

# Struggle for the Future

LGBTQ SITUATION IN UKRAINE IN 2024





## **Struggle for the Future. LGBTQ Situation in Ukraine in 2024.**

This publication presents information that reflects the social, legal and political situation of the LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) people in Ukraine in 2024. It contains data and analyses of the issues related to LGBTQ rights and interests in legislation, public and political life, and public opinion, and provides examples of discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity and more.

Authors: Andrii Kravchuk, Oleksandr Zinchenkov, Oleh Lyashchenko  
Project Manager of Nash Svit Center: Andriy Maymulakhin

This report was prepared according to results obtained through monitoring and human rights activities by Nash Svit Center. The authors express their gratitude to donor organizations and individuals who support our activities as well as LGBTQ organizations and individual activists, participants of e-mail lists and Facebook groups who collect and exchange up-to-date information on various aspects of the LGBTQ situation in Ukraine.

Opinions expressed by the report's authors are solely theirs, and should not be considered as the official position of donors to Nash Svit Center.

Cover photo: Equality March 2024 in Kyiv, (© Denis Glushko, Gvara Media). All photos in this publication are taken from open sources.

### **LGBT Human Rights Nash Svit Center**

E-mail: [nashsvit@gay.org.ua](mailto:nashsvit@gay.org.ua)

Website: [www.gay.org.ua](http://www.gay.org.ua)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/nashsvitcenter](https://www.facebook.com/nashsvitcenter)

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/nashsvitcenter](https://www.instagram.com/nashsvitcenter)

© Nash Svit Center, Kyiv, 2025

When using the report's materials, a reference to Nash Svit Center is mandatory. This report (in Ukrainian and English) is available on Nash Svit's website.

# Content

SUMMARY .....	1
1. LEGISLATION AND JUDICIARY.....	2
2. STATE AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES, LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES .....	5
3. POLITICS, MASS MEDIA AND SOCIETY.....	12
4. CHURCHES AND RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS.....	21
5. LGBTQ COMMUNITY .....	23
6. VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION AND OTHER VIOLATIONS OF LGBTQ PEOPLE’S RIGHTS	28
Violations by the occupying authorities .....	29
Interaction with private persons .....	29
Relations with law enforcement agencies.....	32
Violations in the Armed Forces of Ukraine (military offenses) .....	35
Employment .....	37
Education .....	38
Access to goods and services.....	38
7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	39
8. METHODOLOGY AND AUTHORS OF THE REPORT .....	44

**SUMMARY**

In 2024, no noticeable changes were made in the legislation regarding the protection of LGBTQ rights in Ukraine. Consideration of Bill 9103 on registered civil partnerships is blocked by ultra-conservative members of the Verkhovna Rada, who refer to the position of leading Ukrainian churches. At the same time, the Ukrainian government is trying to advance the adoption of amendments to anti-discrimination and criminal legislation as well as a law on registered civil partnerships available for same-sex couples as a part of the process of Ukraine's European integration.

Advocacy for the adoption of these laws, direct aid to LGBTQ people affected by the Russian aggression, and support for the Ukrainian military remained the main issues for the Ukrainian LGBTQ movement in 2024. For the first time since the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion, the Equality March took place in Kyiv though being rather limited due to security reasons. Meanwhile, it seems that the intensification of the public activities of the LGBTQ movement and its allies increased the activity of its aggressive opponents — ultraconservative and rightist radical groupings. In 2024, for the first time since 2020, Nash Svit Center documented an increase in the number of homo/transphobic threats, attacks, and other incidents compared to the previous year.

Sociological surveys, however, demonstrate that the attitude of Ukrainian society towards LGBTQ people is slowly but surely continuing to improve. At the same time, the leading Ukrainian churches consistently declare their irreconcilable homo / transphobic attitude towards their LGBTQ fellow citizens, which is no different from the ideology of the Russian World and repeats the theses of its propaganda in this area.

## 1. LEGISLATION AND JUDICIARY

There were no notable changes in legislation related to the protection of LGBTQ rights in Ukraine in 2024. The two main bills in this area — 9103 (on the introduction of registered partnerships available to same-sex couples) and 5488 (on amendments to anti-discrimination and criminal legislation) — were not considered by the Verkhovna Rada.

While consideration of Bill 9103 was not even included in the agenda of the current parliamentary session at all, Bill 5488 was scheduled for consideration. The chances for the adoption of Bill 5488 have somewhat increased due to the fact that in the government's "Report on the initial assessment of the progress in the implementation of the European Union legal acts (EU *acquis*)", adopted in December 2023, such a step is defined as a "priority task" within the implementation of Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law.

Since the consideration of Bill 9103 in the Verkhovna Rada is currently effectively blocked due to the openly homophobic / transphobic attitude of most members of the relevant Committee on Legal Policy, its initiators, led by Inna Sovsun, submitted to the parliament for consideration an alternative Bill 12252 "On amendments to certain legislative acts of Ukraine to bring them into line with the requirements of Articles 8 and 14 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (European Convention on Human Rights) and Council Regulation (EU) 2016/1104 implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of jurisdiction, applicable law and the recognition and enforcement of decisions in matters of the property consequences of registered partnerships."

The title of the bill refers to the ECHR decision in the case of *Maymulakhin and Markiv v. Ukraine* (2023), which found that the absence of any legal form of recognition of same-sex couples in our country granting them basic marital rights violates the European Convention on Human Rights. The main parliamentary committee, which has to assess this bill so that it can be further considered by the Verkhovna Rada, is the Committee on Humanitarian and Information Policy, which has a reputation for being liberal and progressive that increases its chances of consideration.

The issue of recognition in Ukraine of civil partnerships or unions registered between non-citizens of Ukraine in accordance with the legislation of foreign states is to be resolved by Bill 11523 “On amendments to the Law of Ukraine ‘On private international law’ regarding the introduction of conflicting rules for de facto marital relations and registered partnerships.”

The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine has updated the procedure for the assignment and payment of one-time money benefit after the death of military personnel in accordance with the law “On amendments to certain legislative acts of Ukraine regarding the assignment and payment of one-time money benefit” adopted last December. Now the members of the deceased's family who can receive such payments also include “a woman (man) with whom deceased person lived as a family but were not in marriage with this person or in any other marriage, provided that this fact has been established by a court decision that took legal force.” In fact, this means that now same-sex partners of deceased soldiers will be able to receive such financial benefit. This, however, does not cancel discriminatory attitude of the state towards same-sex partners: unlike spouses, they will have to prove the fact of their family relationship in court.

In October, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted the “Procedure for material, medical, psychological, and social support of military personnel taking into account the needs of women and men,” Paragraph 2 of which prohibits any discrimination, particularly on SOGI grounds.<sup>1</sup>

On April 11, 2024, the European Court of Human Rights issued a decision in the case of Carter v. Ukraine, in which it recognized that the investigation and punishment of hate crimes based on sexual orientation as ordinary crimes, without taking into account the motives of intolerance, is a violation of Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (prohibition of torture or inhuman or degrading treatment) in conjunction with Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination).

In September 2024, the Lviv District Administrative Court ruled on the lawsuit of LGBTQ soldier Petro Zherukha against the Lviv Oblast Council, in which the plaintiff demanded to recognize as unlawful and cancel the

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1234-2024-%D0%BF#Text>

appeal of the Lviv Oblast Council to the highest state administration bodies to prevent consideration of the draft Law of Ukraine “On the institute of registered partnerships” and the introduction of the institute of civil partnerships in Ukraine. The court recognized that Lviv Regional Council’s members exceeded their powers and fully satisfied Petro Zherukha’s claims.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/121442653>

## 2. STATE AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES, LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

The Minister of Justice of Ukraine (until 4.09.2024) Denys Malyska stated that he is “maximally positive” about the introduction of registered civil partnerships, but believes that there is still no “social compromise” on this issue in Ukraine, so it is necessary to continue communication with the conservative part of the parliament and society.<sup>3</sup> According to him, he agreed with the authors of Bill 9103 that, unless this document is adopted by the Verkhovna Rada, the Ministry of Justice will introduce its own compromise draft law to the parliament. Neither the defenders of LGBTQ rights nor their opponents will like this document, but, according to the minister, it will have a chance of success.

As for the above-mentioned alternative Bill 12252 on partnerships, submitted to the parliament in December 2024, according to its initiators, ministries and government agencies immediately provided generally positive opinions on it, while Bill 9103 in 2023 initially received several negative responses from the government.

