

Notice: Undefined index: et_header_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

Notice: Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

Notice: Undefined index: et_header_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1215

Notice: Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1215

Notice: Undefined index: et_template in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1216

SERBIA: Serbian police ban EuroPride march, citing security concerns

Serbian police ban EuroPride march, citing security concerns

By Dusan Stojanovic

AP News (13.09.2022) – <https://bit.ly/3xrTLeM> – Serbia's police on Tuesday banned a Pride march planned amid pan-European LGBTQ events being held this week in Belgrade, citing

a risk of clashes with far-right anti-gay activists. Organizers vowed to appeal the ban.

Pro-Serbian Orthodox Church conservative groups, who have been marching unhindered for weeks on the Serbian capital's streets to protest the LGBTQ events, had scheduled a new demonstration for Sept. 17 – the day of the Pride parade. Police also banned that anti-gay protest.

“After the security assessment, it was determined that there is a high risk the safety of participants in both (marches) on the announced routes will be endangered, as well as the safety of other citizens,” police said in a statement.

Serbia's populist president had earlier warned the gay Pride march would be banned.

Organizers of EuroPride, the largest annual Pride event in Europe – which includes a week of festivities – said they hoped their legal appeal against the ban will be accepted and that they would hold the festivities as planned.

“Belgrade Pride will use all available means to overturn this decision,” their statement said.

After the ban was announced, gay activists booed and jeered Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabic, who is openly lesbian but has been accused by the Serbian gay community of doing nothing to improve their status. She attended a human rights conference that was a part of the weeklong LGBTQ events.

The Council of Europe's human rights commissioner, Dunja Mijatovic, said Serbian authorities should withdraw the ban on the march and protect participants. The CoE is Europe's top human rights body.

"It is highly regrettable that the Serbian authorities have decided to ban the EuroPride march scheduled for 17 September," Mijatovic said in a statement. "Weeks of uncertainty concerning the holding of this march have sent a wrong message to the public and made space for hateful rhetoric and more threats against LGBTI people, including from religious leaders"

Members of the European Pride Organizers Association chose Serbia's capital three years ago to host the annual event, hoping it would represent a major breakthrough for a Slavic country that is traditionally conservative and strongly influenced by the Orthodox Church.

Serbia's rights groups have urged supporters to join the Pride march as part of a struggle for democracy that they say is under threat from President Aleksandar Vucic's autocratic regime. Serbia is formally seeking European Union membership – and has pledged to boost LGBTQ rights – but has for years been moving closer to Russia's political orbit.

Several EU officials have said they will join the LGBTQ events, while those calling on the Serbian government to reverse the previously heralded ban included U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

Vucic, who has for weeks warned the Pride march would be banned, said police can't cope with possible riots by right-wing groups against the Pride march amid a crisis over [relations with Serbia's breakaway province of Kosovo](#) as well as the energy crisis caused by the war in Ukraine.

"In the current geopolitical situation and tensions in the region, senseless clashes on the streets of Belgrade would make the position of our country more difficult, (and) endanger the safety of participants in the marches, as well as other citizens," Serbian Interior Minister Aleksandar Vulin said.

Photo credits: AP News/Darko Vojinovic

Notice: Undefined index: et_footer_layout in [/home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php](#) on line 1266

Notice: Trying to access array offset on value of type null in [/home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php](#) on line 1266

Notice: Undefined index: et_footer_layout in [/home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php](#) on line 1267

Notice: Trying to access array offset on value of type null in [/home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php](#) on line 1267

Notice: Undefined index: et_template in [/home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php](#) on line 1268