



Regional Dialogue on LGBTI
“UTILIZING EU ACCESSION IN ADVOCATING LGBTI RIGHTS AND EQUALITY”
Saturday, 9 June 2018, 09:30 - 13:00, Sofia

PROGRAMME

Moderators: Lilly Dragoeva and Antonio Mihajlov

09:30 - 10:00 Registration of participants

10:00 - 10:30 Media statements and welcome remarks by the hosts

10:30 - 11:30 Panel discussion “Advocating for LGBTI Rights and Equality in Europe - Challenges, Priorities and Needs”

Iratxe García Pérez - Member of the European Parliament, Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, Member of the Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) Committee at the European Parliament (TBC)

Zita Gurmai - Member of the Parliament of Hungary, Socialist Party, President of PES Women (TBC)

Peđa Grbin - Member of the Parliament of Croatia, Social Democratic Party (TBC)

Sedef Çakmak - President, Rainbow Rose, Republican People's Party, Turkey

Lars Henriksen - Chairperson, Copenhagen Pride, Denmark

Q&A session

11:30 - 11:45 Coffee break

11:45 - 12:45 Panel discussion “Safeguarding LGBTI Rights in the Balkans - Lessons Learnt”

Rudina Hajdari - Member of the Parliament of Albania, Democratic Party of Albania

Payle Bogoevski - Member of the Parliament of FYR Macedonia, Coalition led by the Social-Democratic Union of Macedonia

Maja Videnović - Member of the Parliament of Serbia, Democratic Party

Goran Miletić - Chairperson, Belgrade Pride, Serbia (TBC)

Q&A session

12:45 - 13:00 Closing remarks by Lilly Dragoeva and Antonio Mihajlov

Sofia Pride 2018: Overview



Photos: Anastas Tarpanov

Table of Contents

This year's Organization	3
Organizing Committee.....	3
What was New in 2018.....	4
Financial support	9
Partners of Sofia Pride 2018.....	10
International Partners	10
Media Partners.....	10
In Support of Sofia Pride	10
Statement of Support.....	10
Video messages.....	10
Councillor Warren Morgan, Leader of Brighton & Hove City Council in the United Kingdom	11
Mr Erlend Horn, the Deputy Mayor for Social Affairs, Inclusion & Diversity, Bergen, Norway.....	11
United Societies of Balkans – Bulgaria	11
Harvard Club of Bulgaria	11
Incidents & Complications.....	11
Links to Pictures.....	12
Sofia Pride.....	12
Sofia Pride Arts	12
Sofia Pride Film Fest	12
Sofia Pride Sports	12
Discussion Round FNF: Different people, same rights.....	12
Some Media Clippings	12
Sofia Pride Organizing Committee in the Media.....	12
EN	12
Analyses.....	13
Other	13

This year's Organization

Organizing Committee

The Sofia Pride informal organizing committee consists of representatives of the LGBTI organizations Bilitis Resource Center Foundation, Youth Organization LGBT Deystvie, GLAS Foundation, the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee and the non-formal group Queer Squad.

For the first time this year the organizing committee elected a coordinator – Liliya Dragoeva, who was in charge of coordinating the preparation of activities, contact officials and seek political support, fundraise, represent officially the organizing committee and be a media spokesperson.

The members of the organizing committee for 2018 are: Liliya Dragoeva, Simeon Vassilev, Dimitar Bogdanov, Raya Raeva, Stana Iliev, Sergey Petkov, Viktor Nikolov, Monika Pisankaneva, Radoslav Stoyanov, Veneta Limberova, Denitsa Ivanova, Svetla Baeva, Gloria Filipova and Pol Naidenov.



Photo: People of Sofia

What was New in 2018

In preparation of Sofia Pride 2018, the Pride Organizing Committee held very promising talks with the Mayor of Sofia Ms Yordanka Fandakova who committed to providing financial support to the Arts the Sports events for the first time. The Sofia Pride team is very proud of this successful first step in building fruitful long-term collaboration with Sofia Municipality and is hopeful that in the upcoming years the city of Sofia will gain a bigger and bigger role in supporting the organization of Sofia Pride.