During a meeting between Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyi and representatives of the student government on November 16, one of them asked him if he would sign the law on partnerships. “Yes!” the head of state replied curtly.<sup>4</sup>

The Ukrainian government included several representatives of LGBTQ and friendly human rights organizations, including a representative of Nash Svit Center, in the working groups to prepare Ukraine’s negotiating positions during the negotiations with the European Union on the conclusion of the Agreement on Ukraine’s Accession to the European Union. Their task was to present their proposals and comments for the development of a comprehensive Roadmap of political and legislative reforms, the ultimate goal of which is Ukraine’s accession to the EU. The part of the draft Roadmap on the judiciary and fundamental rights, presented to the working group, already contained particular Section 3.11 “Discrimination against LGBTQ community representatives” which included three actions aimed at

---

<sup>3</sup> <https://youtu.be/13rS5s0Or7E?t=4258>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DCbvn1Zt2V4/>



addressing these issues: development and submission to the Verkhovna Rada of a draft law on amendments to anti-discrimination, criminal and administrative legislation on hate crimes, discrimination and hate speech on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity; introduction of registration of hate crimes on these grounds; development and submission to the Verkhovna Rada of a draft law on registered civil partnership. The deadline for the implementation of the first two actions is by the end of 2027, and the draft law on civil partnership should be presented by the Ministry of Justice in the third quarter of 2025.

On December 5, the Verkhovna Rada adopted Bill 11456 “On amendments to the Law of Ukraine ‘On free legal aid’ to expand the list of persons entitled to free secondary legal aid”, which expands the list of subjects of the right to free secondary legal aid to persons who have suffered from hate crimes on a number of grounds. However, the list of protected grounds in this law does not include sexual orientation and gender identity despite the fact that both independent observers and the National Police report annually on the presence and prevalence of such crimes in Ukraine — accordingly, their victims should have the same right to legal aid as victims of hate crimes on other grounds.

The initiator of this bill is the Cabinet of Ministers, and it was developed in response to the recommendations of the European Commission on Ukraine’s progress within the framework of the 2023 European Union Enlargement Package, namely, the implementation and enforcement of the provisions of the Istanbul Convention. However, both this convention and the European Commission recommendations explicitly state that sexual orientation and gender identity should be included in the list of grounds protected from discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes. Thus, despite the enthusiastic reports from legislators and government officials on the implementation of the EU recommendations, in this case the Ukrainian government ignored them.

Among all government departments, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine has always demonstrated the most consistent position on the protection of LGBTQ people’s rights, but its activity in this area has significantly increased after the Council on Human Rights, Gender Equality and Diversity was formed under it. Zoryan Kis, a well-known Ukrainian

LGBTQ activist who is now an employee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was appointed as its secretary. On the occasion of the International Day Against Homophobia / Transphobia (May 17), this Council announced a call for projects aimed at protecting the human rights of women and LGBTQI+ people, and held a special meeting dedicated, in particular, to advocacy for the adoption of Bills 9103 and 5488.<sup>5</sup>



Similarly, in 2024 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs became the only government department to express its symbolic support for Pride Month (May-June) by painting its logo on the X social network in rainbow colors (illustration on the left). The Embassy of Ukraine in Hungary joined the statement of representatives of foreign countries and international organizations before the 29th Budapest Pride, in which they expressed support for the LGBTQ community and condemned its persecution by the Hungarian government.<sup>6</sup> As in few previous years, Ukrainian ambassadors in some Western countries (in particular, Sweden) participated in Pride events.

Several other state institutions also symbolically supported the Ukrainian LGBTQ community during the Pride Month, namely the Ukrainian Institute (it represents Ukrainian culture in the world and forms a positive image of Ukraine abroad), the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation (it contributes to the development of national culture and art), the Ukrainian Youth Foundation (it supports youth initiatives and performs certain tasks in the field of youth policy), Ukrposhta (the state-owned and largest postal service in Ukraine).

---

<sup>5</sup> <https://mfa.gov.ua/events/rada-z-prav-lyudini-gendernoyi-rivnosti-ta-riznomanityta-pri-mzs-ogoloshuye-konkurs-proyektiv>

<sup>6</sup> <https://hu.usembassy.gov/news-joint-statement-on-the-occasion-of-the-29th-budapest-pride-festival>



*From left to right: logos of the Ukrainian Institute, Ukrainian Cultural Foundation, Ukrainian Youth Foundation, and Ukrposhta, painted in rainbow colors in honor of Pride Month 2024.*

Following a complaint from a representative of Nash Svit Center, the National Council of Ukraine on Television and Radio Broadcasting (shortened as "the National Council"), which performs the functions of the national media regulator, issued an order to the public organization Movement "All Together!" for publishing the article "LGBT Movement and Pedophilia: Historical Connection" on its website. The National Council recognized the violation by the organization "All Together!" requirements of Article 36 (Part One, Paragraph 3) of the law "On Media" ("On the territory of Ukraine, in the media and on platforms for shared access to video, it is prohibited to distribute [...] expressions that incite discrimination or oppression against individuals or groups of persons on the basis of [...] sexual orientation, gender identity") and obliged it to eliminate the detected violations. On March 14, the movement "All Together!" appealed this order of the National Council in the Kyiv District Administrative Court — the court has not yet issued a decision on this case.<sup>7</sup>

The National Council also posted a statement on its online resources dedicated to the International Day Against Homophobia /Transphobia (May 17), in which it emphasized the importance of adhering to the principles of equality and non-discrimination in the media space and reminded of the

---

<sup>7</sup> <https://vsirazom.ua/news/oficzijno-rishennya-naczrady-proty-ruhu-vsi-razom-superechyt-zakonu-ye-dyskryminaczijnym-i-vzhe-oskarzhene-u-sudi>

prohibition of hate speech, propaganda of discrimination, and incitement to hatred, in particular, against LGBTQ people.<sup>8</sup>

At the same time, the National Council did not respond in any way to the next complaint from Nash Svit Center on another material, which has obvious signs of inciting hatred on SOGI grounds, published by "All Together!" website.

In 2024, the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights Dmytro Lubinets and his office in their activities paid due attention to issues of protecting the rights of LGBTQ people. In particular, in his annual report on the state of observance and protection of human and civil rights and freedoms in Ukraine in 2023, the Ukrainian Ombudsman once again emphasized the need to adopt amendments to anti-discrimination and criminal legislation and a law on registered civil partnership (which is provided, respectively, in Bills 5488 and 9103).<sup>9</sup>

A number of LGBTQ activists, including a representative of Nash Svit Center, joined the newly created Expert Council on Equal Rights, Prevention of Discrimination, Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking under the Representative of the Commissioner for Equal Rights and Freedoms, Rights of National Minorities, Political and Religious Views. In January 2024, the Representative of the Ombudsman Mykhailo Spasov sent a letter to the head of the Chernivtsi Oblast Council Oleksii Boiko, in which he recommended "refraining from actions and decisions in the activities of the Chernivtsi Oblast Council that could be considered as prejudiced against LGBTIQ people" after, at late 2023, this council adopted an appeal to the Verkhovna Rada with a call not to adopt Bill 9103.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/Nacrada/posts/pfbid02QAkY2GN2TDaLQoTANYkndPJqZ5gBhYrTfwCm5rA4A5T4WQES94jEKqkVKtbMC5Ppl>

<sup>9</sup> [https://ombudsman.gov.ua/storage/app/media/uploaded-files/Shchorichna\\_dopovid\\_Opovnovazhenogo\\_za\\_2023\\_rik.pdf](https://ombudsman.gov.ua/storage/app/media/uploaded-files/Shchorichna_dopovid_Opovnovazhenogo_za_2023_rik.pdf), pp. 239-242.

<sup>10</sup> <https://vsirazom.ua/news/predstavnyk-ombudsmena-zazihaye-na-politychni-ta-religijni-prava-miscevyh-deputativ>

For the first time in recent years, since the beginning of 2024, no such public appeals from local councils to the Ukrainian state authorities have been noticed.

