

## Message from the co-founders

Dear East meets West friends!

Sometimes its good to stand still and look back before continuing the journey one is making. This is what East meets West did last year. Questioning the sense of what we were doing and challenging the strategy we follow. Both of us have a demanding full-time job in the banking sphere and we have people dear and near to us who are entitled to our attention. In the LGBTI world, many other organizations are active with more people and with more support than our 2-people team. So does it make sense to run EmW? Well, we came to the conclusion that it really does, as East meets West makes a difference and fits well in our divers LGBTI world. We have a unique focus on the region of Central & Eastern Europe, we are professionals and we focus not alone on social LGBTI topics, but we developed also a unique LGBTI business focus.

East meets West is alive and kicking and we are back with a 2018 program. We will continue to support the 2<sup>nd</sup> LGBTI Business Center at the Vienna Pride Village, which promises to be bigger, more professional and with more businesses than last year. But our main focus will be on our 4<sup>th</sup> International East meets West Conference with a surprising, innovating and inspiring theme: "Faces of Modern Diversity". The Conference will, like before, offer you the occasion to meet the people that form the East meets West network and share with them past successes and future plans.

Apart from our LGBTI business focus we will pay equal attention to the efforts made by those of our friends who still fight the basic LGBTI battles in their country. In this newsletter you will find reports on the many activities that were organized.

Enjoy the new edition of East meets West Pages and do not forget to block the date for the 4<sup>th</sup> International East meets West Conference. To make sure you do not miss any program updates, drop us a line to [events@eastmeetswest.eu](mailto:events@eastmeetswest.eu).

Pavel & Ludo



4<sup>th</sup> INTERNATIONAL EAST MEETS WEST CONFERENCE

## FACES OF MODERN DIVERSITY

Featuring indisputable LGBTI people, who have taken their rightful place in the mainstream society and this way have become iconic representatives of the new phase of social diversity.

**15<sup>th</sup> June 2018**  
**Vienna, Austria**

### How to navigate through EmW Pages?

As these EmW Pages want to cover LGBTI Social as well LGBTI Business topics, we added a small hint allowing you the navigate easily through the Pages:

And if you see a [link](#), it is not only safe to click. It will provide you more reading to the topic.

○ EmW Social Topic

● EmW Business Topic

# Inspiration from Canada

## The Competitive Advantage of a Diverse and Inclusive Culture for Modern Business – hosted by the CGLCC and RBC

Our Canadian colleagues from the CGLCC (The Canadian Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce) co-hosted on February 1<sup>st</sup> in Toronto, Canada, an interesting Symposium on a very actual topic - 'The Competitive Advantage of a Diverse and Inclusive Culture for Modern Business'. High level industrial executives moderated a discussion on a subject, which more and more companies are getting aware of.



Faced with an increased number of factors disrupting the existing business approaches, companies see the need, in order to remain competitive, to tap in new enterprise strategies. A major benefit comes with the development of a cross-enterprise holistic Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) strategy. The business case for such Diversity and Inclusion is robust, quantifiable and directly connected to the bottom line. Today, prioritizing Diversity and Inclusion is essential for organizations to remain not only competitive, but be innovative and socially responsible.



Internally, a Diverse & Inclusive strategy allows companies to mobilize the dormant potential within their organizations and enable everyone to bring their whole selves to work. Externally, such a strategy improves community, public, client and employee relations and associated goodwill, and leads to innovation of products and services across supply chains. Smart business leaders have the opportunity to embrace, and proactively look at D&I as means of competitive advantage and view diversity and inclusion as a critical leadership skill.

The big added value of such an event is that it gives a stage to companies and business leaders who are championing D&I across their entire enterprise. They can share how they successfully navigated their cultural journey, highlighting their supplier diversity roadmap and the efforts to grow and link supplier diversity to D&I and corporate social responsibility efforts, providing their firms the power to truly gain and leverage high-performance and corporate empowerment.

You might think Toronto is far away, but in a globalized world, its just around the corner and perhaps its time to also have such initiatives in our region as a fitting Diversity & Inclusive company business pays off, all the time and everywhere!

## The Black & White Gala and the LGBT Business Awards 2017

With glamour but still to the 'LGBT Business' point, the CGLCC's Black & White Gala event took place in Toronto on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. This spectacular event brought not only the opportunity to celebrate great achievements, meet and network with leaders and professionals from all industry sectors that are championing business, entrepreneurship, and diversity and inclusion. It also put a spotlight on Debra

Quade, Manager of Supplier Diversity at Kellogg Company. She received the 2017 Chair's Award, which recognizes an individual who has made a significant contribution to the LGBT+ business movement in Canada and/or globally. She demonstrated a strong commitment to increasing opportunities for LGBT-owned businesses in Canada through her ongoing support of the CGLCC Supplier Diversity Program.



