

# In First, Russia Identifies Member of Banned ‘International LGBT Movement’

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Vadim Vaganov. **Social media**

Russian authorities have identified someone as a member of the “international LGBT movement” for the first time since the country’s Supreme Court designated the non-existent organization as “extremist,” the legal rights group Perviy Otdel [said](#) Monday.

When Russia’s Supreme Court banned the “international LGBT movement” in November 2023, it claimed the so-called organization had 281 members, though it did not identify any of them by name at the time.

According to Perviy Otdel, Russia’s Justice Ministry identified LGBTQ+ journalist Vadim Vaganov as an “activist” from the “international LGBT movement” during a court appeal over his designation as a “foreign agent.”

“The Justice Ministry for the first time named a specific person as an activist of the non-existent ‘international LGBT public movement,’” Perviy Otdel said, citing Vaganov’s lawyer.

Being convicted of involvement in an “extremist” organization is punishable by up to six years in prison.

Vaganov publicly [came out](#) around the time President Vladimir Putin expanded Russia’s 2013 “gay propaganda” law to ban all public mentions of LGBTQ+ identities and lifestyles. The law, now applicable to all age groups, carries penalties including fines and up to 15 days in jail.

According to Novaya Gazeta Europe, the Justice Ministry [described](#) Vaganov as an LGBTQ+ “activist” who had campaigned for political prisoners, unsuccessfully ran for local office with the liberal Yabloko party and currently works for the news outlet Parni Plyus.

Since the “gay propaganda” was passed in 2013, LGBTQ+ rights in Russia have been steadily eroded and incidents of anti-LGBTQ+ violence have increased.

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