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Russian Police Investigate Children's Art Exhibit for 'Gay Propaganda'

November 29, 2018

Pixabay

Russian police have reportedly seized over a dozen children's drawings from a school art exhibition to investigate possible violations of the country's ban on gay propaganda after parents complained that they depicted same-sex couples.

Russia outlawed "homosexual propaganda" among minors in 2013, a move that allowed courts to ban gay pride events and was followed by a surge in anti-LGBT sentiment in polls.

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

Earlier this month, schoolchildren in Russia's fourth-largest city of Yekaterinburg submitted drawings for an art contest marking the UN's international day of tolerance, education officials said.

Yekaterinburg police said they had seized 17 drawings from the competition to investigate complaints that they contain gay propaganda, Interfax reported Thursday.

Yekaterinburg-based news website Ura.ru had claimed Thursday that the the fifth- to 11th-graders had portrayed gay couples in their drawings. One drawing attracted attention for depicting the silhouettes of a female couple, a male couple and a mixed couple.

Embed:

> В Екатеринбурге прокуратура изъяла детские рисунки со школьного конкурса «Толерантный мир». Угадайте, что им не понравилось?
>
> Фото: https://t.co/fo3gFI5hBUhttps://t.co/AFxGzjPaNW pic.twitter.com/9J1m8h7Aqw
>
> — RTVI (@RTVi) 29 ноября 2018 г.

“Around 10 other posters hang next to this picture showing a rainbow (a symbol of the sexual minority movement), planets and people of different nationalities,” the outlet wrote. “Another work contains the motto ‘We’re for peace! We’re for tolerance!’”

The inspection was initiated following an outcry among the students’ parents, Sverdlovsk regional police spokesman Valery Gorelykh told the RBC news website on Friday.

“We’re now checking if this event was really dedicated to the day of tolerance,” he said.

“Someone saw propaganda of sexual minorities in [the paintings], which of course wasn’t there,” an unnamed regional education department spokesperson was quoted by RBC as saying.

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