Photo: Radina Gancheva

In 2018, for the first time a major Bulgarian company supported Sofia Pride both publicly and financially! **Walltopia** is the world leader in climbing wall design and manufacturing with more than 1800 projects worldwide. In the week before June 9, Walltopia hang a 21-meter rainbow flag on the facade wall of its building in Sofia Tech Park in solidarity with the LGBTI people and their fight for equal rights! "I realized that they felt unaccepted and because of their difficult situation they are trying to find their own happiness. That's why we decided to support Sofia Pride - people should not be afraid to be themselves no matter what", said Ivaylo Penchev, executive director of Walltopia.



This year, H&M, Europe's largest sales network, joined the Global Pride Movement with a new collection called *Love For All!* 10% of the sale price of *Love For All* products will be donated to the global campaign Free & Equal organized by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights to build a better world in which sexual orientation and gender identity is not a cause for fear. At the local level, H&M Bulgaria joined the local pride initiatives for the first time, supporting the event with a special showcase at the brand store on 6 Vitosha Blvd in Sofia.



As always, Sofia Pride was preceded by the traditional Sofia Pride Arts and Sofia Pride Film Fest, which have been taking place in the week preceding the Pride Day since 2012. For the first time this year the program of supporting events lasted for a whole month! Starting on May 12, this year's cultural program offered a variety of exhibitions, theatrical workshop, contemporary dance and performance from Bulgaria and around the world, literature club, PRIDExPOWER film development workshop for queer short projects from the Balkans and a selection of the latest movies on the topic of LGBTI from the world cinema.



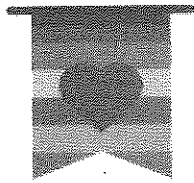
Photo: Radina Gancheva



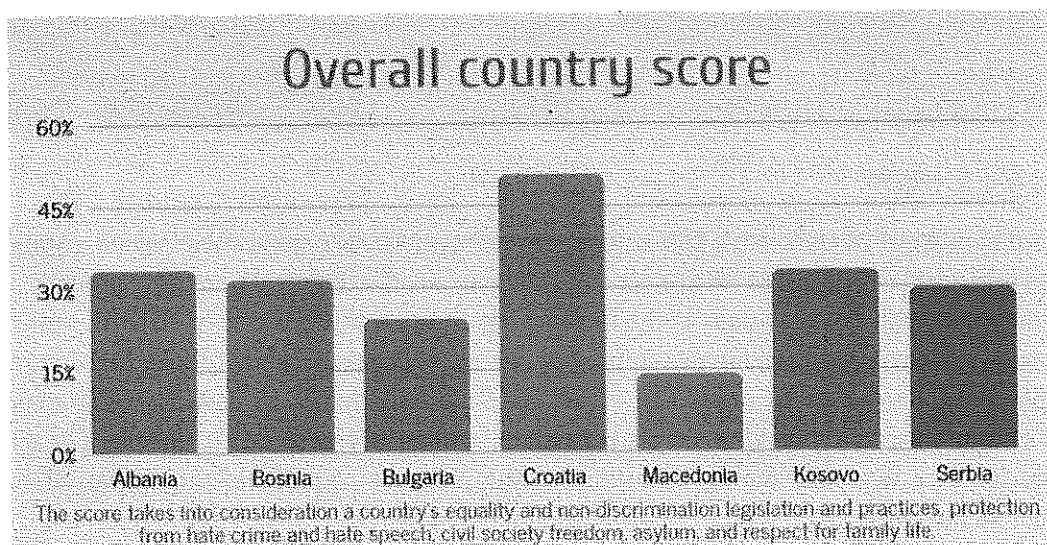
Photo: Petar Rizov

This year Sofia Pride expanded its program of thematic events by adding **Sofia Pride Sports!** The first edition of Sofia Pride Sports consisted of 6 sports events, including **football tournament**, workshops on voguing, bachata sensual, mobility, martial arts and self-defense, and the first **Equality Run** in Sofia! The running pairs had their hands tied to each other and the cause of the Equality run was to give courage to HIV-positive people and to also raise awareness regarding HIV and AIDS. During the event the sexual health center „CheckPoint Sofia I” was kindly offering an anonymous and free testing for HIV on the spot. The Equality Run was funded by the Sofia Municipality Program for Development of Physical Education.

