SKOPJE PRIDE 2024: PROMOTING EQUALITY AND SAFETY POLICY BRIEF

POLICY BRIEF Skopje Pride 2024: Promoting equality and safety

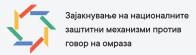
Helsinki Committee for Human Rights

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POLICY BRIEF SUMMARY

Skopje Pride 2024, held on 22 June 2024. represented a powerful statement of visibility, solidarity, and resilience by the LGBTIQ+ community. successfully organized event was The demonstrated a high level of institutional cooperation, public support, and security coordination. Despite the positive outcome, a significant rise in hate speech was observed, particularly online, highlighting the need strengthened institutional mechanisms for prevention and response.

Skopje Pride 2024 was held under the slogan "SPECTACULARLY DISOBEDIENT," which reflects the community's refusal to conform to heteropatriarchal norms and celebrates the colorful and unique nature of the LGBTIQ+ community. "Disobedient" symbolizes the fight against systemic oppression, while "spectacularly" emphasizes the vibrant and joyful aspects of the community.

KEY FINDINGS:

- Successful organization with participation of 1,500–2,000 people.
- Highly professional cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, with no incidents reported.
- Significant increase in hate speech on social media.
- Nine criminal complaints filed by the Helsinki Committee against identified perpetrators.
- Positive trend in media reporting, though a lack of investigative and humanizing approaches to LGBTI topics was noted.

Role of the Media

As in previous years, most media outlets reported on the Pride event professionally and in line with journalistic standards.

However, in a context of intensified anti-gender movements that use disinformation and open hate speech against the LGBTI community, media often uncritically transmit such views under the "objective guise of reporting" and "presenting both sides." By doing so, risk becomina complicit in perpetuating hate speech.

CONCLUSION

Skopje Pride 2024 was an successful example of and public mobilization support for human rights. Given the challenges observed. especially regarding hate speech, national and local institutions must take proactive and coordinated action to ensure equality and safety for all.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Ministry of Interior should establish a dedicated unit for monitoring hate speech related to LGBTI issues.
- Develop rapid response and reporting mechanisms for hate speech on social media (in cooperation with IT companies).
- Encourage media outlets to produce humanizing content that portrays the LGBTI community as an integral part of society.
- Support media literacy campaigns and initiatives to counter disinformation related to LGBTI topics.
- Introduce additional legal protections specifically targeting hate speech based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Strengthen institutional cooperation and logistical support for the organization of Pride and other LGBTI events.

