

Russian LGBT Family Featured in Ad Flees Country Over Death Threats

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yumalevel / instagram

A Russian same-sex family who received death threats after their appearance in an organic retailer's since-deleted promotional material [said](#) they have fled the country.

The family and Russia's VkusVill grocery chain were last month targeted in what appeared to be a coordinated [hate campaign](#) after a nationalist and homophobic group spread the ad on social media.

Yuma, the family's matriarch, posted a photo to Instagram showing the four-member family surrounded by palm trees and waving an LGBT flag on Sunday.

"We're safe, we're resting. We don't have to hide our happiness to be a family," Yuma wrote. "It was a difficult ordeal for all of us; we're all in an uneasy psychological state."

Her daughter Mila [geotagged](#) her Monday Instagram post as "Barcelona" and said she was seeking help with employment after leaving Russia on short notice.

“Sadly, we were left without a job and without a home because of this difficult situation with VkusVill,” she wrote.

Related article: [Moscow Coffee Co-op Rallies Around LGBTQ+ Community](#)

The retailer pulled its ad, part of a series spotlighting health-conscious regular customers, less than a week after publishing it. VkusVill also issued an apology for “hurting the feelings of a large number of our customers, employees, partners and suppliers” in a nod to Russia’s socially conservative majority — a move that in turn sparked cries of hypocrisy from liberal Russians.

Aside from the death threats, the “18+”-marked ad risked running afoul of Russia’s law against “gay propaganda toward minors,” which effectively bans displays of LGBT-related content.

The 2013 law, as well as last year’s constitutional amendments that define marriage as a heterosexual institution, have been the subject of criticism from rights activists and Western countries.

Though Russians’ attitudes toward LGBT people have improved somewhat over the past decade and a half, recent polling still shows three-quarters of Russians [opposing gay marriage](#).

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