

Protesting Russian Anti-Gay Law, German Drag Queen Sews Mouth Shut - Report

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A Berlin-based drag queen has sewed her mouth shut to protest Russia's recent anti-gay laws and documented her painful ordeal in a short video, German and international media reported.

Barbie Breakout, a pink-haired and tattooed DJ and author of an autobiography titled "Tragic, But Cool," sealed her mouth with a needle and thread in less than a minute as blood was flowing down her chin and her eyes were filling with tears, as seen in the [video](#) posted on YouTube Wednesday.

Breakout told German newspaper Die Welt on Thursday that she did it to protest the Kremlin's recent law banning the promotion of "non-traditional sexual relations" among minors that was signed into law by President Vladimir Putin in June.

"The pain I felt inside when I had to see in the media what is happening in Russia was greater than the physical pain of the needle," the Pink News website translated her quote to Die Welt. "My partner held the camera while I did it. But he couldn't look."

While the law's proponents in Russia argue it is aimed at protecting children from harmful influences, critics allege that the move is part of a broader crackdown on Russia's gay community.

The legislation levies fines for gay rallies and dissemination information about LGBT issues from 800,000 rubles (\$24,000) to 1 million rubles for legal entities, from 4,000 rubles to 5,000 rubles for individuals and from 40,000 rubles to 50,000 rubles for officials.

Legal entities may also be suspended for 90 days for the promotion of "non-traditional sexual relations" toward children.

Russia has come under international criticism, including from the European Court of Human Rights, for its treatment of gay people.

The anti-gay bill was adopted 20 years after homosexuality was decriminalized in Russia. A Stalin-era law punished homosexuality with up to five years in jail.

Most of the former Soviet republics have also decriminalized homosexuality, and same-sex love remains a crime only in authoritarian Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

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