



## EQUALITY SIGNS

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▲ With each issue of the newsletter, we ask artists to create their own interpretation of the slogan „signs of equality ... Above is a photograph by Sylwia Łęcka from the S/HE exhibition.

Its slogan is *Love for all things Silesian, respect for everyone* and it was selected in a competition announced on Facebook. We found that it reflects our idea the best. We want to combine the identity of our agglomeration and region with the idea of diversity. We want to show that we are a part of the local community. The date which we chose is also symbolic because it is the birthday of the city of Katowice.

**What do you think distinguishes Katowice on the Polish LGBTQ map?**

From the perspective of our association “Tęczówka” and the city of Katowice, what makes us different is that we work together well with the local government and NGOs. To start with we looked for allies because we were a small group of people who had no experience of social activity. We were looking for someone who we could learn

from. This is how we got to know the Bona Fides Association and the Association for Supporting Non-governmental Organizations MOST. The latter ran an incubator for NGOs where we began to learn about other initiatives. While being trained in Żywiec we contacted the Regional Volunteer Centre. These associations are some of the most important organisations that bring together female and male activists in Katowice. We joined them as a competent partner.

*The continuation of the interview can be found on the next page.*

**The Equality March in Katowice will take place on September the 8th.**

# Respect for everyone

**After a 10-year break the Equality March is return to Katowice, the capital of Silesia!**

*Mateusz Gędźba from the Equality Signs Federation talks to the Tęczówka Association team – the organiser of the march.*

**This year’s Equality March in Katowice is the first one after a 10-year break. What has happened in your city during this time?**

The Equality March in Katowice took place in a new format called Coming out of the Closet Day. We are proud of the events organised to celebrate it. We put a wardrobe in the city centre which everyone

could symbolically ‘come out of’. We even had themed versions, such as “Superheroes” or “the Closet and Literature”, when excerpts from LGBTQ stories were read in front of the closet. While the idea of the first version was to encourage people to walk through the wardrobe, the next one took the form of a march – we carried a wardrobe on a trolley accompanied by a colourful procession and finally put it on the market square. We had a megaphone with us and some leaflets explaining the purpose of the event. However, not all of the marches went off peacefully.

When the superheroes came out of the closet, the members of the National Radical Camp became interested. To this day we do not know if they wanted to come out too.

We also organised some other visibility initiatives, such as the summer projects “Catch the rainbow”, free hugs, the “High five for diversity” initiative and in Silesia Park we rode a cable car with the rainbow flag. Last year, the Campaign Against Homophobia asked us for support in organising their initiative “I support civil partnerships”. We organised things so that every person in front of the Main Railway Station in Katowice could have their picture taken with a sign-board supporting civil partnerships.

What is important is that we always put up the rainbow tent on NGO Day in Katowice. It is a type of picnic that celebrates (it was our suggestion) the birthday of the city and serves as a review of the NGOs which operate in Katowice.

Of our other public initiatives, it is worth mentioning Manifa, which we co-organised as early as 2008 when the Silesian Campaign Against Homophobia was still active. We knew then that we did not have enough resources to organise such an event on our own and Manifa was an opportunity for us

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to get some experience. We organised the first Equality March in Katowice the same year. However, we gave up this format soon after that and we moved in the direction of events!

**What is the message of this year’s Equality March?**



# Respect for everyone

Continuation of the interview with  
the Tęczówka Association

You mentioned working together well with the local authorities.  
What's the nature of your work with them?

It began when we went to a meeting between local authorities and NGOs. We started going frequently and we learnt about the various forms of cooperation available, e.g. about days devoted to NGOs. We learnt to write projects. Our president, Tomek Kołodziejczyk, took part in the elections to the Local Council for Public Benefit last year. This is a body which consists half of city officials and councillors and half of representatives of NGOs chosen by these organisations in a vote. Tomek received 30 votes and took second place among the 7 members elected to the council. We are proud that people have faith in him. The advantage of being a member of the council is that Tomek can directly ask questions to the officials, not only officially during council sessions. And in this case, the officials cannot give him a dusty answer. In addition to the council and general meetings, there are also teams that operate in specific areas, for example to counteract social exclusion. We are also involved in their work.

## ▼ The meetings for the parents of LGBT+ persons The Foundation for Diversity Polistrefa, ul. Zakątek 3

Polistrefa and Us, the Parents' foundations: The Association of Mothers, Fathers and Allies LGBTQIA look forward to seeing you at their meetings for the parents of LGBT + persons. The meetings are an opportunity to get to know other parents and listen to their experiences. It is also an opportunity to ask questions, share your own experiences, thoughts, worries and good news. It's time well spent, in a friendly atmosphere with a cup of coffee or tea and an obligatory biscuit. The meetings take place regularly, every second Monday of the month at 6pm.