On the day of Sofia Pride 2018, June 9, the first ever **Regional Dialogue on LGBTI Rights** took place. The event was organized in the framework of *Balkan Pride* - a non-formal network of Pride organizers and LGBTI NGOs from around the Balkans. Representatives of state authorities, LGBTI CSOs, local and international organisations discussed on the role of EU accession in advocating LGBTI rights and equality. The participants also addressed the strong need of building and maintaining a sustainable regional dialogue on the campaign for on the Balkans. Panelists in the Regional Dialogue were Antonio Mihajlov (President of the Steering Board, Subversive Front, R. of Macedonia), Evin Incir (Deputy International Secretary, Social Democratic Party, Sweden), Goran Miletic (Chairperson, Belgrade Pride, Serbia), Lars Henriksen (Chairperson, Copenhagen Pride, Denmark), Pavle Bogoevski (Independent MP at the list of the coalition led by the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia, R. of Macedonia), Sedef Cakmak (President, Rainbow Rose, Republican People’s Party, Turkey), Thanos Vlachogiannis (Spokesperson, Thessaloniki Pride – EuroPride 2020, Greece), José Santoro (Secretary General, Rainbow Rose, Spain).



LGBTI Rights in the Balkans



Author: Bulgarian Helsinki Committee

Another innovation was the festival atmosphere offered for all guests of the **Pride Day!** From 4 pm until the beginning of the street March at 7 pm at the gathering point in front of the Monument of the Soviet Army, there was a variety of attractions to attend – information booths with materials and merchandise of the LGBTI organizations, make-up station, photo-booth, messages station, beverages limited edition products of the businesses who support Pride and various other attractions. A number of companies and businesses attended Pride with their own stands - Harmonica, RooBar, Haniel Bio, Trastena, Power Pops, EY Careers, Black Flamingo Publishing, Kiflab gourmet cosmetics, Baba's Soapery, CheckPoint Sofia | Център за сексуално здраве, Ailyak Beer, Single Step, POSH Kisses and Sweets. The festival atmosphere was highlighted by the participation of Ruth Koleva, Ivo Dimchev, Mihaela Fileva, Dancing Sofia, Yambadon, Spice Girls Tribute, Jennifer Benediction and Head Man's Hat Live who performed on the Pride stage.



Photo: Emil Metodiev

A record number of 24 Diplomatic Missions and three international organizations signed a Statement of Support to Sofia Pride 2018! “We reject and condemn any discrimination on those grounds, which is incompatible with the provisions of the relevant legal texts within the United Nations, the Council of Europe, and the EU. By signing this statement, we encourage everybody to take this opportunity to support and defend these values and to join the Sofia Pride March to embrace LGBTI people as equal citizens, without prejudice or discrimination, and to promote LGBTI equality”, states the document which was read during Sofia Pride in the presence of many of the Ambassadors who signed it on the stage.



Photo: Anastas Tarpanov

Financial support

Detailed information on the budget for Sofia Pride 2018 can be found on our webpage:

<http://sofiapride.org/budget/>

Here is a list of the main sponsors:

- [American Embassy in Bulgaria](#)
- [Sofia Municipality](#)
- [The Bulgarian Fund for Women](#)
- [ILGA-Europe](#)
- [Human Rights Campaign](#)
- [Walltopia & Auxionize](#)
- [Sutherland](#)
- [Vault](#)
- And over 100 individual donors

