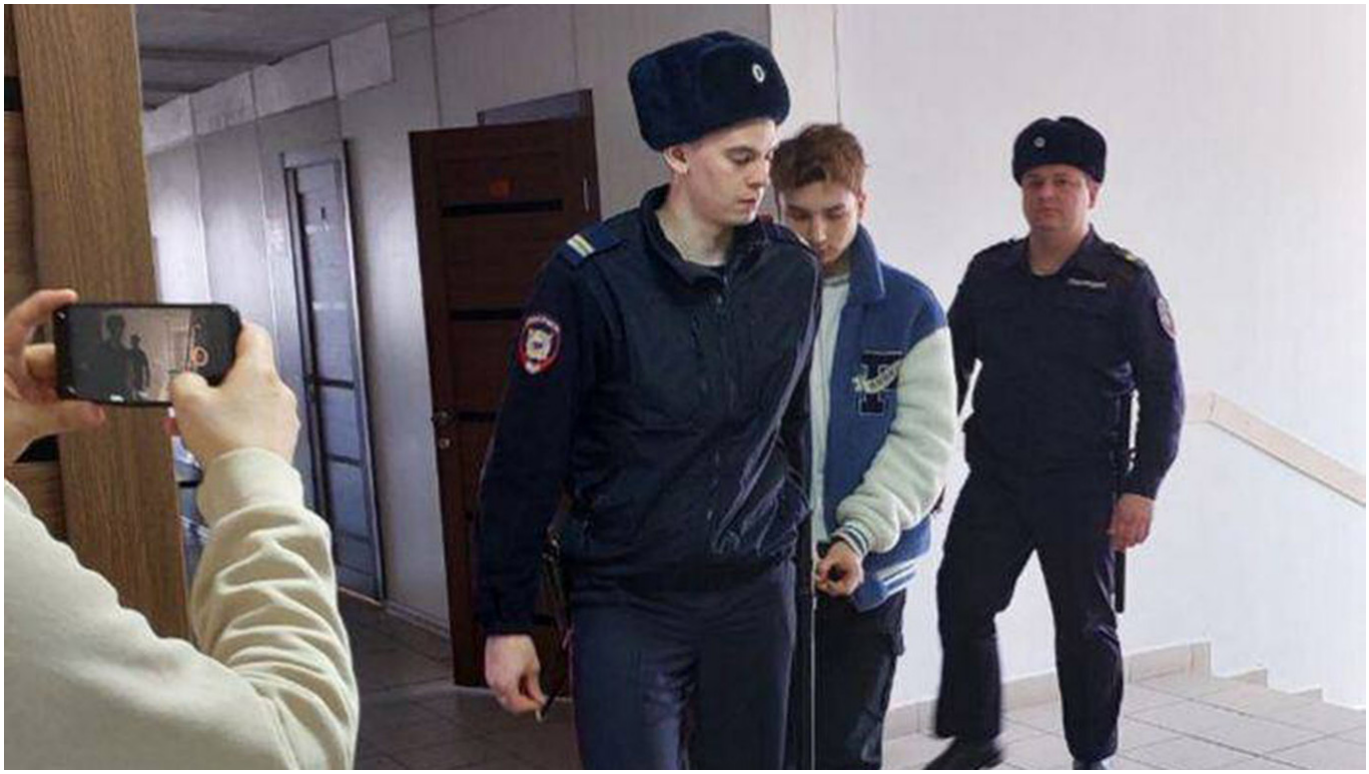
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Orenburg Court Jails 3 Bar Workers for LGBTQ+ 'Extremism'

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Alexander Klimov, Art Director of the Orenburg bar Pose. **Social media**

A court in the Orenburg region on Monday handed down prison sentences to a bar owner and two of his employees in Russia's first criminal case targeting people accused of belonging to what authorities call the "international LGBT movement."

The trio was arrested on LGBTQ+ "extremism" charges in March 2024, representing the first instance of criminal charges being pressed in connection with the Russian Supreme Court's designation of the non-existent "LGBT movement" as "extremist" the year before.

Bar owner Vyacheslav Khasanov received a seven-year sentence, according to Ostorozhno Novosti. Manager Diana Kamilyanova was sentenced to six years and three months, while art director Alexander Klimov received two years and three months.

All three were accused of organizing events that demonstrated "affiliation with individuals of unconventional sexual orientation under the guise of running a nightlife venue." According to the exiled news outlet Mediazona, the bar hosted drag shows.

The trio denied the charges during the court proceedings, which were held behind closed doors.

While the case represents the first instance of criminal charges being brought under the LGBTQ+ "extremism" designation, Russia's first actual prison sentence under the ban was issued separately in January 2025 in the Kemerovo region.

The Orenburg court said Monday that its verdict has not yet taken effect and remains subject to appeal.

In addition to the prison terms, the court seized 1 million rubles ($12,800) in revenue from Khasanov. It also barred all three defendants from working in the entertainment and hospitality industries for two to three years following their release.

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