

## About LGBT legislation in Russia.

Opponents of the Law banning the “propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations to minors” distort its essence deliberately. The Russian Constitution prohibits any forms of discriminations, including the discrimination of sexual minorities.

Under Article 19 of the Russian Constitution, the State shall guarantee the equality of rights and freedoms of all the citizens, regardless of sex, race, nationality, language, origin, property and official status, place of residence, religion, convictions, membership of public associations, and also of other circumstances. All forms of limitations of human rights on social, racial, national, linguistic or religious grounds shall be banned.

The provisions of the newly adopted law are consistent with the Russian Constitution taking into account the fact that in 2010 the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation ruled that family, motherhood and childhood in the traditional sense are the basic values that lead to the preservation and development of the multinational Russia.

The Russian legislation prohibits imposing non-traditional sexual patterns on minors in an aggressive way. Violation of the new law provisions implies administrative rather than criminal responsibility. Russian law enforcement agencies shall penalize only those, who instigate minors to enter into non-traditional sexual relations.

Unlike the USA, Russia is a party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and commits to protect children from the factors that can negatively affect their physical, intellectual, mental, spiritual and moral growth and development. Our legislation encourages elaboration of appropriate guidelines for protection of a child from information and materials injurious to his or her well-being.

As a matter of fact, homosexuality has been legal in Russia since 1993 (10 years before it became legal in the United States). At the same time according to the St. Paul's Foundation for International Reconciliation, in 78-plus countries there are still criminal prosecution (in some cases – capital punishment) for sexual activity by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex people (although for some reason these countries' legislation doesn't seem to bother American LGBT-activists).

LGBT-individuals in Russia are guaranteed the equality of rights and freedoms like any other person and citizen. There are several non-governmental organizations that represent LGBT interests. For instance, "Federation of LGBT-sport" unites more than thirty sport clubs nationwide. The Russian non-traditional orientation athletes were second representation and medals-wise at the Eurogames in Budapest in 2012.

Important to mention that the Olympic movement has nothing to do with homosexuality propaganda. According to the Olympic Charter, it relies on respect for universal basic ethical principles. Russian officials repeatedly noted that our country is ready to welcome all athletes and guests to forthcoming Olympic and Paralympic Games in Sochi regardless of their sexual orientation. At the same time all foreign guest must adhere to the respect for basic Olympic principle – respect for the host's laws.