



# UKRAINE

## EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

The government did not make progress on the implementation of the [National Strategy on Human Rights](#), its relevant Action Plan (2015-2020), and their sections relevant for LGBTI rights, including on hate crimes and family rights (see under **Family**).

The campaign demanding that authorities ban “homosexual propaganda” and “protect the traditional family” continued this year, but much fewer petitions and appeals were filed than [last year](#).

In May, the UN Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity carried out a country visit to Ukraine. The Independent Expert [highlighted](#) that legislation is adequate but implementation is lacking; that LGBTI people are by and large forced to hide their identities as a result of stigma; that attacks against public events are of serious concern; and that political leaders must show public support to the community.

## FAMILY

The Human Rights Action Plan sets out that Ukraine needs to provide legal recognition to same-sex and different-sex couples. Last year, the Ministry of Justice adopted its [report](#) on the implementation of the Strategy, but regrettably inserted a remark that the “implementation [of legalisation] is impossible”. The LGBT Human Rights Nash Mir Centre launched a [campaign](#) asking LGBT people to urge the Cabinet of Ministers to legally recognise civil partnership. On 12 February, the Centre handed over 500 appeals to the government, and later added another 500. On 19 February, the Centre also sent a letter and a detailed [policy paper](#) to the Prime Minister, urging him to ensure that Ukraine lives up to its promises.

## FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

The Second European Lesbian\* Conference was [held](#) between 11 - 14 April in Kyiv, bringing together around 300 participants from Europe and Central Asia. Protesters from far-right and religious groups tried to block access to the hotel, to break into the premises and throw tear gas canisters from outside. Police successfully held them back and protected the conference participants. The Conference called for more inclusive societies, the protection of human rights, and safeguards against sexual, domestic and reproductive violence and discrimination in the region.

On 19 April, the police in Dnipro [raided](#) the local gay club “Potemkin”. More than 20 police officers participated and ordered those in the club to lie down and stay on the floor for hours. They also seized everyone’s mobile phones. The police were aggressive and used homophobic remarks, including jokes and insults. They forced two foreigners to loudly sing the Ukrainian anthem. They also inflicted injuries on one person. The owners of the club and some of the victims filed a complaint to the police department in Dnipro. LGBT Human Rights Nash Mir Center appealed to the National Police of Ukraine in Dnipropetrovsk oblast, and the Parliamentary Commissioner for Human Rights. On 24 April, the National Police of Ukraine in Dnipropetrovsk oblast [published](#) a statement explaining that the raid was part of a pre-trial investigation initiated under Part 2 of Article 302 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine, “Creating or running brothels and trading in prostitution.” This was heavily [criticised](#) by civil society.

The biggest ever Pride March was [held](#) in Kyiv on 23 June, bringing together 8,000 people. For the first time, a public institution, the Public Health Centre of the Ministry of Health joined Pride Week (see under **Health**). Some extremists tried to disrupt the march, which was heavily guarded by police and successfully went on as planned on its original route. Some participants were attacked after the march.

On 15 September, a Pride march was held for the first time in Kharkiv, the second largest Ukrainian city. With 3,000 people attending, the march was the biggest LGBT event to date outside the capital. The mayor of Kharkiv Hennadii Kernes and the City Council announced that they would demand a ban at court, but [stepped back](#). Participants in the march were attacked by far-right counter-protesters, who threw eggs at them. After the march, some [were chased](#) and beaten by extremists, and suffered injuries. The police [detained](#) 17 perpetrators and started two criminal investigations.

On 23 November, NGO Insight [held](#) a Trans March on Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) in Kyiv. Eighty joined the march, which was attacked by extremists of “Tradition and Order”, who held a counter-demonstration. Six attackers were [detained](#) by the police and charged with petty hooliganism.



## FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

Two amendments to the tax code and the law on public associations were rejected by parliament this year. The amendments would have required NGOs to submit detailed reports about their finances and staff, including any external partners they work with or fund. In case of non-compliance, NGOs would have faced fines or a shut-down.

## HEALTH

Despite promises made by the Ministry of Health last year, no steps were taken to approve the new trans healthcare protocol this year. Following the elections, the position of the new Minister of Health Zoryana Skaletska is yet to be known.

The Director General of the Ministry of Health Volodymyr Kurpita published a statement on 21 June in support of LGBT people and the Pride march, which was held two days later. Kurpita highlighted the importance of removing stigma against LGBT people and ensuring the right to health for all.

## HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

Well-known LGBTI+ activist Olena Shevchenko was attacked in the street on 1 November in Kyiv, suffering minor injuries. Civil society called on the authorities to investigate the attack and take into account the homophobic motive.