17th June 2021

THE 7th INTERNATIONAL ONLINE EAST MEETS WEST CONFERENCE:

RIDING THE WAVES OF CHANGE

The Theme

We used to live in a world that was perhaps not always peaceful but that was never in a complete turmoil. But this has changed, and our LGBTIQ community, as an active player in society, cannot ignore this reality. As we might not always be aware of what is exactly changing around us, East meets West wants, in the 2021 Conference, to tackle this very challenging topic of ‘Change’ and ask the question how to ‘ride these waves of change’.

The Changes are revealed in different ways. The LGBTIQ community in Central- and Eastern Europe has certainly undergone changes. So we will bring you an updated picture of the daily LGBTIQ reality in the different countries. As we also want to put a special focus on Poland and its challenged LGBTIQ community, the 7th International East meets West Conference 2021 will be sourced from the Polish capital Warsaw. East meets West set-up a local Studio and will stream the Conference to audiences in the whole world.

But Changes have appeared also in our daily activities. Just consider the new ways of communication and the need to speak a different ‘language’ if we want to reach our communities. We read about the ‘New Normal’ but without knowing what it will mean for all of us. East meets West will present speakers and run discussions that will open your eyes for these changes and show you ways to adapt your existing approaches and become even more successful.

The Online Program

The East meets West Conference does not only reach out to the many NGO’s and business professionals we work with, but we offer a balanced program of key speeches, active panel discussions, specialists interventions and master type classes to everybody who is interested in the well being and strengthening of the LGBTIQ community.

Registration

Registering and attending the 7th International ONLINE East meets West Conference was never this easy – simply click (or tap) on the magic “Register here” button below. As we are not insensitive to the effect of COVID19 on everyone’s work, we are happy to offer to all of you, the participation to the 2021 Conference for free!

But as we are this year guests in Poland, we leave you the possibility to support the crucial work of two Polish leading NGOs financially. Together with our East meets West donation, your support will go to Equality Parade (Parada Równości w Warszawie) and Federation Signs of Equality (Federacja Znaki Równości).
The Online Program

The Conference language is **English** / The schedule is in **CET** (Central European Time Zone)

9:30 – 10:00  **Warm-up Time**
Get your laptop, tablet or smartphone on stand-by and find a comfortable place to sit. Enter the virtual conference room, have a look once again at the program, the speakers and get ready for an awesome Conference day! Our international guests and supporting partners will greet you during this warm-up time and wish you a very good morning.

10:00

**Message of the Co-Founders**
Pavel and Ludo together with the Supporting Partners are welcoming all participants to their 7th International East meets West Conference and introduce in their original way, the theme of the Conference: ‘Riding the Waves of Change!’
- Ludo Swinnen & Pavel Šubrt, Co-founders of East meets West

**Official Opening**
Welcoming the participants of the 7th International East meets West Conference
- Petra De Sutter, Vice Prime Minister of Belgium, Belgium
- Krzysztof Jan Śmieszek, Member of Parliament, Poland

10:15 – 10:50  **An East meets West reality check on Poland**
Poland has a bad press on the treatment of members of the LGBTIQ community. Homophobic declarations from the authorities and the news about ‘LGBT free zones’ caused a global outcry for action. As guest in Poland, East meets West wants to give members of the local LGBTIQ community the opportunity to offer you a unique reality check on the LGBTIQ status in their country, the existing situation and their hopes for the future.
- Julia Maciocha, President of Warsaw Pride, Poland
- Mateusz Gędźba, President of the Board of the Federation Signs of Equality, Poland

11:00 – 11:50  **A Look from the East and a Look from the West**
Having been on the agenda of the 6 previous conferences, this item has acquired the seal ‘traditional’. The idea behind it is as simple as it is successful. From our ever-growing network we select 2 participants from the "East" and 2 from the "West". In a panel discussion, they share with you positive but also saddening testimonials but always realistic updates on the happenings in their local LGBTIQ communities.
- Paula Fagan, CEO at LGBTIreland, Ireland
- Damla Umut Uzun, KAOS GL/Human Rights Program, Turkey
- Justin Nelson, Co-founder and President at the NGLCC, USA
- Lestat Monroe, Founder & Board Member at the RDCC, Romania

12:00 – 12:30  **Business and human rights in diverse worlds**
In many places, there have been impressive changes in the acceptance and recognition of LGBTIQ individuals. This includes their role and contribution to creativity, dynamics, and success of companies in markets and economies. However, a closer look reveals a multifaceted picture in Europe and the world, says economist and author Jens Schadendorf. In his keynote, he explains, why the LGBTIQ equality movement in global workplaces and markets faces a watershed moment: it can win or lose – in diverse ways. In order to win, the fast-growing LGBTIQ ecosystem of states, individuals - including allies -, companies, their c-suites, NGOs, and further organizations has to be smart and flexible. In any case, a new game is on - one that is more political than ever. Jens charts 10 key drivers, trends and fields of action describing what can and should be done to be a winner in the respective local context and to reach the next (local) level of inclusion.
- Jens Schadendorf, Author and Economist, Germany

12:30 – 13:45  **Lunch Break**
13:45 – 14:00  **Surfing the Waves of Change, 2nd Part!**

Pavel and Ludo welcome the participants to the 2nd part of Conference with a quick overview of what can be expected. They will also mention the many activities they are/were involved. Since 2020 they run successful East meets West SPOTLIGHT Series - every month they select an inspiring individual, organisation or proud business and bring them to an online stage for either an interactive session with the audience or a podcast. Recently they announced the start of new Executive MBA Fellowship from the Central European University (CEU). The fellowship will be awarded to a LGBTQI manager or entrepreneur with a proven track record of successfully defying barriers and prejudices facing LGBTQI people in the CEE Region and of achieving high professional recognition levels.

