

Double attack on events organised by Insight in Ukraine

On 30 May, one of RFSL's partner organisations in Ukraine, the Public Organization Insight, was subjected to attacks in both Kyiv and Odessa.

On Saturday evening, a group of approximately twenty aggressive individuals broke into Insight's main office in Kyiv, including by climbing over fences. Despite the fact that they were trespassing, behaving aggressively, and putting everyone present in the office at risk, the police arrived with delay. Furthermore, the police refused to register the complaint until the organisation's lawyer arrived, claiming such measures were not necessary given that no one had suffered physical injuries.

At the same time in Odessa, members of the right-wing groups Tradition and Order, a group that has previously also attacked members of Gay Alliance Ukraine during their preparations for Odesa Pride in August 2020, broke into Insight's community centre and disrupted the organisation's Fem Talks event. The members behaved aggressively towards activists and community members present at the event, but the reaction by law enforcement to this incident was very similar to that of the police in Kyiv.

While both complaints were filed in the end, activists from Insight are worried that no proper investigation will follow. They base this concern on the fact that police arrived at the scene with delay even though they had previously been informed about the event and potential risks. In addition, law enforcement authorities did not shy away from displaying an open reluctance towards taking formal action against the perpetrators.

The head of Insight states that in the last three years, they have been witnessing and experiencing increased levels of inaction of the law enforcement agencies towards the aggressive far-right groups and attacks they perpetrate. This further cements the sense of impunity these groups are already enjoying, and puts activists and community members under constantly increasing risks.

RFSL calls on authorities in Ukraine to investigate the attacks as well as look into the introduction of a hate crime legislation. We urge the authorities to ensure the safety and security of LGBTIQI people in different parts of the country.