Partners of Sofia Pride 2018

AMI Communications Bulgaria, George Yanakiev, People of Sofia, Anastas Tarpanov Photography, Emil Metodiev – Photo EMotions, Alexander Tomov, Monika Varadinova, Petar Rizov, Monika Varadinova, FNF Foundation, Fare Network, French Institute in Bulgaria, Josh McKenna, Ego Rodriguez, Iskra Blagoeva, Kalin Serapionov, Natalia Lenz, Ptpetrov, Radostin Sedevchev, Sevda Semer, Yassen Zgurovski, Ivo Dimchev, Christian Bakalov, Krasen Krastev, Pavel Naydenov, Daniele Vilassana, Vladislav Kiriazov and Mila Varbanova, Neva Balnikova, Nikolay Sardamov, Fabrica 126, Æther, Generator, SABAI, the fridge, The Red House Centre for Culture and Debate, “Sredets” House of Culture, NATFA “Krastyo Sarafov”, Tezgiah, One to One, KANAAL, Barcode, Mina Mileva, Stefan Genov, Rebecca Podleh, Ralitsa Petrova, Vesela Kazakova, Dom na kinoto, Odeon Cinema, Swimming Pool, French Institute in Bulgaria - Varna, Stuni & Yoanna Bachata Sensual, Alex Boreva and Konstantin Krastev, Miryana Tashkova and Femmination, Kristiana Daneva, Miroslava Manavska, Begach Sports Club, Easy Club, Fabrika Avtonomiya, Mir & Druzhiba Sports Complex, A Hub, Rainbow Hub, Zelenite Political Party

International Partners

InterPride, AllOut, Liberal International, FRA, VVD Internationaal, Rainbow Rose, Copenhagen Pride, Belgrade Pride, Thessaloniki Pride, Zagreb Pride, Subversive Front (Macedonia), Open Mind Spectrum Albania, Aleanca LGBT (Albania), Sarajevo Open Centre, Center for Equality and Liberty (Kosovo), Queer Montenegro

Media Partners

Dnevnik, Webcafe, ВИЖ, Programata, Momichetata ot grada, HUGE.bg, Capital

In Support of Sofia Pride

Statement of Support

- EN <http://en.sofiapride.org/2018/06/08/statement-of-support/>
- BG <http://sofiapride.org/blog/2018/06/08/rekordna-podkrepa-kam-sofiya-pride-2018/>

Video messages

- Julie Ward, MEP from the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament:
<https://www.facebook.com/sofiaprideparade/videos/1822154741183342/>
- Ska Keller and Terry Reintke, MEPs from the Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance:
<https://www.facebook.com/sofiaprideparade/videos/1825319274200222/>
- Lars Henriksen, Chairperson at Copenhagen Pride:
<https://www.facebook.com/sofiaprideparade/videos/1792789844119832/>
<https://www.facebook.com/sofiaprideparade/videos/1825592850839531/>
- H.E. Mrs. Emma Hopkins, Ambassador of the United Kingdom:
<https://www.facebook.com/sofiaprideparade/videos/1825681094164040/>

- H.E. Mrs. Bea ten Tusscher, Ambassador of the Netherlands:
<https://www.facebook.com/sofiaprideparade/videos/1825802870818529/>
- Mr Andrea Biggi, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Australia in Athens:
<https://www.facebook.com/sofiaprideparade/videos/1825706307494852/>
- Mr Sjoerd Potters, mayor of De Bilt, the Netherlands, Mr Gijs Houben and Mr Mart Teunissen from VVD Internationaal:
<https://www.facebook.com/sofiaprideparade/videos/1825684587497024/>

Councillor Warren Morgan, Leader of Brighton & Hove City Council in the United Kingdom

- <http://en.sofiapride.org/2018/02/24/sofia-pride-received-it-s-first-letter-of-support-for-2018/>

Mr Erlend Horn, the Deputy Mayor for Social Affairs, Inclusion & Diversity, Bergen, Norway

- <http://en.sofiapride.org/2018/05/26/sofia-pride-with-support-from-bergen-norway/>

United Societies of Balkans – Bulgaria

- <http://sofiapride.org/blog/2018/05/28/usb-bulgaria/>

Harvard Club of Bulgaria

- <https://harvard.bg/sofia-pride-bulgarian/>

Incidents & Complications

This year three counter demonstrations have been held on the day of Sofia Pride – a march, a protest and a concert. All of them were communicated as events aimed at preservation or revival of family values:

- The March for Family started at 2 pm from Nezavisimost Square and ended in front of the National Palace of Culture at 4:30 pm.
- At 5 pm at the same place in front of the National Palace of Culture started the second event – a concert titled "Revival of the Family Values" organized by "Vazrazhdane" political party. This is the third year in which the party organizes events under this title in the week of Sofia Pride.
- The "Save the Children of Bulgaria and the Bulgarian Family" protest was planned to start at 5 pm on the back of the Soviet Army Monument in Knyazheska garden where Sofia Pride was held. Eventually the protest organized by "National Resistance" - a non-formal, anti-democratic neo-Nazi group, was held at the entrance of Borisova garden. "National Resistance" has a long history of organizing counter demonstrations during the day and time of Sofia Pride in a close proximity.