Although the organizers of the Equality March 2024, which took place in Kyiv for the first time since the start of the full-scale Russian invasion, had some problems with the city authorities and police, they managed to find common ground. The Kyiv City State Administration and personally the First Deputy Head of the Kyiv City State Administration Mykola Povoroznyk publicly called on Kyiv residents and guests of the city to demonstrate tolerance and mutual respect on the eve of the march and ensured its successful conduct.<sup>11</sup>

Representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine at various events have consistently emphasized the need to adopt Bill 5488 aimed at combating discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes, in particular, based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Thus, at the meeting-seminar held in Uzhhorod in March 2024 by the State Service of Ukraine for Ethnopolitics and Freedom of Conscience within the framework of the project “Supporting the implementation of European standards on combatting discrimination and the rights of national minorities in Ukraine” for representatives of state and regional authorities, public organizations and national communities, a heated discussion broke out on this occasion. Lyudmila Tymoshchuk, a representative of the Department on Human Rights Observation Monitoring of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, explained to the participants of the event that this draft law is not aimed at protecting any particular social groups — it offers equal protection to all citizens of Ukraine, regardless of their nationality, skin color, language, religious, political or other beliefs, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, place of residence, etc.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/kyivcity.gov.ua/posts/pfbid02t2y6gUzZJBuHbpdP GJWWtWLNZEkeZ9DJNjwfbNLbzGoYG2yBfJF5Q3Ex2JmTkuPI>

<sup>12</sup> <https://dessa.gov.ua/yevrointehratsiia-ta-prava-natsionalnykh-menshyn-svoboda-sovisti-fokus-na-dialozi-ta-spivpratsi>

In 2024, the National Police was generally effective in protecting not numerous public LGBTQ events from homo / transphobic violence — notably the Sunny Bunny Queer Film Festival and the Kyiv Equality March. Officers of the Department of the General Inspection and Human Rights Compliance of the National Police have established fruitful cooperation with LGBTQ and human rights organizations — particularly, in conducting trainings for police officers and distributing information booklets and posters.

At the same time, some officers of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine demonstrated openly unlawful and transphobic behavior, repeatedly preventing a transgender woman from traveling abroad despite her having all the necessary documents (for more details, please see p. 34).

### 3. POLITICS, MASS MEDIA AND SOCIETY

Inna Sovsun of the liberal Holos party remains the main LGBTQ ally in the Verkhovna Rada, but over the past couple of years she has managed to find a number of like-minded people among members of the parliament, the most notable of whom are Dmytro Hurin of her party and the head of the ruling Servant of the People party Olena Shulyak. They initiated Bill 9103 on the introduction of registered civil partnerships in Ukraine, available to same-sex couples, submitted to the parliament in 2023, as well as alternative Bill 12252, which was registered in December 2024, and are also advocating for the adoption of the government's Bill 5488 on combating discrimination, hate speech, and hate crimes.

The vast majority of Ukrainian politicians, however, simply ignored these issues. Some of them, on the contrary, tried in every way to prevent the consideration and adoption of these bills, arguing this with their own beliefs and/or the position of Ukrainian churches — particularly, Ihor Friz MP (Servant of the People). Trying to increase the chances of the adoption of draft law 9103, its initiators tried to change the relevant committee of the Verkhovna Rada, which is supposed to preliminarily consider this document, from the current Committee on Legal Policy to the Committee on Integration of Ukraine into the European Union, but, due to the opposition of Ihor Friz and other homophobic members of the Committee on Legal Policy, they did not succeed.<sup>13</sup>

Yulia Tymoshenko and her Batkivshchyna party, who last year decided to increase their popularity by promoting homo / transphobic ideology, refrained from discussing this topic in the public space, but in parliamentary activities they consistently took ultra-conservative positions.

The main political enemies of the LGBTQ community — radical nationalist and ultraconservative organizations and individual activists — have been little visible in Ukrainian politics in recent years, but, apparently due to a certain increase in the public activity of the Ukrainian LGBTQ movement in

---

<sup>13</sup> <https://zmina.info/articles/chervone-svitlo-yevrointegracyiy-yak-narodni-obranczi-blokuyut-yevrointegracijnyj-zakon-pro-czyvilni-partnerstva>

2024, they have also become more active, trying to disrupt various events related to LGBTQ issues — particularly in Kyiv and Kharkiv.



*"March in Defense of Family and Tradition" which united opponents of the Kyiv Equality March 2024.*

Very revealing was the counter-march to the Kyiv Equality March, which took place on June 16, 2024. The alternative “March in Defense of Family and Tradition” was organized by the journalist and Pentecostal preacher Ruslan Kukharchuk, who has long been a central figure in the homophobic movement of Ukraine. However, this time he failed to mobilize for this event its traditional audience — families of conservative Protestants and representatives of leading Ukrainian churches — so the main contingent of the march, supposedly dedicated to family values, consisted of several hundred very young men under the banners of the far-right organizations known for its aggressiveness who hid their faces. Thus, for the first time,





*An anti-Semitic leaflet from the grouping “Ukrainian Blood Unity” at a transport stop in Kyiv.*

the Ukrainian “movement for the traditional family” openly united with far-right radicals.

In July 2024, participants of this march, who previously called themselves “Unknown Nationalists,” announced the creation of a new organization, the Ukrainian Blood Unity, based on the ideology of ethnic, racial, and social nationalism.<sup>14</sup> Judging by their social media pages, they participated in numerous attempts to attack LGBTQ events, painted racist graffiti, and distributed racist, homophobic, and anti-Semitic leaflets.

Meanwhile, some right-wing politicians have begun trying to avoid demonstrating their hostility towards their LGBTQ fellow citizens. At early 2024, the

Mayor of Ivano-Frankivsk Ruslan Martsinkiv, a member of the right-nationalist Svoboda party, known for his repeated statements that a gay cannot be a Ukrainian patriot, unexpectedly answered extremely evasively to another journalist's question about his attitude towards the LGBTQ community: “I love all people. I pray for them. The Lord said to pray even for enemies. [...] A Christian cannot do otherwise.”<sup>15</sup>

A loud public scandal broke out over the decision of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kyiv Patriarchate to deprive the famous Ukrainian LGBTQ activist, the head of the LGBTQ military association, Viktor Pylypenko of his award.

<sup>14</sup> [https://t.me/krovna\\_yednist/284](https://t.me/krovna_yednist/284)

<sup>15</sup> <https://pik.net.ua/2024/01/13/molyusya-za-nyh-ruslan-martsinkiv-rozpoviv-chy-zminylosya-jogo-stavlennya-do-lgbt-spilnoty>

Once the head of this micro-church, Patriarch Filaret, who is also the founder and Patriarch Emeritus of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, awarded Viktor Pylypenko, along with other servicemen of his unit, with the UOC-KP medal “For Courage and Love to Ukraine” — yet, when the church administration found out that Pylypenko is an atheist and an LGBTQ activist, they canceled this award with the wording “we do not share his sinful preferences and LGBTQ agitation.”

Such a decision caused a storm of emotions and almost unanimous condemnation in the media and social networks — in particular, it was strongly condemned even by the well-known nationalist activist, journalist and military officer Olena Bilozerska.<sup>16</sup> Several other military refused their own awards, which they received from the UOC-KP, as a sign of protest.<sup>17</sup> In their opinion, it was not the church that did them honor, but they supported the authority of this dubious church and its even more odious patriarch, agreeing to receive a reward from them, but after such an act they do not longer want to have anything common with them.

During the Pride Month, similar to the previous year, many Ukrainian businesses, mass media, and cultural institutions repainted their logos in rainbow colors as a sign of support for LGBTQ — in particular, such large and well-known ones as mobile phone operators Vodafone and Lifecell, the shopping network for electronics and household appliances Comfy, Novyi and Kyiv TV channels, the Odesa National Art Museum, and the Khanenko Museum in Kyiv.

This did not attract significant attention from the mass media and general public except the Ukrainian Literary Gazette which republished the article “How the Khanenko Museum and the Odesa Museum are turning into a closed propaganda cluster” from the website of the homophobic movement “All Together!” headed by the above-mentioned Ruslan Kukharchuk. Likewise, a homophobic post with a link to this article was

---

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/bilozerska/posts/pfbid09kswq7itVC1grpxWLgMDjGmMLEi5ggkR4cKmyHh6X3MFaxa4QWDDd8DDuMn4NKgf4!>

<sup>17</sup> <https://suspilne.media/rivne/699692-na-vijni-a-ne-zaznavav-diskriminacii-upc-kiivskogo-patriarhatu-pozbavila-bijca-z-rivnogo-vidznaki-cerez-orientaciu>

published on the official Facebook page of the National Writers' Union of Ukraine.<sup>18</sup> Probably, both of these publications reflect the personal position of Mykhailo Sydorzhhevskyy, who is the editor-in-chief of the Ukrainian Literary Gazette and the head of that Union — it is known that he professes ultra-conservative and radical-nationalist views. After that, several members of the Writers' Union announced their resignation from this organization, and the executive producer and host of the Public Radio, Ana More, filed a complaint against the Ukrainian Literary Gazette to the Commission on Journalistic Ethics. This commission — a self-regulatory body of the journalistic community — recognized that the article violated the Code of Ethics of Ukrainian Journalists and expressed public condemnation to this media.<sup>19</sup>



*From left to right: logos of the Odessa National Art Museum and the Khanenko National Art Museum, painted in rainbow colors in honor of Pride Month 2024.*

In fact, today in Ukraine exactly the website of the movement “All Together!” has become a principal source of openly anti-LGBTQ publications full of manipulation, distortion, and ultra-conservative propaganda rhetoric. The rest of the homo / transphobic (mostly religious) resources rarely publish their own material of this kind, preferring to share articles from this site. Ruslan Kukharchuk and his unknown assistants closely monitor LGBTQ-related news and promptly react to them — for example, to the proposal of Anton Drobovych, the Director of the Ukrainian

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/100063103517143/posts/787605890019521>

<sup>19</sup> <https://cje.org.ua/complaints/shchodo-homofobii-v-onlayn-versii-ukrainskoi-literaturnoi-hazety>

Institute of National Memory, not to dismantle the infamous Kyiv Arch of Peoples' Friendship (a monument of the Soviet era) but to paint it in rainbow colors, giving it a different meaning — a symbol of the LGBTQ community or just a rainbow over the water, as it already happened during Eurovision 2017. This idea caused violent indignation of Ruslan Kukharchuk but a completely calm and somewhat ironic reaction from the public.

