The Politicization of Sexuality

While international organizations and governments move to expand equality for all—regardless of sexual orientation—recent global developments threaten this progress. The timeline begins at a pivotal moment, the 1969 Stonewall Riots in New York, widely regarded as a catalyst for the modern LGBT movement. Stonewall is considered the first instance of community solidarity against systematic, state-sponsored persecution of sexual minorities. While the struggle has been ongoing, the most significant developments have occurred in the last 25 years, including expansion of voting rights, social welfare benefits, and political power. We end our timeline, however, with a disturbing new trend—the passage of homophobic legislation in Africa, South Asia, and Russia.



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NOVEMBER 2013

The European Union's high court in Luxembourg rules that refugees who face prosecution in their home countries because of homosexual acts have the right to seek asylum in the EU.

DECEMBER 2011

Belgian Prime Minister Elio Di Rupo becomes the first openly gay head of government.

MAY 2012

Argentina passes the Gender Identity Law, which allows for human rights protection and access to critical civil services for transgenders and homosexuals.

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JUNE 2013 Russia passes

legislation forbidding the spreading of "propaganda" discussing "nontraditional sexual relations." It is largely viewed as an attack on free speech and the gay community.

2013

someone is gay and he searches for the Lord and has good will, who am I to judge?" signaling a change in the Catholic

Church's

stance on

homosexuality.

JULY 2013

Pope Francis

remarks. "If

NOVEMBER 2013

Bangladesh's hijras receive official government recognition as a "third" gender. Hijras do not consider themselves male or female. 10,000 people in Bangladesh selfidentify as hijras and are often banished or ostracized.

DECEMBER 2013

The Indian court criminalizes homosexual acts, making it one of 77 nations to designate homosexuality a crime.

DECEMBER 2013

The Ugandan Parliament passes a bill that states the practice and promotion of homosexual acts may result in life in prison.

2011



2012