If you are interested, please contact: [rodzice@polistrefa.pl](mailto:rodzice@polistrefa.pl)

## ▼ Free and anonymous HIV tests Department of Microbiology at the University Hospital ul. Kopernika 19 (2nd floor)

The Krakow Association for HIV/AIDS Prevention and Support „One World” runs Consultation and Diagnosis Drop-in Clinics, which offer anonymous and free HIV tests. Testing is possible on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays (from 4pm to 7pm), and the results are issued on Fridays at the same times. The Association also operates an emergency phone line. The psychologists are on duty on Fridays from 5pm to 7pm on +48 572 284 140 (SMS messages will not be answered).

# Glam Cup 2018

Krakow hosted LGBTQ female and male volleyball players during the international Glam Cup for the sixth time. 12 teams from Poland and Europe participated in the games organised by Krakowski Klub Sportowy Krakersy.

This year's tournament was attended by players from European cities such as London, Prague, Paris and Barcelona. For some of them, it was their second visit to Krakow. "I've been taking part in the Glam Cup for 5 years" – recalls Cary Marcelo from the London Spikers Volleyball Club. "And since I have many friends from Poland taking part in the tournament, I have the opportunity to meet them again. There was a year, probably 2015, when 8 teams from our club in London took part in the competition. Glam Cup has built up a reputation that prompts London teams to come every year".

In the AGH sports hall, where the matches were played, there were also sportsmen and sportswomen from Polish cities. Teams from Warsaw, Katowice, Wrocław and, of course, Kraków were there. "Taking part in the tournament allows us to compete with other teams from Poland and Europe, but above all it is a lot of fun" - says the captain of the Wrocław team Hurragany „Bajla". "We have the opportunity to meet people who share our passions and interests. In addition to the social side of things, all teams have the opportunity to test their skills at every level of the game, and their sporting spirit is awakened by the battle for the medals".

Although the first whistles sounded on the morning of Saturday 30th June the Glam Cup was already in full swing. Two days earlier the first integration event took place, and the registration of the competitors was also a chance to get to know each other better. The competition itself lasted 9 hours without a break, creating a lot of excitement, but also terrible tiredness. This did not stop the participants from celebrating later in Cocon Club, where the talented D-JO was performing. Rostek Peresłucha, the president of the Krakersy, feels that, "this year's tournament was smaller and more intimate than previous years, but thanks to this he was more relaxed and didn't feel any stress. We had fun organising it".

Glam Cup is not only a chance to integrate and experience sports rivalry, the players also commented on the hospitable atmosphere and the fact that it was well organised. "We are surprised by something every year. The advantage is that the tournament brings together more teams than other LGBTQ competitions organised in Poland". However, according to

Much is being said about the growth in civic activity. Are you also experiencing it in Katowice?

Yes and no. If you consider the number of people who would like to join the Equality March – then the answer is yes. The march is becoming the starting point from which you can begin your activity. People have a need to act, but they do not always know where to start. There are also people who would like to be involved anonymously because of their life situation. However, it often happens that people – for various reasons – lose the will to take part. So, in practice there are always more tasks to be done than hands to do the work.

What is Tęczówka currently focussing on?

Our main focus this year is the Equality March. After a 10-year break, we are organising it practically from scratch. In addition, there are things that we have been doing for years, for example we offer psychological support, legal assistance and we deal with HIV / AIDS prevention (we are trained by the Association „One World” \*). Since the time of the Silesian Campaign Against Homophobia, we have been working for the benefit of transgender people. Our group, whose aim is to build a safe space for meetings and integration, has been working for non-heteronormative women since March. As of this year we are paying more attention to mobilising the community. More and more people are coming with their own ideas and using our social media centre when implementing them. As a result, a book discussion club was created, among other things.

\* The interview with the Association of HIV/AIDS Prevention and Support „One World” can be found in the first issue of our bulletin. The previous editions are available at [www.znakirownosci.org.pl](http://www.znakirownosci.org.pl).



