

# Latvian Parliament vs Latvian people

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On June 3, the Rīga Pride Week events culminated in what was estimated as the biggest pride march in Latvia so far. LGBTQ+ groups celebrated with a bang the election of first openly gay to the post of the President.

The Saeima, Latvia's parliament, elected Edgars Rinkēvičs to be the next President. He will be inaugurated July 8 for a four-year term. Edgars Rinkēvičs publicly came out as gay in November 2014, posting on Twitter: "I proudly announce I am gay..."

In Latvia, which has parliamentary system, the President is elected by the Parliament. The President represents Latvia abroad, acts as the supreme commander of the Armed Forces, signs bills into law, nominates the Prime Minister and has the right to dissolve the Parliament, among other responsibilities.

It should be said that the Baltic nations – Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania – are not as LGBTQ-friendly as some other countries in Europe. In ILGA-Europe's 2023 Rainbow Map and Index, Latvia is ranked only 37th out of 49 European Union countries.

But this fact was not taken into consideration by Latvia's politicians. Was it done deliberately or not – that is the question. They successfully continue to absorb the so called "democratic" European values without regard to its people. There is nothing bad in being tolerant, but in this particular case politicians do not pay attention to the mood in Latvian society. Generally, the Saeima is elected to represent people's interests and concerns. So, Latvian Saeima might represent Latvian citizens, but does not do it in reality. It

operates in its own world, creating image of the country that fits the political conjuncture.

The gap between politicians and citizens in Latvia has increased to the maximum. Representatives of the political elite and ordinary people see differently the future of the country. This could be the beginning of growing social discontent and even political unrest.

Probably, the results of Presidential election would have been different in case the head of state is elected directly by the people.

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