

RUSSIA

Population: 144,7 Mio

Area: 17.075.400 km²

Part 1: Laws concerning Homosexuality

Forbidden by law: No

Until May 1993 homosexuals in Russia were subject to persecution under criminal law. The history of that law started in December 1933 when a paragraph was added to the criminal law of the Russian Republic as well as to the other republics of the Soviet Union which proscribed up to five years in prison for voluntary homosexual contacts (the term in Russian roughly translates into sodomy) between adults. Article 154a of Stalin's penal code was later turned into part 1 of article 121 of the criminal law of the Russian Soviet Republic (RSFSR) and was in that form in force until 1993 when it was abolished on orders of the president of the Russian Federation, Boris Jelzin. In the Ukraine homosexuality had been decriminalised somewhat earlier and later the wave of liberalisation in that area was to sweep through the whole territory of the former Soviet Union.

There was a law prosecuting male homosexuality also during pre-revolutionary times. Lesbian love was never criminalised in Russia. In Soviet times though, during Stalin's terror as well as later during the stagnation period under Breshnev and even – albeit to a lesser degree – during Perestroika, lesbians were subject to arbitrary psychiatric institutionalisation.

Registered partnership/marriage: No

Anti-discrimination law, protecting lesbians/gays (L/G) against discrimination: No

Comments: Although paragraph 19 of the constitution guarantees human rights for all, in civil law same-sex relationships are still discriminated against. Just as there are no provisions in family law for same-sex partnerships there are also no laws prohibiting the discrimination and harassment of gays/lesbians although they occur daily.

At work: No

On the housing market: No

In other areas: No

Other groups in the society protected through such a law: No

Incidents that briefly describe the situation of L/G in society:

Nationalist political movements like the KPRF (Russian Communist Party) or the RNE (Party of Russian Unity/Ultra-Nationalist) are extremely hostile towards gays and lesbians. This negative attitude can be found in all parts of society.

Part 2: Situation in the Church(es)

Open L/G welcome to

Eucharist: No

Comments: All major religious denominations in Russia are negative in regard to gays and lesbian.

Do volunteer work: No. But there are exceptions.

Work as ordained ministers: No, only if they are closeted.

Other employment in church(es): No, only if they are closeted.

Partnership blessing possible: No

Part 3: Christian Lesbian/Gay Networks

Network name: St.Petersburg Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Centre Kriolja

Web page/contact address: kriolja@ilga.org

Questionnaire filled in by Olga [REDACTED]