

# UKRAINE

## VITALINA KOVAL

### LGBTI activist attacked by the far right

Vitalina Koval is a high-profile member of Ukraine's LGBTI community. She co-founded a community centre that provides a rare safe space for LGBTI people, and fearlessly speaks out against hate. But Ukraine has seen a surge of far-right violence, and Vitalina has been repeatedly threatened and attacked.

In March 2017, Vitalina was attacked by young men during an International Women's Day march. She filed a complaint with the police, but they never got back to her. Vitalina refused to be silenced and organised a peaceful demonstration for women's and LGBTI rights to mark International Women's Day in 2018. The police said they would provide protection, but at the end of the march members of a far-right group shouted insults and threw red paint over Vitalina, chemically burning her eyes.

Her attackers were detained briefly but released within hours. Vitalina has since received further threats, and two fellow activists say they were beaten up.



#### SEND A MESSAGE OF SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY

Vitalina Koval  
c/o Amnesty International Ukraine  
POB 40  
04050  
Kyiv  
Ukraine  
 @VitalinaKovalUA

**Language** Ukrainian, Russian and English

#### Suggested message

We support you Vitalina!

A Ukrainian translation is available at [amnesty.org.uk/write](http://amnesty.org.uk/write)

Vitalina would be happy to receive homemade artworks and accessories featuring LGBTI rainbow symbols.

#### CAN I

- Send a religious card or message? **Yes**
- Send an Amnesty card or mention Amnesty? **Yes**
- Include my name and address? **Yes**

#### SEND AN APPEAL LETTER

Urge Minister of Interior Arsen Avakov to deliver justice to Vitalina and protect LGBTI activists from future attacks.

**Write to** Minister of Interior Arsen Avakov  
vul. Akademika Bohomoletsia, 10  
01601 Kyiv  
Ukraine

**Salutation** Dear Minister

**In your letter urge him to**

- Bring Vitalina Koval's attackers to justice in a fair trial, taking the discriminatory motive for the attack into account
- Acknowledge the growing problem of violence by far-right groups that advocate hatred
- Protect LGBTI activists from attack.

**'There are many people in the LGBTI community in Ukraine who are afraid. I wish that they weren't feeling under direct threat.'** Vitalina Koval

# WRITE FOR RIGHTS

# 2018



**EVERY MESSAGE COUNTS** Together we can persuade the government to protect Vitalina

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