One of the events that caused a storm of indignation on the website “All Together!” and other Ukrainian homophobic Internet resources was the cancellation of a lecture by ultraconservative philosopher, humanitarian researcher and public figure Serhii Chaplyhin at the Business School of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy National University. The administration of the educational institution canceled it after the LGBTQ organization Gender Z on social networks drew their attention to Chaplyhin's numerous homo / transphobic propaganda publications and speeches.<sup>20</sup>

Chernivtsi Internet radio Wanda FM, existed since 2015, refused to cooperate with DJ Vladyslav Saveliev (DJ Deckers) after he made homophobic remarks on far-right Internet forums, and declared their strong condemnation of negative statements towards the LGBTQ community. Shortly after, Vladyslav Saveliev posted an apology video on his Instagram page, where he stated: “I want to support representatives of the LGBTQ+ community so that they have their rights, and we want Ukraine to be a European state, and we are on the path to Europe.”<sup>21</sup>

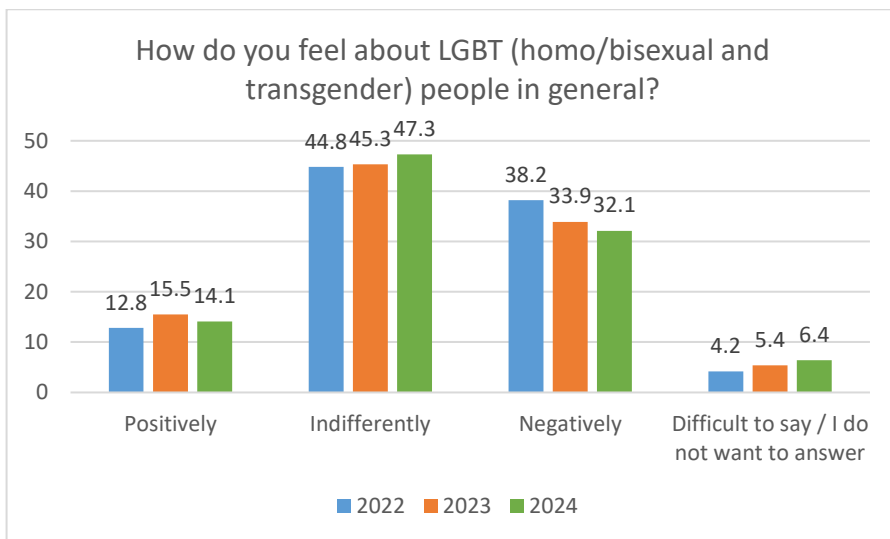
A public opinion survey conducted in May 2024 by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (hereinafter abbreviated as KIIS) on behalf of Nash Svit Center once again confirmed the conclusions of similar surveys of 2023 and 2022: the attitude of Ukrainian society towards LGBTQ people is mostly neutral or friendly, and in recent years it has been slowly but steadily improving.

---

<sup>20</sup> <https://hromadske.ua/suspilstvo/235792-u-mohyliantsi-filosofu-ne-daly-provesty-lektsiiu-cherez-yoho-pozytsiiu-do-lhbt-shcho-vidomo-pro-sytuatsiiu>

<sup>21</sup> <https://news.obozrevatel.com/ukr/show/people/di-dzhej-vidomogo-radio-zaproponuvav-ttsk-vruchiti-povistki-vsim-predstavnikam-lgbtk-i-zalishivnya-bez-roboti-detali-skandalu.htm>

In particular, the number of those, who believe that LGBT people should have the same rights as the other citizens of Ukraine, in 2024 amounted to 70.4% that is 3.1% more than in 2023 and 6.7% more than in 2022. Even among those who generally have a negative view of LGBT people, more than half (51%) agreed that they should have equal rights.



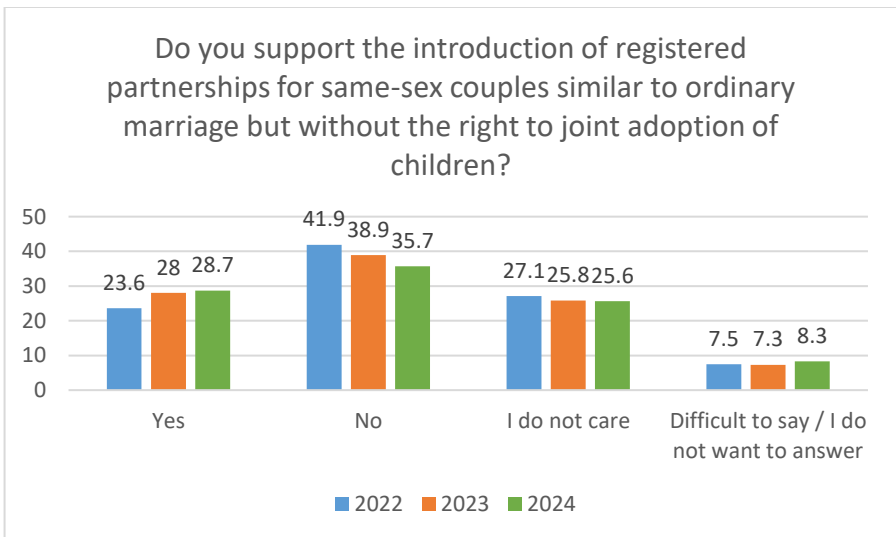
*Changes in the attitude of Ukrainian society towards LGBTQ people according to KIIS surveys for 2022-2024.*

The introduction of registered civil partnership for same-sex couples in 2024 was supported by 28.7% of respondents, 25.6% were indifferent to it, and 35.7% were against. Thus, already more than a half of Ukrainians have no objections to this. If two years ago the gap between those who support civil partnership for same-sex couples and those who do not like it constituted 18.3% in favor of the latter, then in 2024 it decreased to 7%.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.kiis.com.ua/?lang=eng&cat=reports&id=1417&page=1>



*Changes in support for equal rights for LGBTQ people by Ukrainian society according to KIIS surveys for 2022-2024.*



*Changes in support for the introduction of registered partnerships for same-sex couples by Ukrainian society according to KIIS surveys for 2022-2024.*

In June 2024, the Center for Analysis and Sociological Research of the International Republican Institute conducted the third wave of polling within the program “Youth as a Leader of Ukrainian National Identity.” In particular, Ukrainian youth aged 16-35 were asked about their attitude towards LGBTQ+ people, to which the following answers were received:

*Please tell me, how comfortable would it be for you to communicate personally with such people?*

Same-sex couples: generally comfortable — 69%, not desired — 29%.  
LGBTQ+ representatives: generally comfortable — 61%, not desired — 36%.

*To what extent do you agree or disagree that members of the LGBTQ+ community should be accepted by society?*

Completely agree — 31%, tend to agree — 39%, tend to disagree — 16%, completely disagree — 13%.

The highest level of LGBTQ+ acceptance (completely or somewhat agree) was noted in Kyiv (84%), the lowest — in western Ukraine (63%).<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> <https://iri.org.ua/sites/default/files/surveys/Doslydzhene%20molodi%20-2024.pdf>, pp. 96-100.

#### 4. CHURCHES AND RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

As in several previous years, in 2024 the leading Ukrainian churches joined in the All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (hereinafter abbreviated as AUCCRO) almost did not touch on LGBTQ issues in their public activities. However, according to the testimonies of MPs who support Bills 5488 and 9103, they still retain significant influence over Ukrainian legislators in their efforts to block adoption of any documents which would protect equal rights for LGBTQ people.