## ▲ Human Library 6th October 2018, 12pm - 6pm the Public Library in Kraków, ul. Rajska 1

The Foundation for Diversity Polistrefa invites you for the fourteenth time to visit the Human Library. A library is a place where you can borrow a book. This scheme has been moved to the Human Library. However, this time we will be dealing with people who have a story to tell. The conversations will take place face to face, so it will be as if we actually have a borrowed book in front of us. By coming to the Human Library, you can get to know the experiences of people who, because they belong to minority groups, can be viewed stereotypically and experience discrimination. All you have to do is to "borrow" a person whose story interests you. While talking to them you will get answers to questions that intrigue you, you will hear stories that will perhaps change your perception of the world and you will discover the values that diversity brings. More information can be found at: [zywabibliotekakrk.pl](http://zywabibliotekakrk.pl) and on Facebook: [@zywabiblioteka.krk](https://www.facebook.com/zywabiblioteka.krk)



"Bajla" the biggest advantage is the opportunity to visit Krakow during free time. Rostek summarises: "I think that the Glam Cup is a very prominent and interesting initiative in the LGBTQ world because it allows us to show ourselves in a different – a sporting – light". The organisers confirm that for some people this is their first contact with LGBTQ sport. "We are only trying to make our usually rather grey reality a bit more colourful for one weekend and organise a nice party for people from Poland and abroad", explains Rostek.

Alcedo Praha (level C) and Chilli All Stars from Katowice (level B) won the tournament. Silver was won by the London teams Crash Boom Bang and Big Cats, while bronze went to the teams Alcedo from Prague and Panteras Grouges from Barcelona.

Unfortunately, there is a risk that Glam Cup will disappear from the Polish LGBTQ sporting events calendar. The Krakersy are short of activists to join the club's day-to-day activities. Let Cary's words testify to the fact that axing the tournament would be a great loss: "It's a great way to promote sport, but also to improve the visibility of the LGBTQ community in Krakow. I think that this is influenced by the presence of teams from all over Europe. We will definitely support the Krakersy in the coming years, I hope the club will continue organising the tournament".

People interested in regular volleyball training are encouraged to contact the association. Current information can be found on the facebook page of [@kkskrakersy](https://www.facebook.com/kkskrakersy)  
// Amciek, Dariusz J. Krupa

Tęczówka celebrated its 5th anniversary last year. How do you remember this time?

This is a period of natural development. From the beginning, we knew that we had to find a base. For a time we used the office of a friendly organisation - the Sand Dragon Foundation, but we wanted to be independent. We looked for our own premises among the urban resources in the centre of Katowice. Since we got our own place, more freedom and opportunities have appeared. Planning activities is easier. As an independent organisation, we are perceived as an equal partner for co-operation.

What do you think the Equality Marches should be like in Katowice in the coming years?

Because we are an agglomeration comparable to Warsaw in terms of population, we want to achieve a turn-out corresponding to half of that of the parade in the capital. Our dream is that it should be a march of the whole Silesian agglomeration. With visible support from the authorities. That it should be a celebration of all female and male residents.

We want an Equality March that will also include the twin cities. This year, a delegation from Cologne (which is twinned with Katowice) will be present in the Śląsko-Zagłębie region; there is also some hope that Essen (twinned with Zabrze) will also be represented.

// The interview took place on August 18, 2018 in Soblówka.



## ▲ Krakofonia performs in Munich

Kraków's LGBTQ choir \* Krakofonia visited Munich in Germany in May to take part in the international LGBTQ choir festival „Various Voices”. Five days of non-stop concerts and parties culminated in the grand finale – a performance of Carl Orff's Carmina Burana on Odeonsplatz. Krakofonia gained some new energy and lots of inspiration from European choirs that have already existed for 10, 20, and even 30 years! We have no doubt that making music together has great power – especially when there are thousands of musicians. Recordings of the main concerts can be viewed at [www.various-voices.de](http://www.various-voices.de). Krakofonia on Facebook: [@LGBTQkrakofonia](https://www.facebook.com/LGBTQkrakofonia)  
// text and photo: Krakofonia

## ▼ Angry Trans - Lifyen

The most popular myth regarding the transition? People seem to think that this is a process lasting just a few days and involves one operation. However, the transition is a lengthy process and there are many procedures depending on the needs of the individual. By the way, we stopped using the term „gender change” a long time ago. This is what makes **Angry Trans - Lifyen angry**. You will find him on Facebook: [@AngryTransLifyen](https://www.facebook.com/AngryTransLifyen).



We encourage you to help us produce our newsletter!  
If you are interested in writing and editing texts, please contact: [kontakt@znakirownosci.org.pl](mailto:kontakt@znakirownosci.org.pl)