

HUMAN RIGHTS & DIVERSITY COORDINATOR – Mattias Kristoffersson

This past year has been the first for me as Human Rights & Diversity Coordinator, but also my first encounter with EPOA as an organization. In many regards, this has been an introductory year for me, learning about the organization and how it operates, but also trying to further define the role and function of the Human Rights Coordinator.

During the year, I have had a first meeting with ILGA-Europe, to discuss in what ways we can cooperate. In short, it was a good meeting, and in a longer perspective, there are several ways that our organizations can cooperate and contribute to each other's work.

Together with parts of the Board, I visited West Pride in June. Along with the rest of the Board I participated in EuroPride in Riga, where I among other things took part of the various human rights conferences and seminars, which were all very well organized and well-attended, as the rest of the program was.

I have also had several conversations about EPOA with smaller Swedish Pride festivals, with the aim of growing the EPOA membership. I have also engaged with other LGBTI actors in Sweden, mainly around finding ways to coordinate visits to Prides in need in Europe. During Stockholm Pride this year, I met with a group of LGBTI activists and Pride organizers from Russia. While our conversation mainly revolved around strengthening them as LGBTI activists/Pride organizers, we also got a chance to talk about EPOA and our activities. In late September 2015, I will go to St Petersburg to join in a panel discussion on Pride, and will there have the opportunity to talk more with the organizers about EPOA and in what ways EPOA could support them in their work.

For the coming year, I hope to turn into action many of the ideas that has been discussed during the year, for example the initiation of a EuroPride Award, making the human rights dimension of EuroPride more visible within EPOA communication, and develop in what ways EPOA and the EPOA network can support smaller Pride organizations and Prides in need.