- Ludo Swinnen, Pavel Šubrt, Co-founders of East meets West
- Thomas Lammel, Senior Program Manager Executive MBA at Central European University, Austria

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14:00 – 14:50  **Your NGO in a Changed World... Time for a New Story?**

We all work with or at least know a number of LGBTQI NGO’s. These groups have contributed since many years to the improvement of status of our community. But they also are confronted with changes and they should not be afraid to face these changes but try to reinvent themselves. We have with us representatives of active NGO’s who found new ways to play their role in society. In a panel discussion we discuss with them the reasoning behind their development. Use this opportunity to learn from their best practices and why not copy them in your own activities?

- Melinda Miklós, CEO at WeAreOpen, Hungary
- Aida Malkić, Program Manager at Sarajevo Open Centre, Bosnia & Herzegovina
- Simeon Vasilev, Chairman & Co-Founder at GLAS Foundation, Bulgaria
- Óscar Muñoz, Co-director at REDI & María Ortúño Deputy Director at REDI, Spain

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15:00 – 15:50  **Corporate Social Responsibility in action!**

East meets West has presented in previous events the Corporate Social Responsibility as a huge opportunity for the LGBTQI community. Today we look at CSR from the point of view of a Corporate to get an inside view of how they deal with this new reality. We have gathered representatives from international companies which some with an active presence in Poland, and asked them to share with us their ‘internal kitchen secrets’.

- Denise Reed Lamoreaux, Global Chief Diversity Officer at Atos, USA
- Carla Maria Tiburtini, Inclusion & Diversity Leader at AvioAero a GE Aviation Business, Italy
- Tuvia Borok, Global Head of Policy and Documentation at Goldman Sachs, UK
- Alexey Kozlov, Hogan Lovells LGBTI ERG Lead, Russia / USA

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15:50 – 16:05  **Is the end of the “Grey Suits” near?**

When we were recently on a meeting chaired by the Board of large company in the CEE region, it was striking to see in front of us a row of men in grey suits. No women and nobody who identified himself/herself as a member of the LGBTQI community. Even in companies with a mature diversity and inclusion policy, LGBTQI professionals in a Board are rare specimen. We will ask questions like what is the possible benefit of having LGBTQI representation on a board level, how the actual existing situation in the US and Europe is and how much unbalanced status could be changed?

- Fabrice Houdart, Managing Director for Global Equality Initiatives at Out Leadership, USA

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16:15 – 16:30  **Data of LGBTQI Businesses, the oxygen behind every successful action**

Humans can survive without food for three weeks. For water, it’s three days and for oxygen, it’s a mere three minutes. And what about another, but just as basic and essential part of modern life, the ability to access data when we want? Our LGBTQI community still lacks reliable and recent data, especially in the CEE region. With their last report on the Economic Case for LGBTQI inclusion in the CEE region, Open for Business, filled a gap, published key findings and suggested clear action plans.

- George Perlov, Eastern Europe Program Lead at Open For Business, Germany
16:30 – 17:15 **Coming Out in Business, Your 1st Class Ticket to Success!**

When you come out as LGBTIQ business owner, you enter a new business universe. New contacts, new opportunities and you will feel, you let yourself no longer being carried away with the waves, no, you are riding the waves of change! But how do you successfully tackle such endeavour, which tools are available and what is the underlying business case? We invited professionals in this field. Just enjoy the discussion and start moving!

- Matej Ftáčník, CEO Vacuumlabs, Slovakia / UK
- Alexandra Tarmo, Head of Partnerships & Social Procurement at Unilever, Switzerland
- Peter Zerp, Global Supplier Inclusion & Sustainability at Accenture, Netherlands

17:15 – 17:30 **The East meets West Awards & Closing Words**

We from East meets West meet people, NGO’s and businesses that are just very good in what they do. We honour here for the 2nd time these 3 categories and give the winners a pat on the shoulder, an encouragement wrapped in the virtual thank you hug, together with an original East meets West 2021 Award Trophy.

- Pavel, Ludo and the Conference Backstage Team

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**Supporting Partners**

Organising the 7th International East meets West Conference in Warsaw would not be possible without the kind support of the following partners:

- **EGLCC Founding Partners**
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  - nightjet
  - FEDERACJA ZNAKI Równości
  - PARADA Równości
  - CAVARIA

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**About East meets West**

*Founded in 2013 in Vienna, Austria, East meets West is a network of LGBTIQ professionals from Western & (primarily) Eastern Europe. East meets West facilitates the exchange of ideas, the sharing of best practices and generates mutual inspiration to improve the social acceptance of LGBTIQ people in the different countries. The East meets West brand has two pillars. East meets West Social has a catalyst function in the LGBTIQ organizational ecosystem by connecting NGOs, diplomatic representatives, officials, corporate players, entrepreneurs and variety of other inspiring personalities. East meets West Business is the facilitator of awareness on LGBTIQ businesses and that LGBTIQ people can be successful entrepreneurs and become role models inside and outside the LGBTIQ community. East meets West is also the founding member of the EGLCC, The European LGBTIQ Chamber of Commerce.*

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