### Useful links

The Canadian Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (CGLCC)  
<http://www.cglcc.ca>

# More from the Western front

## Introducing a new, close EmW partnership

● SGLCC, The Scandinavian Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, is proud to be now closely connected to East meets West (EmW), as well as with the other NGLCC Global Affiliate Chambers. Together with the IGLBC, The Italian GLbt Business Chamber, we cover a large part of Europe. The SGLCC has several aims - to certify LGBT owned businesses for Diversity Supplier registration, to serve as a platform for dialogue on LGBT issues for the private sector, branding and not at least be a center of knowledge on how your company can better reach out to the LGBT market and improve the chances of attracting the best talents.

# SGLCC

The SGLCC composes annually the Diversity Index and by doing this, offers the possibility to measure the success within D&I and compare it to international standards. This year's winner will be presented in Stockholm on March 21<sup>st</sup> at the SGLCC's event "[Make Diversity your next business success!](#)".

The SGLCC participated and hosted 13 events during 2017 and looks forward to as many during 2018, together with partners in Scandinavia, across Europe and the world. With the close ties between European chambers, we certainly form the one-stop resource for corporates across Europe.

## NGLCC Celebrates 15 Years at The 2017 National Dinner Gala

● The Washington based National LGBT Chamber of Commerce, the [NGLCC](#), the business voice of the community, marked 15 years of creating LGBT business success and opportunity at the 2017 [NGLCC National Dinner](#), hosted at the National Building Museum in Washington DC. "The NGLCC National Dinner is a thrilling moment for us to reflect on the tremendous growth we see year after year in the LGBT business community because of the opportunities, partnerships, and advocacy victories championed by the NGLCC and our partners," said NGLCC Co-Founder and President Justin Nelson. "Our fifteenth anniversary affords us the special opportunity to look back at our journey, as well as launch ourselves forward into the next chapter of success for our communities. Our 2017 honorees exemplify the very best in our fifteen year mission to grow the economic vitality of LGBT businesses across the United States and throughout the world. We will harness the excitement of a year that produced a record-breaking number of certified LGBT Business Enterprises, powerful public policy wins, many new corporate and government partnerships, and our largest International Business & Leadership Conference yet as we continue to lead boldly."



● The 2<sup>nd</sup> NGLCC Global LGBTI Business Week, created by the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce in partnership with leaders and organizations committed to expanding global LGBTI economic opportunities, ran again just shortly before the National Dinner. Series of events and panel discussions at a variety of locations in Washington DC featured global leaders, economic development and human rights experts, governments, but also the private sector.



### Useful links

The Scandinavian Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (SGLCC)

<https://www.sglcc.se>

National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC)

<http://www.nglcc.org>

[https://my.nglcc.org/register/business\\_enterprise](https://my.nglcc.org/register/business_enterprise)

# Kosovo writes history

## First ever pride parade in Kosovo's capital, Pristina

○ After three marches organized over the last three years in Kosovo by the CSGD and the CEL, now in coordination with other human rights organizations, finally for the first time the Pristina Pride Week "In the name of Love", took place!

From October 6<sup>th</sup>, the five-day program included "Queer night", an exhibition on the LGBTI rights movement, many panel discussions on the progress and regress of the state of the LGBTI community in recent years and concluded on October 10<sup>th</sup> with the Pride Parade. Hundreds of people supporting the LGBTI rights marched through the main boulevard and square in Pristina. Held one day before the National Coming Out Day, to protest homophobia and transphobia in the country, people during the Pride Parade were singing and dancing but still under a heavy police security. Being the first Pride Parade in Balkan without barricades, the March ended without major incidents although two alleged incidents related to the Pride Parade occurred after the march ended. According to Kosovo Police, a person was threatened and verbally harassed by unknown offenders and a Swiss citizen was physically attacked by an unknown offender in a nearby area. There was also a small group of five protesters who were holding anti-LGBTI signs though they did not show threatening or violent action.

