

“Culture for Tolerance Days” - was a review of various creative activities which have been brought to life by, for, or about lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgendered people. During the four days in April (**21-24 IV 2005**) the organizers tried to show to the society – through a series of events - that LGBT people constitute a valuable and creative part of the Polish society. 'Culture for Tolerance' also aspired to be a forum for discussion about the place and role of LGBT people in Poland, the way of promoting understanding of the past and present of LGBT people, as well as reflecting upon their future.

The festival "Culture for Tolerance" was organized by the Krakow branch of Campaign Against Homophobia. Its goal was to introduce the issue of homosexuality into a wider discourse, to draw attention to the discrimination and exclusion against which homo-, bi- and transsexual people struggle in an everyday life. The organizers have set a goal for themselves: to establish a neutral space in which people - irrespective of their sexual orientation - might feel free, and one that will enable them to engage in dialogue on equal footing.

The EU Campaign "For Diversity. Against Discrimination" was present at the festival "Culture for Tolerance" with an eye catching information point, where two volunteers, dressed in the campaign T-shirts distributed factsheets and brochures and provided the participants with information on the campaign and the festival. Moreover, the campaign supported the festival with the promotional campaign in newspapers - daily paper in Kraków - Gazeta Wyborcza and daily Gazeta Krakowska as well as radio spots in Radio Wawa, Radio Eska and Radio Flash). The organizers have also emphasized the support of the EU campaign during the opening ceremony on April, 21st.

Most important events during the “Culture for Tolerance” Days:

International conference „Sexual Minorities: Pride and Exclusion”

The key issue of this year’s conference was exclusion within the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans) community. Disability, aging and gender identity were the most important issues discussed. It was also examined during the discussion how Western-based concepts, such as queer theory or Gay Pride, work in the Polish contest.

LGBT movie shows

Just like last year, movie shows was an important part of the Culture for Tolerance Days. The films -mostly documentaries -that were presented have never been shown in Poland before.

„Gender Training”

with Jelena Postic, Women ’s Room, Zagreb, Croatia Vanja Hamziæ, Organization Q, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina. During the workshop the problems undertaken were concerning gender and gender identity. Are there only two rigidly defined genders? What happens in the space between?

Paying Homage to Victims of the Holocaust

45,000 homosexuals were murdered during the Third Reich era on the basis of clause 175, and between 5,000 and 15,000 died in the concentration camps. Together with the representatives of Polish and international LGBT organizations, the participants wanted to pay homage to the homosexual victims of the Holocaust.

Discussion on LGBT Movement in Poland and in the Balkans

with Vanja Hamziæ, Organization Q, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina and Jelena Postic, Women ’s Room, Zagreb, Croatia.

In the Balkan region, much like in Poland, attempts to raise the question of the rights and issues of sexual minorities have faced strong resistance and even physical aggression. The panelists, therefore, were to share the experiences of the mentioned countries and also to discuss what steps could be taken in order to change the situation in the future.

Ladyspace is about women and for women.

The aim of the project is to provide an opportunity for lesbian, bisexual and queer women to share their thoughts and experiences. Ladyspace included: workshops (body consciousness, HIV/AIDS prevention, hate crimes), discussion panels (panel on the institution of the brothel in Auschwitz; meeting with activists from Lesbian (LBT)Coalition).