Ukrainian churches do not share any softening of anti-LGBTQ attitudes seen among their co-religionists in the West — in particular, the head of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine Metropolitan Epiphany rejected a suggestion to take a cue from Pope Francis, who allowed priests to bless same-sex couples, pointing out that even the Roman and Greek Catholic bishops of Ukraine do not support this position of the Pope.

Having almost stopped homophobic propaganda of their own production, Ukrainian religious resources, especially Protestant ones, continue to distribute extremely manipulative materials from the website of the leading homophobic movement “All Together!” which violate all norms of journalistic ethics. Similar to the Russian propaganda, these materials create in the reader a completely false impression of Ukraine as a “leftist” country, in which freedoms of speech and religion are grossly violated in favor of “propaganda of homosexuality” and “gender ideology,” and defenders of “traditional values” are subjected to repression.

An unexpected effect of this for the Ukrainian churches was that certain of their Western colleagues — mainly ultra-conservative Protestants in the United States — believed Russian propaganda supported by similar statements from the Ukrainian side that significantly undermined support for Ukraine among American conservatives. Particularly because of this, since the beginning of 2024 the AUCCRO and representatives of concrete churches had to hold a series of meetings with representatives of conservative religious and political circles in the USA, at which they tried to dispel the negative effect of their own homo / transphobic propaganda and ensure vital support for Ukrainian resistance to Russian aggression from the latter.



At the same time, the AUCCRO did not give up the use of homophobic propaganda clichés, protesting against the Equality March in Kyiv as a part of a “left-radical political movement that is a continuation of Marxism of the past” and characterizing legislative proposals aimed at protecting LGBTQ rights as “laws that would promote spreading sin of debauchery and immorality in Ukrainian society.”

As for military chaplaincy, in an interview with the ultraconservative Catholic Radio Maria, the head of the military chaplaincy service of the Main Directorate of Intelligence of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, Kostyantyn Kholodov (OCU), stated that LGBTQ servicepersons have never personally contacted him, but he sees no problem in their existence and would treat such a soldier like any other.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h6pkKzua1Mg&t=2286s>

## 5. LGBTQ COMMUNITY

Promoting resistance to Russian aggression and survival in war conditions remained the main issues for the Ukrainian LGBTQ movement in the first half of 2024. Thanks to international aid, LGBTQ organizations were able to support the activities of shelters for forced migrants, provide direct material, financial and psychological assistance to victims of military actions.

Advocacy for the adoption of legislation aimed at protecting the rights of LGBT people — primarily Bills 5488 and 9103 — as well as legal assistance to victims of homo / transphobic discrimination and violence remained another important area of the LGBTQ movement's activity. All leading Ukrainian LGBTQ and friendly organizations united their efforts on conducting advocacy campaigns in support of such legislative initiatives, and the NGO Fulcrum UA ensured the development and lobbying of Bills 9103 and 12252 on registered civil partnership.

The vast majority of public LGBTQ actions, as in the previous year, were aimed at drawing public attention to LGBTQ people who, as a part of the Ukrainian army, defend the country from Russian aggression, and the specific problems they face due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. In February 2024, KharkivPride reported that the advertising holding Megapolis, without any explanation, had stopped communicating on the information campaign in support of LGBTQ soldiers planned by KharkivPride together with the public association Rizni.Rivni ("Different.Equal").<sup>25</sup> This campaign, in the form of placing portraits of soldiers and their stories on advertising areas in Kyiv and Kharkiv, was nevertheless launched later.<sup>26</sup>

On September 7, KharkivPride held a closed PrideFest which included, among other things, a charity fair for the needs of the Ukrainian military. Far-right activists tried to prevent it from taking place, but the police

---

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/kharkivprideukraine/posts/pfbid0AzLygXa3BtukcEQVtNdpDnUK2LciVTmKrii7ctWVUj8J4huVdBNNpJANdhszjNRzI>

<sup>26</sup> <https://rubryka.com/2024/05/17/na-pidtrymku-lgbtk-vijskovyh>

provided security for the event.<sup>27</sup> On September 15, KharkivPride held the AutoPride with the participation of the military: 13 cars drove through the city center with rainbow flags and slogans in defense of Ukraine and the rights of LGBTQ people.<sup>28</sup>



*Posters featuring Ukraine's LGBTQ defenders were placed in several cities as a part of advocacy campaign by KharkivPride and Rizni.Rivni.*

The placement of the symbolic “Shelter from Intolerance” on Kyiv's Independence Square, also at the initiative of the Rizni.Rivni platform, had a similar informational and advocacy nature. It was intended to draw the public's attention to the issue of homo / transphobic violence and the need to adopt Bill 5488 aimed at overcoming this problem.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.newsroom.kh.ua/ua/news/u-harkovi-molod-z-pravogo-sektoru-vashtuvala-akciyu-proty-harkivpraydu-video>

<sup>28</sup> <https://harkiv.news.live/u-kharkiv-vidbuvsia-lgbt-avtoprobiz-za-uchastiu-viiskovikh-kozhna-z-kolon-simvolizovala-zaklik-200146.html>

<sup>29</sup> <https://suspilne.media/kyiv/778145-ukritta-vid-neterpimosti-u-kievi-vidkrili-instalaciu-proti-diskriminacii>

Under the leadership of the well-known Kharkiv LGBTQ and feminist activist Anna Sharyhina, who has temporarily headed KyivPride until the formation of a full-fledged new team, the first Equality March since the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion was quite successfully held in the Ukrainian capital.<sup>30</sup> For security reasons, it had a limited and closed nature — to participate in it, you had to register in advance, and the organizers from the very beginning planned only about half a thousand participants. Despite its purely symbolic nature (the march was very brief), it attracted a lot of attention from the media, the LGBTQ community, and its allies, as well as its opponents — ultraconservative and right-wing radical organizations, which organized a counter-march under the slogan of “protecting family and tradition.”<sup>31</sup>



*Equality March 2024 in Kyiv.*

The Queer Propaganda Fest announced by KyivPride for November 23 also attracted quite a lot of attention due to the fact that its date coincided with

---

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-marsh-rivnosti-kyjiv-lgbt/32995013.html>

<sup>31</sup> <https://vsirazom.ua/news/marsh-rivnosti-u-kyjevi-ne-vidbuvsya-zamist-nogovelylyudna-hoda-na-zahyst-simyi-i-tradycyiy>

the Day of Holodomor Victims Remembrance. Eventually, after numerous critical statements and public discussion, the organizers decided to postpone the festival events to later dates<sup>32</sup> However, the Kyiv Queer Talk scheduled on December 8, was disrupted by aggressive right-wing radical groups who clashed with the police guarding the event venue.<sup>33</sup>

Similarly, due to threats from right-wing radical groupings, the presentation of books on LGBTQ issues published by the publishing house Vydavnytsvo, which was supposed to take place on November 10 at the Kyiv bookstore Readeat, was canceled.<sup>34</sup>

The NGO Ukrainian LGBT Military for Equal Rights and individual military LGBTQ activists actively participated in advocacy campaigns to promote Bills 9103 and 5488, directly representing those who are defending Ukraine from Russian aggression. As for military service itself, they testified about a generally tolerant attitude from their fellow soldiers and command, but pointed to the presence of systemic discrimination against same-sex family partners by the state, which is especially painfully felt during wartime, as well as individual cases of harassment and even violence related to the homo / transphobia still widespread in Ukrainian society. In the summer of 2024, the Ukrainian LGBT Military for Equal Rights opened in Kyiv the first in Eastern Europe and the only one in Ukraine veteran hub for LGBTQ military personnel, where they can receive psychological and legal consultations, and other activities are taking place to support their mental and physical health.<sup>35</sup>

According to numerous testimonies of transgender persons, Ukrainian doctors have practically stopped making diagnoses of “transsexualism” and “gender dysphoria” which can be grounds for removal from military registration. Obviously, there is no official ban on this, but doctors are now

---

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/kyivpride/posts/pfbid02W2CSyUZTqxAhe8BfazxRtJcRTFsVdNytnNcEYFEn45mY8EB2sEGFPudCYJs5z7iCl>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.instagram.com/kyivpride/p/DDW8p1TIP1j>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/vydavnytstvo/posts/pfbid02ySvT1qcXsKaSwTqonBVc3ZkwXYAoeVf9MudU16NRKXuMwwcyAajPnfiG4h78KCzaI>

<sup>35</sup> <https://life.nv.ua/ukr/socium/viyskovi-lgbt-v-ukrajini-yak-i-de-pracyuye-hab-dlya-dopomogi-i-reabilitaciji-ta-yaki-problemi-dolayut-50446172.html>

afraid that law enforcement agencies may pay attention to their practice, suspecting them of facilitating the evasion of conscripts from military service. There are still no clear medical and psychological criteria for the suitability or unfitness for military service of persons who have been given the mentioned diagnoses (code F.64 according to the International Statistical Classification of Diseases of the 10th revision), so doctors bear full personal responsibility for their assessment of the condition of such persons. Thus, in fact, the official process of gender transition for trans\*women in Ukraine is currently suspended.

