil Rights Defenders
- Democracy Council
- Equal Rights Trust
- Flow (Integral Change Center)
- Freedom House
- Front Line Defenders
- Hirschfeld Eddy Foundation
- Human Rights Watch
- ILGA Europe
- IREX Europe
- OAK Foundation
- Open Society Foundation
- People in Need
- Peter Tatchell Foundation
- Prague Civil Society Centre
- Sigrid Rausing Trust
- Stiftung Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft (EVZ)
- Stonewall



## Contact Information

**Main Office Telephone: +7 (812) 454-64-52**

### Russian LGBT Network Email Addresses

Main Email: [info@lgbtnet.org](mailto:info@lgbtnet.org)

Committee Chairperson: [vinnichenko@lgbtnet.org](mailto:vinnichenko@lgbtnet.org)

Legal Counsel [secretary@lgbtnet.org](mailto:secretary@lgbtnet.org)

Auditor: [auditor@lgbtnet.org](mailto:auditor@lgbtnet.org)

Information Services: [media@lgbtnet.org](mailto:media@lgbtnet.org)

Work with Volunteers and Supporters: [welcome@lgbtnet.org](mailto:welcome@lgbtnet.org)

### Contacts of Regional Outposts

MOSCOW: [msk@lgbtnet.org](mailto:msk@lgbtnet.org)

Voronezh Oblast: [vrn@lgbtnet.org](mailto:vrn@lgbtnet.org)

Komi Republic: [scw@lgbtnet.org](mailto:scw@lgbtnet.org)

Krasnodar Krai: [kdr@lgbtnet.org](mailto:kdr@lgbtnet.org)

## Contact Information

Novosibirsk Oblast: [nsk@lgbtnet.org](mailto:nsk@lgbtnet.org)

Omsk Oblast: [oms@lgbtnet.org](mailto:oms@lgbtnet.org)

Perm Krai: [prm@lgbtnet.org](mailto:prm@lgbtnet.org)

Primorsky Krai: [vvo@lgbtnet.org](mailto:vvo@lgbtnet.org)

Samara Oblast: [sam@lgbtnet.org](mailto:sam@lgbtnet.org)

Sverdlovsk Oblast: [ebg@lgbtnet.org](mailto:ebg@lgbtnet.org)

Tomsk Oblast: [tom@lgbtnet.org](mailto:tom@lgbtnet.org)

Tyumen Oblast: [tjm@lgbtnet.org](mailto:tjm@lgbtnet.org)

### Contact Addresses for Member Organizations:

Avers (Samara): [samaralgbt@gmail.com](mailto:samaralgbt@gmail.com)

Gender-L (Saint Petersburg): [vasilina.hr@gmail.com](mailto:vasilina.hr@gmail.com)

Kriliya (Saint Petersburg): [kriliya@ilga.org](mailto:kriliya@ilga.org)

Максимум (Мурманск): [rosta.serzh@gmail.com](mailto:rosta.serzh@gmail.com)

Maximum (Murmansk): [AROORakurs@yandex.ru](mailto:AROORakurs@yandex.ru)

Revers (Krasnodar): [TSHG773@gmail.com](mailto:TSHG773@gmail.com)

