

First Peaceful Gay Pride Parade Held in St. Petersburg

July 27, 2014

The  Moscow Times

For the first time, a gay pride event went off without a violent hitch in Russia, Radio Liberty reported Sunday.

Some two dozen LGBT activists rallied on Saturday on the Field of Mars square in downtown St. Petersburg, the report said.

Poor attendance has failed to stop attacks in the past: Four similar events held in the city in previous years, most of them unsanctioned, all saw violence by nationalists and religious conservatives.

"The Nazis are busy with Donbass," unnamed event-goers were cited as saying by Radio Liberty. A pro-Russian insurgency ongoing in the Donbass region in eastern Ukraine has been the focus of Russian politics in recent months.

Russian LGBT activists have been campaigning to hold a gay pride parade since 2006, but most requests have been rejected, and in 2013, Russia banned "homosexual propaganda"

targeting minors.

However, an LGBT rally had been sanctioned last year for the first time in Russia in the newly created free-speech zone at the Field of Mars.

See also:

[Russia's 'Gay Propaganda' Law One Year On](#)

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