## 6. VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION AND OTHER VIOLATIONS OF LGBTQ PEOPLE’S RIGHTS<sup>36</sup>

In 2024, Nash Svit Center’s monitoring network documented 75 cases of actions based on homophobia / transphobia, discrimination and other violations of human rights on SOGI grounds in Ukraine. This is significantly more than in 2023 (56 cases). In total, 36 cases had signs of *a hate crime* and 22 — *hate incident*.<sup>37</sup> For the distribution of documented cases by region, please see Table 1.

*Table 1. Regional distribution of cases documented in 2024.*

<b>Region</b>	<b>Number</b>
Kyiv and oblast	29
Zhytomyr	8
Lutsk and Volynska oblast	5
Dnipro	5
Zakarpatska oblast	5
Kharkiv	5
Odesa	4
Lviv and oblast	3
Ternopil	2
Kherson oblast	2
Autonomous Republic of Crimea	1
Vinnitsia	1
Ivano-Frankivsk and oblast	1
Mykolaiv	1
Poltava	1
Cherkasy oblast	1
Chernivtsi	1

<sup>36</sup> In this section, the number of documented violations of LGBTQ people’s rights may apparently exceed the number of cases, because some cases involve several violations.

<sup>37</sup> Italicized terms are given according to the ODIHR/OSCE classification.

---

<b>Total:</b>	<b>75</b>
---------------	-----------

---

### Violations by the occupying authorities

One documented case includes application of the Russian discriminatory legislative norm regarding the so-called “ban on LGBT propaganda”: in March 2024, a 23-year-old male resident of occupied Yalta was fined 100,000 rubles for appearing in a nightclub in women's clothing.

Also during this period, a case of physical violence and threats of a sexual nature by the Russian military against a transgender woman was documented, which took place in May 2023 in the occupied Oleshki of Kherson oblast.

### Interaction with private persons

In 2024, 51 cases of actions based on homophobia / transphobia and hate speech by private individuals or groups of individuals were recorded in Ukraine. 33 of them can be characterized as *hate crimes*, and 17 as *hate incidents*. In 7 cases, manifestations of *hate speech* were documented.<sup>38</sup> The following types of violations were noted (please see Table 2):

*Table 2. Actions motivated by intolerance based on SOGI by private persons in 2024.*

<b>Types of violations</b>	<b>Number</b>
insults, humiliation of human dignity, threats	36
physical violence of varying severity	31
intrusion in private life	13
illegal collection, disclosure or threat of disclosure of confidential information	9
attacks on LGBTQ centers / events or activists	8
intentional destruction or damage to property	8
extortion and blackmail	6

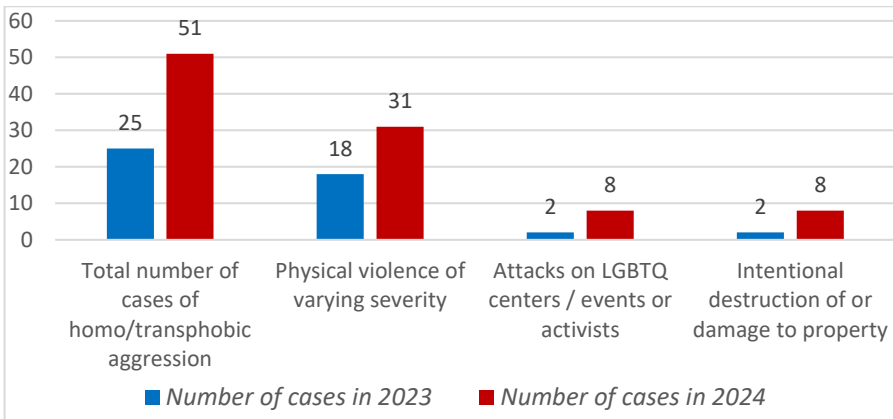
---

<sup>38</sup> Italicized terms are given according to the ODIHR/OSCE classification.



homo/transphobic inscriptions / calls (hate speech)	7
homophobia / transphobia in family	4
threats with weapons and/or their use	3
brigandage	1

In 2024, a significant increase in homophobic and transphobic aggression was observed: 51 cases compared to 25 in previous 2023 (please see chart below). In particular, this applies to such important indicators as physical violence and attacks on LGBTQ centers / events or activists. Also, it concerns the intentional destruction or damage to property suffered by various businesses due to their support for Pride Month, the Sunny Film Festival Bunny, and other LGBTQ events, as well as due to providing venues for them.

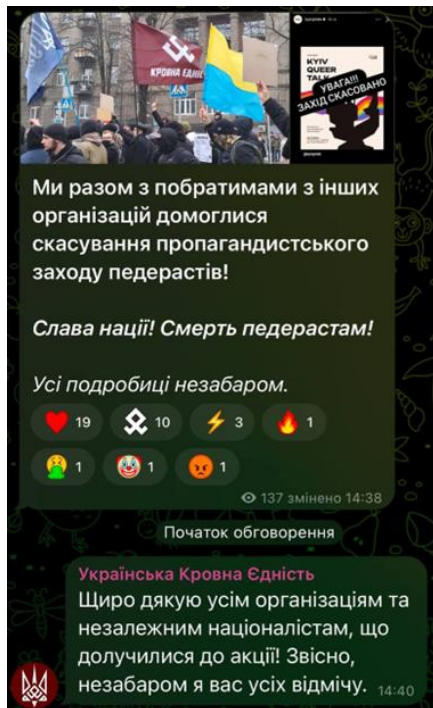


*For the first time in recent years, in 2024 the number of documented hate crimes based on SOGI in Ukraine increased compared to the previous year.*

In our opinion, such growth can be attributed, first of all, to the increase in public activity of both LGBTQ organizations / activists and various kinds of homo/transphobic groupings which keep on trying to disrupt any LGBTQ events.

In October 2024, the creative space “Na poshti” in Ternopil was attacked by unknown young men with covered faces. Twice they “hunted” for a rainbow flag that was hung in the premises, tore it down, and disappeared. The

second time, employees of the venue came up with the attackers and persuaded them to exchange the torn rainbow flag for a Ukrainian one.



*Screenshots from the websites of KyivPride and the far-right grouping Ukrainian Blood Unity regarding the attack on an LGBTQ event on 8.12.2024.*

On December 8, 2024, KyivPride was forced to cancel the event that had already begun and evacuate its participants due to the real danger to them from the crowd (about 100 persons) of aggressive right-wing radicals from the Ukrainian Blood Unity grouping and other hate groups, who physically attacked the police line maintaining public order at the scene of the conflict.

On November 30, the creative collective Aqualatex was forced to cancel a planned drag event due to a police warning about threats and danger from right-wing radicals.

*Case 2334*

In late April 2024, a transgender woman aged 27 in Lutsk was subjected to insults and physical violence because of her gender identity by two young men living in the neighborhood, whom she describes as “drug addicts.” They lured her out of her home, abused and beat her.

The victim filed a police report, after which she began receiving death threats from her attackers. The criminal case was opened under the article “minor bodily harm.” According to the victim, the police refused to investigate the transphobic motive of the crime, and the investigation was very slow despite the fact that the attackers were immediately identified. Nevertheless, a trial was held in November: one of the attackers was found guilty and ordered to compensate the victim for moral damage.

*Case 2326*

In April 2024, an asylum seeker aged 19, being in one of the temporary residence for foreigners in Volynska oblast, was repeatedly subjected to physical violence, bullying and extortion of money by another refugee because of his sexual orientation, which was previously known only to the administration of the facility. The victim reported, “I have been here for 3 months. I fled Russia precisely because I was also beaten there and threatened with death due to my orientation. I am afraid that he will beat me to death if I oppose him. He is in collusion with the guards and most of those who are here. I saw his subordinates handing bribes to the guards. I am afraid that if someone finds out that I reported this, they will simply kill me.”

**Relations with law enforcement agencies**

The interaction of the victims with law enforcement agencies was noted in 33 cases (calling the police, filing reports of violations, conducting investigative actions, crossing the border, etc.). 11 of them included violations by the police, and three cases — by officers of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine.