Among many local institutional officials who attended the Pride Parade, there was also a great support shown from the international community, mainly diplomatic representatives and international institutions and organizations. Everyone was pleased to see the massive support of the LGBTI community from Albania, Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia. On October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017, in cooperation with the LGBTI organizations, The Office of Good Governance in Office of Prime Minister organized a reception in the premises of the government building to mark the opening of the Pride Week. At this occasion the Prime Minister of Kosovo, Mr. Ramush Haradinaj, reconfirmed the commitment of the Government of Kosovo for the advancement and protection of the LGBTI rights.

In accordance with constitutional obligations to promote equality and human rights, the President of Kosovo, Mr. Hashim Thaci joined the first Pride Parade in Kosovo. He had also participated in the 2016 march for marking the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT). In a statement, Mr. Thaci reminded the audience that "Kosovo was built on the principles of equality and freedom for all communities, and that violence or threat of this community will not be allowed".



### Useful links

Further readings on Kosovo Pride Parade  
<http://prishtinainsight.com/first-pride-parade-mag>

CSGD - Center for Social Group Development  
<http://csgd-ks.org>

Center for Equality and Liberty (CEL) Kosovo  
<http://www.cel-ks.org>

# Short news from the EmW Network

EmW works in a region where the LGBTI topics touch many people in a variety of ways. Sometimes political or sometimes business, often social, but always very driven! Enjoy the news from this network and be amazed. For more information about country related news, feel free to contact us: [info@eastmeetswest.eu](mailto:info@eastmeetswest.eu).

## Hungary

The 2nd [OPEN Conference](#), which took place on November 10<sup>th</sup> in Budapest, was attended by over 160 international diversity leaders, local and regional businesses, NGOs, and Employee Resource Groups. Altogether 30+ speakers, panelists and facilitators, from 3 continents and representatives of sounding brands such as BlackRock, BP, Budapest Bank, Citi, Central European University, Eaton, General Electric, Google, Mckinsey&Company, Microsoft, MOL Group, OUTstanding, P&G, Tesco, The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) and Vodafone Hungary. The annual conference is brought by the [WeAreOpen](#) community initiative, founded in the summer of 2013 and based on the conviction that being open, judging everyone solely on the basis of their achievements and actions, is not only the right thing to do, but experience indicates that it makes business sense.



The 2017 OPEN Conference brought to participants also an interesting cultural experience and over an exhibition presented the breathtaking work of [Déri Miklós](#).



## Macedonia

December was a busy time for the [Subversive Front](#), the Macedonian EmW partner organization. Firstly, together with Stonewall and the LGBTI Support Center at the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of the Republic of Macedonia, they organized on 8-10<sup>th</sup> December 2017 a Regional Conference "Access to Justice for LGBT People in Western Balkans and Turkey". Two training sessions were held during the conference as they had on board police officers, prosecutors, employees of several ministries, activists from the LGBTI organizations from Macedonia and few countries of the region.

The National LGBTI Conference "Rainbow Dialogues – Needs, Challenges and Priorities" was also held in December 2017 and served to convene some of the key stakeholders in advocating for LGBTI equality in the Republic of Macedonia such as representatives of the relevant ministries, Members of Parliament, representatives of the political parties, representatives of the independent human rights institutions in the country, media representatives, as well as representatives from the civic sector advocating for LGBTI equality. The event was organized by the Association for a critical approach to gender and sexuality [Subversive Front](#), in partnership with the Sarajevo Open Centre from Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Outcomes of an important research study (conducted by Subversive Front) [Needs Assessment of the LGBT Community Members in Macedonia](#) were presented there. The research aimed to provide a comprehensive assessment of the self-identified needs of the LGBT community in Macedonia in relation to health, education, economic opportunity, housing and service provision.



# Czech Republic

- SAP is the newest signatory of the [Pride Business Forum Memorandum 2017+](#). Management representatives of 4 SAP companies signed the Pride Business Forum Memorandum 2017+ on November 29<sup>th</sup> 2017 and officially adopted principles of LGBT diversity and fair access to employees regardless of sexual orientation. By signing the memorandum, SAP joined existing signatories like Accenture, Clearstream Operations, Vodafone CR, Hilton Hotel Prague, IBM, Prague Pride, and Business for Society.

- Another workshop hosted by Vodafone Czech Republic took place on February 23<sup>th</sup> 2018, this time themed "How to Start with LGBT Diversity in the Workplace – in terms of HR and Marketing". This was another mutual exchange of experience in the implementation of LGBT equality in the workplace.



