



NEWS REPORT

Update of flash report nr: 1705-LV-9 Attempts to ban homosexual propaganda

Date: 25 November 2014

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Title: Attempts to Ban Homosexual Propaganda Among Children Fail

Country: Latvia

Context

Issue at stake: Attempts to ban homosexual propaganda by amending Children's Rights Protection Law through referendum fail

Ground of discrimination: Sexual orientation

Source: Legislation, referendum

Field: Other (Freedom of speech)

Legislative provisions: Sections 47, 50.¹ Children's Rights Protection Law

Content

Law: Only 9,140 of the required 30,000 voter signatures were collected from 27 November 2013 until 12 November 2014 to initiate the 2nd stage of referendum procedure aimed at banning homosexual propaganda among children. As a result the NGO 'Let Us Protect Our Children!' (*Biedriba Sargāsim mūsu bērnu!*) decided to stop further collection of signatures.

On 27 November 2013 the Central Election Commission (CEC) registered the draft law "Amendments to the Protection of the Rights of the Child Law" prepared and submitted by the NGO 'Let Us Protect Our Children!' The draft envisaged amending two sections of the Law: first, Section 47, determining that "gender education in child educational and child care institutions should be based on Section 110 of the Constitution (*Satversme*)" which provides that "The State shall protect and support marriage – a union between a man and a woman [...]" and that "in child educational and child care institutions the popularisation and advertisement of sexual and marriage relations between persons of the same sex shall be prohibited". Section 50.¹ would determine that "the involvement of children as participants or as spectators of events aimed at popularisation and advertisement of sexual and marriage relations between persons of the same sex shall be prohibited."

According to the provisions of the Law on National Referenda, Legislative Initiatives and European Citizens' Initiative, the NGO was required to collect 30,000 signatures within one year for the CEC to announce the second stage of signature collection. If no fewer than 10% of the voters of the last parliamentary elections (154,379) supported the legislative initiative, the draft law would then be submitted to the



Parliament. The NGO claimed the amendments would prohibit the Euro Pride 2015 to be held in the capital Riga, the first Euro Pride to be held in Eastern Europe.

Although a considerable public campaign was organized involving media (mainly Russian-language newspapers), civil society and religious organizations, the NGO failed to collect the required number of votes

Internet link source and additional information:

Draft Law on Amendments to the Protection of the Rights of the Child Law (Likumprojekts "Grozījumi Bērnu tiesību aizsardzības likumā"), available at: <http://cvk.lv/pub/public/30673.html>

Statement of the NGO "Let Us Protect Our Children!" (*Biedrības "Sargāsim mūsu bērnus!" paziņojums*), Press release, 12 November 2014.