*Table 3. Violations on SOGI grounds in 2024 by the police and border guards.*

<b>Violated rights (by what actions)</b>	<b>Number</b>
effective means of legal protection (improper performance of rights protection functions, refusal to protect rights)	8
equality and non-discrimination (biased treatment, unlawful decisions / acts)	8
freedom and personal integrity (violation of procedural norms, abuse official authority, insults, humiliation of human dignity, threats)	5
respect for private life (intrusion into private life, illegal collection, disclosure or threat of disclosure of confidential information)	5

Almost all cases of violations by law enforcement agencies concerned the violation of the right to effective legal remedies, and first of all, the failure to take into account a homophobic or transphobic motive in committing crimes. Law enforcement officers qualified them mainly as infliction of light bodily harm without indicating the motive of intolerance. Two cases of prosecuting perpetrators taking into account motives of intolerance on SOGI grounds, which were noted in 2023 (under Articles 161 and 67 of the Criminal Code that we mentioned in last year's report), currently remain the only ones in the entire Ukrainian judicial practice.

In at least two cases in 2024, in which Nash Svit Center provides legal assistance to the victims, the police and prosecutors involved in the investigation ignored the precedents of last year's judgments of Ukrainian courts in similar cases, as well as the decision of the ECtHR in the case *Karter v. Ukraine* (April 2024), in which the court pointed to a violation of the European Convention on Human Rights in cases where law enforcement agencies refused to investigate homophobic / transphobic motives of the crime. Applications for proper reclassification of these cases from Article 125 of the Criminal Code (minor bodily injuries) to Article 161 (violation of equality of citizens) were rejected by the Prosecutor's Office of the Solomianskyi District of Kyiv City and the Bucha District Prosecutor's Office in Kyiv oblast without any reasonable arguments.

Meanwhile, several videos made by participants of the conflict as well as videos from the body cameras of police officers evidently demonstrate that the offenders were guided by a homophobic motive. Due to improper qualification of the incident, the initiator of the conflict managed to avoid responsibility because her blows on the victims allegedly were not serious enough to qualify her actions as infliction of minor injuries. The fact that she incited enmity and instigated to discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation remained unnoticed by law enforcement authorities, although such actions constitute a crime under Article 161 of the Criminal Code.

Two cases of violations by the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine concerned the ban on leaving the country of a transgender woman who had completed the gender transition process and received the relevant documents under a female name. However, border guards thought that she did not look feminine enough and her identity documents were allegedly forged. Although the police officers they summoned established the authenticity of the documents, the woman was refused permission to leave the country. Meanwhile, the border guards, unlike the police, stubbornly addressed the victim in the masculine gender and used the name she had before the gender transition. Moreover, a transphobic and offensive article was published on the State Border Guard Service website about how the border guards allegedly managed to prevent an attempt by a man in female guise to cross the border.<sup>39</sup> Monitoring of publications on the State Border Guard Service website for recent months revealed at least one other similar publication regarding another transgender woman.<sup>40</sup> Such cases may indicate that the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine unofficially bans leaving the country to transgender women who have officially completed the gender transition process and received the relevant documents.

#### *Case 2368*

On November 26, a trans\*woman was attacked by unknown armed men in Mykolaiv. When she tried to file a complaint with the Inhul District Police

---

<sup>39</sup> <https://dpsu.gov.ua/ua/news/45330-shob-viyihati-za-kordon-kiyanin-rozluchivsyia-prikinuvsyia-zhinkoyu-ta-prihopiv-u-podorozh-kolishnyu>

<sup>40</sup> <https://dpsu.gov.ua/ua/news/44443-na-kordoni-viyavili-osobu-yaka-nazvalasyia-zhinkoyu-a-torik-projshov-vlk-yak-cholovik>

Station, she was subjected to mockery and transphobic insults by law enforcement officers, and the complaint was not registered. After publicity in the media and the intervention of the Human Rights Department of the National Police, criminal proceedings were opened only on December 3 that lost time for an effective investigation. The case, as in many other homophobic and transphobic attacks, was opened under the article “minor bodily harm” that makes investigation of the motive of intolerance actually impossible.

#### *Case 2317*

On March 8, 2024, in one of the capital's squares, a gay man aged 24 was subjected to physical violence by a group of aggressive young men simply because he refused to answer their question about his attitude towards LGBTQ people.

However, according to a witness, the investigative and operational police group that arrived at the scene refused to stop the attackers, whom this witness pointed out, even to check their documents, motivating this by the fact that attackers outnumbered police officers. Because of this, the investigation had to establish their identities for several months. When this was done, it turned out that the attackers were students of the National Academy of Internal Affairs. After that, the investigation stalled altogether — the Public Prosecutor's Office of the Solomiansky District of Kyiv has not served notices of suspicions to these persons, and only responds with meaningless replies to inquiries and petitions from the victim's lawyer. The police investigation also refused to take into account the homophobic motive of this crime, limiting itself to the “standard” qualification of “minor bodily harm.”

### **Violations in the Armed Forces of Ukraine (military offenses)**

In 2023, 4 cases of human rights violations on SOGI grounds were documented in the Armed Forces of Ukraine (please see Table 4).

*Table 4. Violations on SOGI grounds in 2024 in the Armed Forces of Ukraine.*

<b>Type of illegal actions</b>	<b>Number</b>
biased treatment (discrimination)	4

insults, humiliation of human dignity, threats	3
intrusion in private life	2
robbery	1
sexual violence	1
illegal collection, disclosure or threat of disclosure of confidential information	1
demotion or denial of promotion	1
intentional destruction of or damage to property	1
physical violence of varying severity	1

### *Case 2373*

In early December in Lutsk, a transgender woman and her father were attacked by officers of the local Territorial Recruitment Center right on the street. A car stopped next to them, from which 4 burly men in military uniforms jumped out and began to grab the victim's father with the aim of bringing him to the TRC. The victim stood up for her father, asking them to let him go as he had recently suffered a stroke. Then the military's attention switched to her — suspecting that she was not a woman, they rudely demanded to check her documents which turned out to be male. After that, using transphobic insults (“creature” etc.), they tried to grab her, but thanks to her father, she managed to escape. After her, she heard threats to kill her. The police were not present at the scene (only the police have the right to check a person’s document).

### *Case 2369*

On November 18, 2024, military serviceman Oleksandr was standing near the building of a military hospital in Kharkiv, where he was undergoing a medical examination, and talking on the phone. Suddenly, another serviceman approached him, tore off the LGBT military chevron from Oleksandr's uniform with the words “You will not spread your pederasty here,” threw the chevron into the trash can, and left.

## Employment

In this area, 5 cases of labor rights violations based on SOGI were recorded (please see Table 5):

*Table 5. Violations on SOGI grounds in 2024 in employment.*

<b>Violated rights (by what actions)</b>	<b>Number</b>
equality and non-discrimination (inducing voluntary dismissal, worsening working conditions, administrative inaction, non-payment of wages, illegal dismissal, sexual harassment, biased treatment)	5
respect for private life (intrusion in private life)	3

Two of these cases had signs of a hate incident (insults, humiliation of human dignity, threats), and one had signs of a hate crime (physical violence).

### *Case 2378*

In November 2024, a 26-year-old warehouse worker in Zhytomyr experiences physical aggression by his boss as well as homophobic insults and threats (“What are you, a faggot? They kill those in our people”) after the boss accidentally found out about the victim’s homosexual orientation. After that, the boss simply kicked him out. The next day, the victim and his friend came to work to pick up his things and ask for a half-month’s paycheck, to which the boss rudely ordered them to leave and refused to pay anything, saying “I won’t pay faggots anything; go away or everyone will find out about you and your sexual perversions.”

### *Case 2222*

In April 2024, a transgender woman aged 46, who worked as a parking attendant at a parking lot in the city of Dnipro, was forced to resign under prolonged pressure from her immediate superior. She was repeatedly subjected to transphobic insults and unfounded criticism from him, which served as a pretext for financial deductions from her already low salary. Complaints to the senior management led to nothing.



## **Education**

Violations in this area were recorded in two cases. One case involved underestimating grades and biased attitude towards a female student by teachers. The other involved a teacher being forced to resign at his own request, intrusion in his private life, and disclosure of confidential information by the director of an educational institution.

## **Access to goods and services**

In this area, 7 cases of discrimination based on SOGI were documented, one of which also had signs of a hate incident.

### *Case 2344*

On June 9, 2024, after a KyivPride party, two young men were returning home in a Bolt taxi. “What’s going on there? Why are there so many police?” the taxi driver asked them. The guys replied that a queer festival was taking place there. After that, the driver started saying that he didn’t support it, that he supported Russia in its policy towards gays, that he himself lived with a woman and had children, turned the car around, took the guys to the place where he picked them up, and, after dropping off the victims, drove away. The police only mocked the victims and refused to document the incident.