- "[Jsme Fer](#)" (We are fair) is a new project which started in Prague. A coalition of non-profit organizations and many individuals was brought together and to challenge the status quo – Czech Republic is missing marriage equality! The campaign is not just about putting posters but is about getting people to talk and about a "national conversation". Further this year throughout the Czech Republic, from April 19<sup>th</sup> on, they will deliver a series of discussions, dialogues and debates about marriage equality, they will be present at local and national festivals. They will tour over 60 Czech cities and talk about marriage equality and at the same time listen to the people they meet. The goal is simple – make the policy formers and makers to act fairly towards LGBTI people and recognize their love, commitment and contributions.



# Bulgaria

- [Work It OUT](#) took part in the largest HR forum in Bulgaria. Held on October 25<sup>th</sup> in Sofia, Simeon Vassilev, the co-founder and CEO of the [GLAS Foundation](#), presented the Work it OUT business platform at the annual conference 'HR and The Future of Work: Management Challenges'. The purpose of this platform is to integrate LGBTI employees better into the workforce and to create an inclusive and empowering business environment in Bulgaria. Fleur Botwick, Diversity & Inclusion Director in EY for the EMEA region discussed the topic 'Why the inclusive business leadership is more important than ever'. GLAS Foundation presented data from a quick survey among more than 100 employees from Bulgarian companies in different business fields. The results show that 45% of respondents say they do not have open LGBTI colleagues in the workplace. A majority are also those who admit that their employer does not apply anti-discrimination policies in the company. Over 80% say they would welcome and participate in corporate initiatives for equality and inclusion. Approximately 91% claim that the business in Bulgaria can do much more to make LGBTI employees integrated at work.



- Bulgarian businesses now start to develop internal guidebooks on inclusion of LGBTI employees. The first of its kind in Bulgaria was presented jointly by EY Bulgaria and the business platform [Work It OUT](#). It introduces employers to the practical steps they can undertake to make the work environment more inclusive for their LGBTI employees and create a more tolerant and productive corporate culture for everyone. The document is of course available for anyone to [download](#).





# Austria

● [OEBB](#) (The Austrian Railways) received the 2017 [Meritus Award](#) in the category 'Large organizations'. Held on November 11<sup>th</sup> 2017 under the patronage of the President of the Vienna Economic Chamber and the Federal Minister of Labor, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, the biennial Meritus Awards recognize organizations that are particularly committed to diversity management in the sexual orientation dimension. The project is funded by the federal government, the states, social partners, other organizations and private sector supporters. Unfortunately, despite the high quality of the submissions, no Meritus Award could be given in the category "micro-organization" (up to 10 employees) and "small organization" (11-250 employees). A special prize "LGBTIQ Business & Innovation", was awarded to the [Courage Counseling Center](#).



○ Vienna hosted the first [European Lesbian Conference](#). Hundreds of lesbian activists, artists, academics, politics, journalists, NGO leaders from 45 countries and 148 cities, met for 3 days during a major and historical event for the European Lesbian community. One of the main goals of the Conference was to provide a space for lesbians to develop a political agenda and a working program for the European Lesbian movement in order to increase their impact and visibility in all spheres. The full narrative report of the European Lesbian Conference 2017 is in a lively, informative but still accurate format available for [download](#).



● The LGBTIQ Election Studies are very important not only for its scientific but also for its political reasons: to increase the visibility of the LGBTIQ community, to reduce prejudices and to fight for LGBTIQ people in science and politics to be at last adequately perceived. In the summer of 2017, in the run-up to the federal elections in Germany on September 24<sup>th</sup> and in the run-up to the national elections in Austria on October 15<sup>th</sup>, the first election studies addressed to the LGBTIQ community in Germany and Austria were held. Which parties have LGBTIQ people voted for during the elections? What political and social issues did the LGBTIQ community employ? Which topics were decisive for the electors? [Download](#) the survey results and find all answers.

○ In Vienna, [WASt](#) (The Vienna Anti-Discrimination Office for same-sex and transgender lifestyles) has not only a long operational history but is well known for the large number of events they organize. One of such events took place on November 13<sup>th</sup>, the Specialist Conference - [LGBTIQ and Disabilities](#). Being precise, the Conference was titled "Intersectionality: LGBTIQ and Disabilities - The Interactions of Multiple Diversity Features in Theory and Practice" and featured lectures by international experts were devoted to the topic of "Intersectionality and Disabilities". LGBTIQ, disability and intersectionality in school, pedagogy and psychosocial work were discussed in four parallel workshops. It also shed light on barriers and freedoms in the LGBTIQ community and opened a protected space for LGBTIQ disability exchange.

