

URGENT ACTION

VIOLENT DISRUPTION THREATENS EQUALITY FESTIVAL

The Ukrainian Police in the western Ukrainian town of Chernivtsi have advised the organizers of the Equality Festival to move it away from the city centre to an undisclosed location because far-right groups have threatened the event and are set on disrupting it. The police also claim that they are unable to offer a sufficient number of officers to protect the festival despite reports that members of different far-right groups from across Ukraine are planning to travel to Chernivtsi for the festival.

On 14 May, the Head of the Preventive Activities Department of Chernivtsi Police, Svyatoslav Kishlyar, told the organizers of the **Equality Festival** that he had spoken with Ihor Luchak, a representative of the National Corps right-wing group, who had told him the "Festival of Equality will not happen in Chernivtsi. They are going to disrupt it".

Furthermore, the Police advised the organizers to move the festival to an undisclosed location away from the city centre. They also told the organisers that they cannot send more than 10 police officers to ensure security at the festival because there would be another musical festival taking place in the city at the same time.

The organizers from the LGBTI NGO Insight have not yet announced whether they will move the location of the festival, scheduled to take place on 19 May, or cancel it completely, but have decided to raise awareness by publicizing their conversation with the authorities. Insight has also been informed that members of different far-right groups are planning to travel to Chernivtsi specifically with the aim of disrupting their festival.

The Ukrainian authorities have an obligation under international human rights law to respect and protect the rights to freedom of association and peaceful assembly and freedom of expression for all in Ukraine, without discrimination on any grounds, including ethnicity, disability, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation.

Please write immediately in Ukrainian or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to guarantee the freedom of assembly of the Equality Festival, in particular by taking sufficient measures to protect public safety and order;
- Demanding an effective investigation into all instances of threats and harassment against members of the LGBT community in Chernivtsi.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 27 JUNE 2018 TO:

Head of National Police for Chernivtsi

Region

Serhey Piligrim

vul. Holovna 24

58000

Chernivtsi

Ukraine

E-mail: gupolice@cv.npu.gov.ua

Salutation: Dear Head of Department

Head of City Council

Oleksiy Kasparuk

Tsentralna Ploscha 1

58002

Chernivtsi

Ukraine

Fax: +380 (0372) 55 35 39

Email: document@rada.cv.ua

Salutation: Dear Head of City Council

And copies to:

Head of Regional State Administration

Oleksandr Fischuk

vul. Hruschevskogo 2

58010

Chernivtsi

Ukraine

Fax: +380 (0372) 55 37 76

Email: oda@bukoda.gov.ua

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HER EXCELLENCY Ms Natalia Galibarenko
Embassy of Ukraine, 60 Holland Park W11 3SJ, 020 7727 6312, Fax 020 7792 1708, emb_gb@mfa.gov.ua
www.ukremb.org.uk Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The threats against the Equality Festival in Chernivtsi are the latest incident in a wave of rising violent actions by far-right groups in Ukraine against people who they perceive as enemies due to their sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, political or other views. Equality Festival is devoted to addressing discrimination based on the grounds of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Most recently, a planned discussion about LGBTI rights in Russia, organized by Amnesty International Ukraine, was disrupted by members of far-right groups from Kyiv on 10 May. More than 20 far-right group members arrived and threatened the participants with violence unless they left. An owner of the venue joined their calls and told the organizers to cancel the event and vacate the premises.

In recent months in Ukraine, there have been at least 30 attacks by members of far-right groups on women's human rights defenders, LGBTI and left wing activists and Roma families. In most cases, the perpetrators act openly and with near-total impunity, often boasting about the incidents on social media.