



Prides in hostile environment

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Association of LGBT and their friends MOZAIKA



- + Established in 2006 as a response to the violence at Riga Pride 2005
- + So far the only LGBT organization in Latvia
- + Areas of work: Prides, lobby, legal and social assistance, youth work, information centre, culture, sports etc.

HISTORY – HOW WE BEGAN TO TAKE PRIDE SECURITY SERIOUSLY



- + Riga Pride 2006 - 2nd Pride in Riga
- + Pride was banned by City Council, the Court upheld the ban
- + Pride took place in a hotel (private property, no public action)
- + People throwing excrements (shit and urine), tomatoes, eggs and holly water at participants entering/leaving the hotel and other events (press conference etc.)
- + The hotel was surrounded by protestors – police refused to help
- + ... we had to evacuate, ensure security etc. ourselves
- + Think of action movies? – Only this was the reality! 😊

ROLE OF MOZAIKA FOR PRIDE SECURITY

- + Risk assessment – independently /and together with involved parties
- + Security trainings at large scale – MOZAIKA has trained AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL pool in order to ensure security at prides where AI is participating
- + Providing local security trainings
- + Training of security coordinators / security officers / stewards
- + If necessary, participating / sometimes leading negotiations with the police forces and city officials

INVOLVED PRIDES

Riga Pride 2006 (☹☹☹)

Riga Pride 2007 (☹☹)

Riga Pride 2008 (☹☹)

Baltic Pride 2009 (☹☹)

Baltic Pride 2010 (☹☹☹)

Baltic Pride 2012 (☺)

Belgrade Pride 2010 (☹☹☹)

Budapest Pride 2011 (☹☹)

Bratislava Pride 2011 (☹☹)

Bratislava Pride 2012 (☹☹)

Sofia Pride 2012 (☺)

Kiev Pride 2012 (☹☹☹)



Security

Risk assessment

Analysis

Discussions with organizers and involved parties

Discussions with the police and officials

Security trainings

Security leaflets

Security briefings

Evacuation plans / Escape route

Plan B

Ready for the attack

Monitoring

Debriefing / evaluation

THREATS

- + Flying objects (stones, “holly” water, excrements, food etc.)
- + Situations that cause panic (firecrackers, tear gas, pepper gas etc.)
- + Terrorist threats (Molotov cocktails, chemical bomb, direct threats targeting specific people)
- + Nazi attacks (threats to / or attack organizers or well known activists/figures at home)
- + Right wing and religious extremists (during, before and after events)
- + Skinheads attack quickly and in small groups – usually do maximum damage

Security training (example)

- + Identify people responsible for security
- + Go through the programme of the Pride
- + Go through the risks (not all risks are mentioned)
- + Go through arrival, exit and emergency evacuation procedures
- + Discuss and set clear rules for behavior
- + Provide information on what to do in extreme situations
- + Buddy system
- + Emergency information
- + Final rules for precaution

DO's

- Be cheerful! ... is a wonderful city, plenty of nice people, you can have a lot of fun here!
- Follow all instructions from the Pride organizers and security coordinators, they are there to insure your own safety!
- Take a bottle of water with you (take off the cap), as well as your personal medications - it could take around 4 hours from arrival to the end of the event.
- Attend security briefings and debriefings, pay attention to the latest security information provided.
- Make sure you understand all security procedures. If something is unclear please ask security coordinators or security officers.
- Know and follow the plan for the day of the march, including the meeting time & place and how to travel safely to and from the event.

DO's II

- Treat police officers with respect, they are on duty.
- Inform security coordinators in case of any verbal and physical abuse within or outside the events
- Inform security coordinators about any suspicious actions, items etc.
- Have some neutral clothes with you so you could change to more neutral outfit and blend in after the march.
- Be aware of and if it becomes necessary follow the evacuation plan in case there are problems during the Pride.
- If you feel in danger or just lost, call security coordinators or security officers.
- Remember that ***hotel is the Safe Place for all occasions.
- After late evening or night events take or share a taxi.

DON'Ts

- If you are approached by the protesters do not try to convince them, do not argue
- Never give out your contact details, hotel information etc. to strangers
- Do not walk alone in the evening or at night
- Even if you are verbally abused don't reply (please no rude language or rude gestures!)
- Do not pay attention to the protesters **NO MATTER WHAT THEY DO**
- Remember that many Lithuanians understand English and other languages, so no rude comments please
- Try not to provoke any of the protesters, think twice before you do anything (kissing to provoke them etc) as the protesters will use it against us.

DON'Ts II

- Don't bring any alcohol to the event and remember drinking in public places is prohibited in COUNTRY (except in bars, restaurants, etc.)
- For your own safety refrain from smoking during the march.
- Do not bring any weapons or sharp items to any of the Pride events.
- Don't argue with the police, always follow their instructions.
- Outside of the designated events please refrain from displaying LGBT symbols such as rainbow flags etc.

Success stories

- + Sofia Pride 2012 – finally didn't have to pay for the police protection
- + Baltic Pride 2012 – international and local focus on pride
- + No person have ever been injured (that followed security rules) during the Prides

Bad stories

- + ... Pride – no experience – bad timing – bad place – no communication with police – no risk assessment
- + ... Pride – enjoying the pride too much while underestimating security risks and making yourself an easy target for protestors
- + Some participants feel overconfident with no reason - teaching police how to do their job, engaging in discussions with the protestors, not being concerned with security (too much bravery at events is unnecessary and endangers others) etc.



THANK YOU!

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