

Examples of mobilization against discrimination across Europe: Fight Discrimination in Europe Campaign

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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Aim and objectives of the Campaign

To ensure that all individuals in Europe enjoy effective **protection against discrimination and equal rights**

- Campaigning for the introduction and effective implementation of **comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation** at European and national level
 - Campaigning **against discriminatory policies and practices** - and **for** the introduction of **effective measures to promote equal treatment** - in a number of priority areas
 - **Combating the prejudices** underlying discrimination
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Themes of the Campaign

- ❖ Discrimination on grounds of **sexual orientation and gender identity**
- ❖ Discrimination against **Roma**
- ❖ **Race-based** and **faith-based** discrimination
- ❖ EU anti-discrimination legislation

www.fightdiscrimination.eu

Support to LGBTI Pride events at risk



Support to LGBTI Pride events at risk

Aim: to ensure that LGBTI individuals enjoy their right to freedom of peaceful assembly without hindrance

- ❖ States have duty to allow Prides to go ahead and protect their participants from violence
 - Amnesty International's added value: framing Prides as a HR issues (freedom of expression/assembly)
 - **Participation** in Pride events with **activists** and/or **teams to provide support on security matters** to the organisers and **perform monitoring** of Pride marches at risk
 - **Mobilising AI members/activists** → petitions targeting national and local authorities
 - Help **building the capacity** of Pride organisers
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Example of impact: Baltic Pride

- In 2006, the march was banned and alternative events were attacked by homophobic groups
 - In 2007, the march went ahead but inside an enclosed park with attempt of attack by counter-demonstrators. In Lithuania, the Mayor of Vilnius refuses permission to EU anti-discrimination truck touring Europe
 - In 2008, the march went ahead but on a street closed off by police and not visible to public.
 - In 2009, decision by the Riga city to ban the march was overturned by local court.
 - In 2010, first ever Pride march in Lithuania, despite several attempts to ban
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Example of impact: Baltic Pride (cont)

- 2011: public rally in Estonia takes place without hindrance
- 2012: Baltic Pride comes back to Riga. **The march goes through a city close to the centre, without fences.** Some of the Pride events are **sponsored by state authorities.**



Example of impact: Baltic Pride (cont)

Amnesty International supports Baltic Pride since 2006 by

- running a partnership with one of the main organisers (Mozaika, Latvia) and cooperating with other organisations in the Baltics (Lithuania Gay League, Lithuanian Human Rights Centre) → **working with local NGOs is key**
 - **Participating with AI activists from across Europe**, raising the visibility and increasing the safety of the march
 - **Mobilising AI members** to put pressure on national and local authorities (petitions)
 - **Advocacy and media work** at national and regional level (EU, Council of Europe)
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Example of impact: Baltic Pride (cont)

- In **Latvia**, the situation changed from having the Pride march banned to having national authorities sponsoring some Pride events
 - In **Lithuania**, the situation changed from the prohibition by the Mayor of Vilnius of the EU anti-discrimination truck to come to town to the first-ever Pride march in 2010. Still challenges ahead, but now local authorities ask to move the march rather than trying to ban it
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How do we know we had impact?

Not only from looking at progress across time, but also **from the words of the rights holders themselves!**

When interviewing the Pride organisers for our internal evaluation, these are some of the highlights (LGL, 2010):

“Amnesty’s name is well-known in Lithuania. Amnesty’s work on the pride before and its participation in the pride was really important. I don’t think the pride would have happened without Amnesty. Amnesty’s statements on the pride in the Lithuanian media were also really important to show that it is a Human Rights issue and not only about Gay rights. “

How do we know we had impact? (cont.)

“Amnesty International gave credibility – then there was no discussion that it was about Human Rights. The media in Lithuania were really respectful towards Amnesty’s press releases. It was really important the delivering of signatures to the Presidential Palace. It was also really good that Amnesty brought so many participants to the Pride since it made it a lot easier to attract more local participants”.

“It is good that Amnesty could contact other Human Rights NGO’s in Lithuania because some of them do not recognize LGBT rights as Human Rights. Action taken by Amnesty towards the mayor and embassies was very useful.”

How do we know we had impact? (cont.)

And the most important thing to know that impact is durable:
to see the **empowerment of local organisations**

- **Mozaika** has established good cooperation with Latvian institutions (→ sponsorship of Baltic Pride 2012) and namely with the police (training to police officers)
 - **Lithuania Gay League** now knows all the steps to take to organise Baltic Pride this year, including how to target local authorities
 - Both organisations increased their **international profile** (participating in international meetings, advocacy at UN) and also help Amnesty to **train local AI and LGBTI activists**
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THANK YOU!
MERCI!
DANKESCHÖN!