One small incident occurred: During Sofia Pride two women from the March have passed through the counter demonstration of "National Resistance". One of the women was wearing the rainbow flag which was taken by a person from the counter demonstration. After an intervention from the police two people from the counter demonstration were arrested. Another 5 have been arrested for possession of prohibited articles or lack of identity documents.

Links to Pictures

Sofia Pride

- https://www.facebook.com/pg/sofiaprideparade/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1828742133857936
- VIDEO: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DFQNAhmvSPc&app=desktop>

Sofia Pride Arts

- <https://www.facebook.com/pg/sofiapridearts/photos/?tab=albums>

Sofia Pride Film Fest

- https://www.facebook.com/pg/SofiaPrideFilmFest/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1552413528218527

Sofia Pride Sports

- <https://www.facebook.com/pg/SofiaPrideSports/photos/?tab=albums>

Discussion Round FNF: Different people, same rights

- https://www.facebook.com/pg/fnfsee/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1871705516193209

Some Media Clippings

Sofia Pride Organizing Committee in the Media

- <https://www.btv.bg/video/shows/tazi-nedelia/video-sabota/simeon-vasilev-nie-imame-nuzhda-ot-prajd-za-da-zajavim-che-ne-sme-nevidimi.html>
- <https://www.bgonair.bg/sutreshen-blok/2018-06-06/patrioti-vs-homoseksualisti-v-spor-da-se-provezhda-li-sofiya-prayd>
- <https://www.bnt.bg/bg/a/art-sedmitsi-predi-sofia-pride>

EN

- <https://sofiaglobe.com/2018/06/10/arrests-as-homophobes-try-to-disrupt-sofia-pride-parade/>
- https://www.gaystarnews.com/article/sofia-pride/?fb_ref=bw6RxtZU33-Facebook&utm_source=Facebook&utm_medium=ShareButton&utm_campaign=GetSocial

Analyses

- https://www.capital.bg/politika_i_ikonomika/bulgaria/2018/06/07/3190939_zashto_ima_nu_ida_ot_sofiia_praid_poveche_ot_vsiakoga/
- https://www.dnevnik.bg/bulgaria/2018/06/09/3197577_sofiia_praid_premina_pod_nadslov_razlichni_hora_ravni/
- https://www.dnevnik.bg/bulgaria/2017/06/10/2986797_da_otstoiavash_pravata_si_s_usmiv_ka_ili_kak_premina/
- <https://woman.bg/novini/kakvo-urodstvo-e-sofiya-praid.56476.html>
- https://www.webcafe.bg/webcafe/onya-deto-ne-go-triyat/id_802973033
- <http://bnr.bg/post/100981038>

Other

- <https://momichetata.com/article/sofia-pride-arts-edin-mesets-izkustvo-pod-dagata-na-sofiya.html>
- <https://fakti.bg/kultura-art/303221-art-programa-za-sofia-praid>
- <https://offnews.bg/kultura/zapochva-sedmoto-izdanie-na-sofia-praid-film-fest-681769.html>
- https://clubz.bg/68588-sofiq_praid_film_fest_2018_s_produkcii_ot_bylgariq_sasht_rusiq
- <http://news.bnt.bg/bg/a/906918-sofiya-prayd>
- <https://momichetata.com/article/simeon-ot-sofiya-prayd-za-lgbt-predizvikatelstvata-i-malkite-pobedi.html>
- <https://btvnovinite.bg/bulgaria/sofija-praid-2018-g-za-ravni-prava-na-razlichnite-snimki.html>
- <http://inlife.bg/%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%BC%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B0-%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D1%81%D0%BE%D1%84%D0%B8%D1%8F-%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B9%D0%B4-2018-%D0%B5-%D0%BB%D1%8E%D0%B1%D0%BE%D0%B2%D1%82%D0%B0/>
- <http://terminal3.bg/tazi-godina-rekorden-broj-kompanii-i-lichnosti-v-podkrepa-sofija-praid/>