The victims contacted a Bolt taxi service operator, who promised to conduct an internal investigation. The company then assured the victims that the driver would no longer be serving them. It is unknown whether they actually took any action against the driver.

### *Case 2358*

In August 2024, a lesbian couple was denied to rent an apartment in Kyiv by its landlord after the girls revealed that they were a couple. The owner demanded that they leave the apartment, saying, “I don’t need pervert orgies here.” She agreed to return the rent only after the victims warned her that they would contact law enforcement and the tax office.

## **7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The war with Russia and the acquisition of candidate status in the European Union were the most important factors determining the situation of the LGBTQ community in Ukraine in 2024.

Having created obvious challenges to the very existence of the Ukrainian state, nation, and LGBTQ community, the war with the main provider of homo/transphobia in the world has simultaneously forced Ukrainian society to change its previously traditionally negative attitude towards LGBTQ people that is confirmed by all sociological surveys over the past two years. Even the leading Ukrainian churches, irreconcilably hostile to LGBTQ people, finding themselves in an extremely uncomfortable position where they cannot openly show solidarity with Russian propaganda, have almost stopped spreading homo/transphobic statements and appeals.

The beginning of the EU accession process has demonstrated that the Ukrainian government understands and plans to take all the necessary steps to this end, which are dictated by the requirements of European legislation and the governing bodies of the European Union, including in protecting the rights of LGBTQ people and implementing the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights. However, the solution to these problems largely depends on the adoption of relevant laws, and the vast majority of the current Verkhovna Rada members not want to deal with this. As historical experience shows, the Office of the President of Ukraine is nevertheless able to convince them to support such decisions if this is justified by direct demands from European partners.

One of the two most important bills of this kind is the amendments to the criminal and anti-discrimination legislation which directly include sexual orientation and gender identity as grounds protected from discrimination, hate crimes and hate speech (Bill 5488). This is a governmental document that has been awaiting consideration by parliament for the third year and whose adoption looks realistic enough. Its relevance is underlined by the fact that in 2024, for the first time in the last four years, the number of attacks on LGBTQ people and other violations of their rights in Ukraine began to increase.

The second most important legislative step for the Ukrainian LGBTQ community is the introduction of a registered partnership in our country, available to same-sex couples, which would provide them with basic marital rights and obligations. The homophobic composition of the relevant committee of the Verkhovna Rada effectively blocked the consideration of the relevant Bill 9103, but its initiators registered an alternative Bill 12252, which will be considered by another relevant committee and thus has a chance of being considered by the entire parliament.

In order to eliminate the legal and social inequality of LGBTQ people in Ukraine, solve their everyday problems, modernize our society and successfully advance Ukraine on the path to European integration, Nash Svit Center recommends:

1. **The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine** is recommended to eliminate all provisions in Ukrainian legislation that lead to discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity — in particular, in articles 74 of the Family Code of Ukraine “The right to property of a woman and a man who live as family but are not in marriage between themselves or in any other marriage” and 91 “The right to maintenance of a woman and a man who are not married to each other.” Same-sex couples in Ukraine should be given the opportunity to register their partnership that would provides them with basic marital rights and obligations.

When adopting new laws, anti-discrimination articles in their composition should directly and openly prohibit discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. Laws and regulations aimed at protecting family and children should protect all families without discrimination — in particular, same-sex married couples and children raised in such families.

Characteristics of sexual orientation and gender identity must be explicitly included in the list of protected grounds in the Law of Ukraine “On principles of prevention and counteraction of discrimination in Ukraine” (Clause 2 of Part One of Article 1). In the Criminal Code of Ukraine, motives of intolerance on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity must be indicated as aggravating circumstances when

committing crimes, and responsibility for inciting enmity based on these characteristics must be established.

2. **The President and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, as well as the Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights**, are recommended to develop and implement state policies to overcome inequality, discrimination, promote tolerance and mutual respect in society, always explicitly mentioning sexual orientation and gender identity as protected characteristics and LGBTQ people as a vulnerable group.
3. **The Ministry of Justice of Ukraine** is recommended to ensure support in the Verkhovna Rada of Bill 12252 on the legalization of registered civil partnerships for same-sex couples in Ukraine, clarifying the need for its adoption in accordance with Ukraine's international obligations and within the framework of acquiring EU membership.

4. **The Ministry of Health of Ukraine** is recommended:

To adopt changes to the order of the Ministry of Health No. 479 dated 20.08.2008 "On approval of the List of diseases in the presence of which a person may not be an adoptive parent," removing from this list the code F64 (Clause 9 "Personality and behavior disorders in adulthood").

To monitor the implementation and provision of a new procedure for providing medical assistance to persons who need a sex change (correction); to continue the development and adoption of changes to this procedure in cooperation with activists of the transgender community.

5. **The Ministry of Education and Science** is recommended to include the topics of sexual orientation and gender identity in the school curriculum and programs of pedagogical universities and professional development courses for teaching staff, to involve LGBTQ and other public organizations in the development and implementation of such programs.

6. **The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine** is recommended:

To regularly conduct educational activities with the staff on the formation of tolerant attitude and the inadmissibility of human rights

violations regarding LGBTQ people, as well as carefully and impartially investigate cases of violations of LGBTQ people's rights by the police and National Guard personnel, and bring the perpetrators to responsibility.

To provide support for consideration of Bill 5488 in the Verkhovna Rada.

7. **The Ministry of Defense of Ukraine** is recommended:

If possible, to conduct educational activities with the personnel on the formation of a tolerant attitude and the inadmissibility of human rights violations regarding LGBTQ people, as well as thoroughly and impartially investigate cases of homo / transphobic behavior on the part of military personnel and bring the perpetrators to responsibility.

To make changes to the Schedule of diseases, conditions and physical disabilities that determine the degree of fitness for military service, allowing service for persons diagnosed with transsexualism and gender dysphoria in the case of a positive conclusion of a military medical expertise.

8. **State bodies, local self-government and their representatives** are recommended:

In their activities to be guided by the principle enshrined in Article 35 of the Constitution of Ukraine, which states that "the church and religious organizations in Ukraine are separate from the state, and the school is separate from the church" as well as that "no religion may be recognized by the state as obligatory."

To take into account and explain to the public that the concept of "family" according to the Family Code of Ukraine is not limited to officially registered spouses, and the protection of family interests extends to all forms of family relations.

To prevent and condemn public manifestations of homophobia / transphobia, to adhere to the principles of respect, equality and non-discrimination for all social groups.

When considering appeals and petitions, to be guided by the requirements of Ukrainian legislation on the prohibition of calls for discrimination and the restriction of constitutional rights and freedoms.

## **8. METHODOLOGY AND AUTHORS OF THE REPORT**

The monitoring network of Nash Svit Center and publicly accessible mass media, especially electronic ones, were the main sources of information for this report. Our results cannot be considered statistically representative in terms of quantitative sociological data, but we state that they quite adequately reflect the current situation for LGBTQ people in Ukraine, at least from the viewpoint of the Ukrainian LGBTQ community. State institutions, except for the Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, practically neither monitor themselves nor collect information on issues related to the observance of the rights and interests of this social group in Ukraine, therefore, more trustworthy statistics and analysis on these issues, other than those published by the Ukrainian LGBTQ and human rights organizations and individual activists, simply do not exist.

The guarantee of truthfulness and representativeness of our information is the long-term experience of our public work with the Ukrainian LGBTQ community, cooperation with leading domestic and international human rights organizations, and our own life experience as ordinary Ukrainian LGBTQ citizens — we write about what we feel and see around us in everyday life.

When documenting human rights violations, we take into account only those cases in which a sufficient volume of information was collected to clarify all the circumstances of the incident. The main condition is the presence of evidence of the commission of an offense based on the motives of intolerance on the grounds of SOGI, and not simply against LGBTQ people or organizations. We do not document minor incidents where only insults or threats were recorded, particularly on the Internet, unless they were related to other, more serious, violations. Members of our monitoring network are trained in the methodology of selection and collection of information in accordance with ODIHR/OSCE standards.

Our activities are aimed at both the LGBTQ community and Ukrainian society as a whole. We are now focusing our efforts on:

- Monitoring violations of LGBTQ people's rights.
- Legal assistance and counseling for victims of discrimination and hate crimes on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity.

- Legal education for the LGBTQ community.
- Advocacy for the protection of equal rights for LGBTQ people at the legislative and political levels.
- Strategic litigation.

Organization Activity Report 2023: <https://gay.org.ua/documents/Report-Nash-Svit-2023-ENG.pdf>

You can support Nash Svit's activities at <https://gay.org.ua/en/donation/>