

Open appeal concerning Article 19.16 of the Code of Administrative Offences of Belarus

LGBTQ+ House invites organisations to endorse an open appeal concerning Article 19.16 of Belarus's Code of Administrative Offences. We call for repeal of the discriminatory provision, international scrutiny of its enforcement, and proper consideration of the associated risks in protection decisions.

LGBTQ+ House · <https://lgbtqhouse.org/en/article-19-16> · office@lgbtqhouse.org

For the right of LGBTQ+ people in Belarus to information and protection

On 27 September 2026, Article 19.16 of Belarus's Code of Administrative Offences will have been in force for 100 days. The provision penalises the dissemination of information that the authorities consider aimed at forming perceptions of the "attractiveness" of same-sex relations, gender transition or childlessness. Part 1 applies regardless of the audience's age.

UN experts have warned of the discriminatory nature of the law. Human rights organisations report its enforcement. The vagueness of its wording creates risks for access to information about health and rights, for cultural expression and for the provision of assistance.

LGBTQ+ House makes the following calls:

The authorities of Belarus — to repeal Article 19.16 and other discriminatory restrictions, to end persecution for lawful expression, and to ensure access to information and assistance.

UN mechanisms, the European Union and its Member States — to press for repeal of the provision, to request information on its enforcement, and to reflect the risks to LGBTQ+ people in monitoring, public positions and engagement with Belarus.

States examining applications for international protection — to update country-of-origin information and to take into account risks related to sexual orientation and gender identity in the individual assessment of applications. The absence of an official document of persecution should not in itself preclude recognition of risk. We also ask that available humanitarian mechanisms be considered for people at risk.

Access to reliable information about oneself, one's health and one's rights must be ensured without discrimination.

We invite organisations to endorse this appeal.

How to endorse

Email office@lgbtqhouse.org from your organisation's address with its name and country, confirmation that it endorses the text, and permission to publish its name among the endorsing organisations. Providing a logo is optional. The list is updated as organisations join. Researchers may also endorse the appeal in an individual capacity. Please provide your name and country, your affiliation if you wish, and confirmation that you endorse the text and consent to publication of your name. An individual endorsement does not imply endorsement by the institution.

Study: <https://lgbtqhouse.org/en/article-19-16/research>. Advocacy brief: <https://lgbtqhouse.org/en/article-19-16/brief>.