

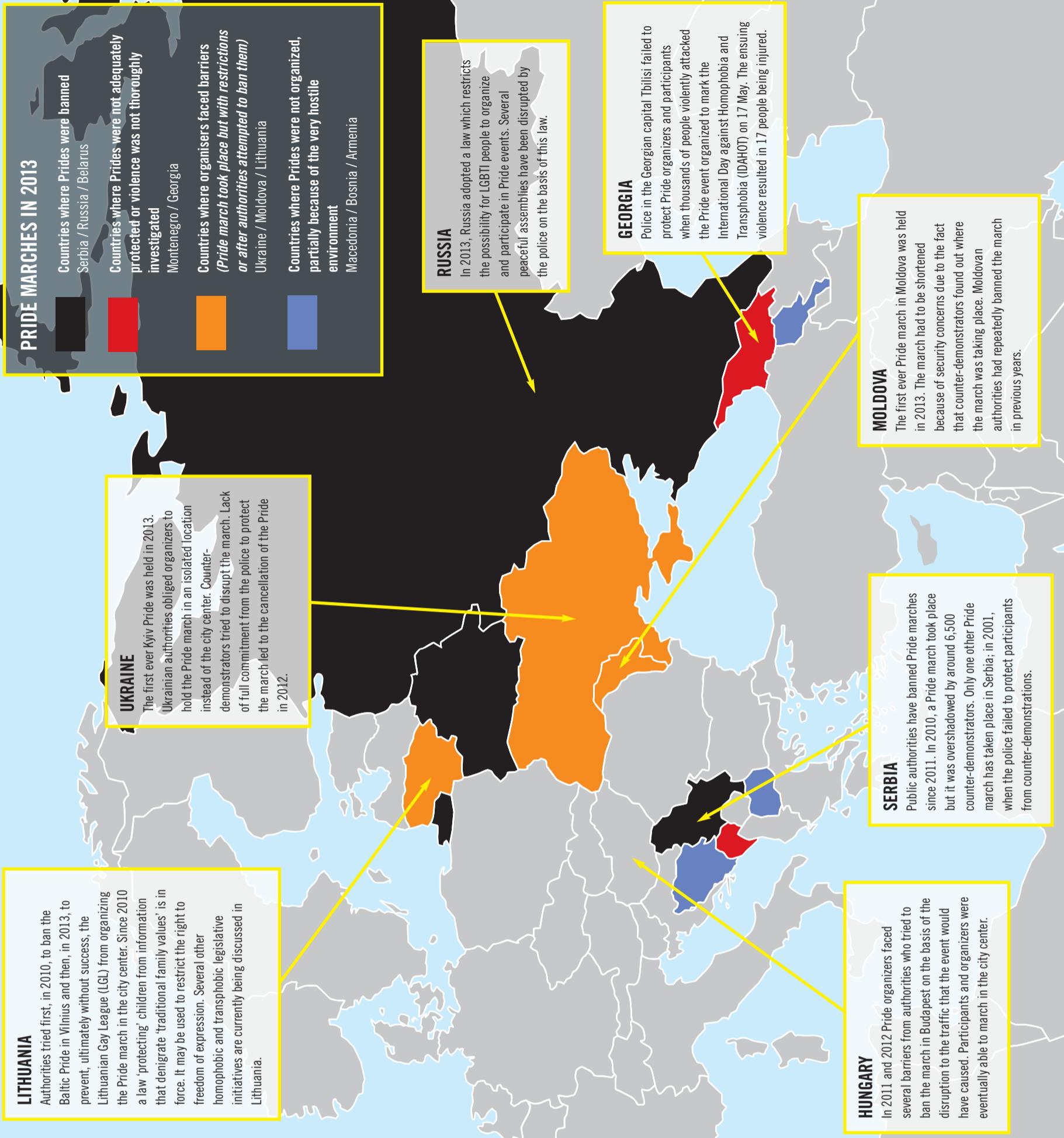
HUMAN RIGHTS ARE MY PRIDE

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NOT EVERYTHING'S ROSY FOR PRIDES IN EUROPE

LITHUANIA
Authorities tried first, in 2010, to ban the Baltic Pride in Vilnius and then, in 2013, to prevent, ultimately without success, the Lithuanian Gay League (LGL) from organizing the Pride march in the city center. Since 2010 a law 'protecting' children from information that denigrate 'traditional family values' is in force. It may be used to restrict the right to freedom of expression. Several other homophobic and transphobic legislative initiatives are currently being discussed in Lithuania.

SPLIT PRIDE
The organization of the LGBTI Pride march in Split, Croatia, has brought positive change at different levels. The first march took place in 2011 but it was not adequately protected by the police. At that time, there were no organizations explicitly aimed at promoting the rights of LGBTI people in the city and there were no public debates about discrimination experienced by them. In 2012 and 2013, the Pride march took place with adequate police protection.

PRIDES IMPROVE THE RIGHTS OF LGBTI PEOPLE
Since the 1970s, Pride marches have been crucial for LGBTI organizations, communities and individuals to mobilize against homophobia and transphobia, to send clear-cut messages to policy makers and to take a stand against discrimination. Pride marches have also helped strengthen LGBTI organizations, building their capacity and establishing a dialogue between LGBTI people and mainstream sectors of the society.

In 2013, LGBTI Pride marches have taken place for the first time in a number of European countries including Moldova, Montenegro and Ukraine. Regrettably, LGBTI organisations and individuals continue to be discriminated against when exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

BALTIC PRIDE
“The Baltic pride has positively impacted on both the LGBTI community and wider society. One of its assets is that it gives a unique space to LGBTI people so they can raise awareness and visibility about their rights, and at the same time lets LGBTI-friendly people speak out in support, regardless of their own sexual orientation or gender identity. It's also a real unifying force that brings together all kinds of people under a unique set of common, political claims.”

Vadimii Simonko, Board Chair of the Lithuanian Gay League, the organizers of the Baltic Pride in Vilnius in 2010 and 2013

Ljubica Lipanović, Coordinator of Rišpet