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European Court Rules in Favor of Russians Denied Right to Gay Pride Events

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A European human rights court has ruled that Russian courts violated the freedom of assembly rights of sexual minorities by systematically rejecting gay pride events applications.

Russian courts have in the past decade either banned gay pride parades outright or backtracked on earlier promises to allow them, often citing a 2013 law banning "homosexual propaganda" among minors. Earlier this year, seven activists filed 51 applications with the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), alleging discrimination and a violation of their freedom of association.

Related article: Gay Pride Parade in Russian Village of 7 Residents Gets Canceled

In its ruling on Tuesday, the ECHR said that "the ban on holding LGBT public assemblies imposed by the domestic authorities did not correspond to a pressing social need and was thus not necessary in a democratic society."

The court said that the ruling itself constituted "sufficient just satisfaction" and dismissed the applicants' claims for compensation ranging from 5,000 euros ($5,600) to 500,000 euros ($566,000).

Russian media described the ECHR proceeding as the court's "single biggest case to date."

In 2013, Russia introduced a nationwide law banning the "promotion of non-traditional relationships to children." The ECHR and the UN Human Rights Committee have criticized the law as discriminatory.

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