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Spike in Russian LGBTs seeking asylum in United States

A record number of Russian LGBTs are seeking asylum in the United States with over 800 applications from Russian citizens during the last 12 months

25 OCTOBER 2013 | BY ANDREW POTTS

Russia's growing climate of intolerance for LGBT people appears to be responsible for a spike in applications for asylum in the United States by Russians.

837 Russians sought asylum in the US during the last 12 months compared to 722 the year before – the most since 2002.

LGBT group Immigration Equality say they have received 99 inquiries from Russian LGBT asylum seekers when they only received 63 inquiries from Russians during the previous 12 months – suggesting LGBT Russians make up a large proportion of the Russians to seek asylum in the US in 2013.

The group said that of 42 cases it took on on behalf of LGBT Russians in the last year 11 were already successful in achieving asylum.

New York based immigration lawyer Tsirina Goroshit told RIA Novosti that she was seeing a big spike in the number of LGBT Russians seeking out her services.

'A majority of the recent cases from Russia are pretty much connected to the gay climate in Russia,' Goroshit said.

Goroshit told the news agency that the number of LGBT clients she was advising had gone from 'a few' to 'a lot more than a few' in the last 12 months.

Another New York lawyer, Alena Shautsova, said she was getting five or six enquiries from Russians seeking asylum every week.

'We have great success with them because the climate is so much different in the United States than it is in Russia,' Shautsova told RIA Novosti.

'It's relatively easy to prove their claims compared to other kinds of claims.'

The US may not be the only North American country seeing a spike in asylum applications from LGBT Russia.

In neighboring Canada, Immigration Minister Chris Alexander said in August that asylum applications from LGBT Russians will be 'looked at very seriously.'

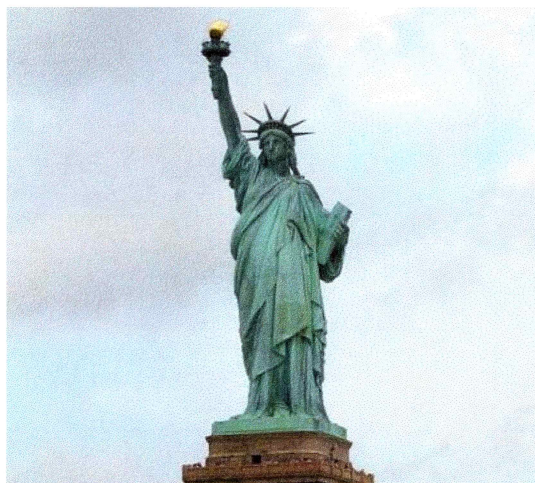


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