● The 5<sup>th</sup> LGBT Business Forum, the initiative of QBW - Queer Business Women, agro - Austrian gay professionals and IBM Austria, took place on November 22<sup>nd</sup>. Hosted by Erste Group at their famous Erste Campus Vienna, and opened by the Erste Group member of the board, the Forum featured number of lectures and workshops as well as sessions on experience-sharing between LGBTI ERG groups.





## Slovakia

IBM Slovakia share knowledge on diversity and inclusion not only within the own company but even beyond country borders! They established a new partnership with Raiffeisen Centrobank (Austria) and initiated a series of best-practice sharing workshops. The first took place in October 2017 in Vienna and focused on two dimensions of diversity - inclusion of people with disability and LGBTI inclusion. Over 40 'bankers' in the audience came willingly to learn about what IBM representatives have to say. Want to find out what they [said](#)?



Diversity teams of Raiffeisen Centrobank and IBM met again to share tips and tricks, this time in February in Slovakia. Although LGBTI inclusion was still heavily discussed by the audience, this time the focus topic was 'balance of gender equality and empowerment of women', a topic which Raiffeisen Centrobank can be very proud of. Read [full story](#).



## Poland

This year's ILGA-Europe Annual Conference was held in Warsaw, Poland - a place of history and heritage. The Annual Conference 2017 was this time hosted by ILGA-Europe's member Campaign Against Homophobia (KPH). The Conference theme of the Annual Meeting was: CHANGE! Communities Mobilizing, Movements Rising. Read further under: <https://www.ilga-europe.org/conference/warsaw-2017/storify>



## Russia

More efforts to support LGBT Families in Russia by [Resource Rus!](#) In the last 6 months, there were a series of large and smaller activities in Moscow, that were driven by an independent group of activists and the non-governmental organization 'Resource LGBTQIA Moscow'. There were LGBT films shown in various private locations in Moscow, a series of meetings of support and discussion groups. The most notable event was held in November 2017 (November 9-10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>), the IV LGBTQIAPP+ Family Conference 'Openness and Solidarity. Risks and Opportunities'. With 400 registered participants, guests from Russia (St. Petersburg, Ekaterinburg, Tyumen, Tomsk, Perm and other cities), Ukraine, Italy, Switzerland, this forum has gathered a diverse and vivid audience. The conference delivered 20 presentations, 2 round-table discussions, a workshop with a legal specialist for families, 15 workshops on family and partnerships, many new connections and friends.



The latest research reveals that every 5th Russian LGBT is HIV positive. The independent Moscow-based organization '[AIDS Center](#)' published the latest research data according to which by December 2017, 18% of the Russian gay and bi-sexuals are HIV positive. [UNAIDS](#) additionally confirmed that 90% of the new HIV diagnoses in Eastern Europe are coming from Russia. It is increasingly important to know that the anti-retroviral therapy is not available in Moscow to those without permanent registration in Moscow, and is only provided in Russia at the place of the person's permanent address. The total amount of HIV+ people is estimated to 1,2 million, with the very high frequency among men aged 30-39 years old. In 2016, only 260.000 patients have been given the therapy, as per the data provided by the Ministry of Healthcare of Russia. Number of deaths that is caused by HIV reached 14.631 from January to June 2017. This represents an increase by 13,5% higher year-over-year (for a 6 months reported period).





## Kosovo

○ The Center for Social Group Development (CSGD) published on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018 the Annual Report 2017 for LGBTI rights in Kosovo - "[Lookback: The LGBTI Community and their Rights in Kosovo.](#)" The report analyses the key developments during 2017 and also sets recommendations for Kosovo Institutions and NGOs on improving the LGBTI environment in the country.



○ The Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo (CCRK) is under revision. The CSGD attended meetings of the Working Group for Amending and Supplementing the CCRK and presented proposals for amendments dealing with hate crime. Subsequently, hate crime was introduced to Article 74 (General rules for mitigation or aggravation of punishments). The amendment is made in paragraph 2, point 12, "If a criminal offense is a hate act, which is a crime committed against a person, group of persons or property, motivated upon the race, color, gender, gender identity, language, religion, national or social origin, relation to any community, property, economic condition, sexual orientation, birth, disability or other personal status, or because of their affinity with persons who have the aforementioned characteristics, except if one of the enumerated characteristics constitutes an element of a criminal offense."

Though the recommendation for inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity as a protected ground in Article 147 (Inciting national, racial, religious or ethnic hatred, discord or intolerance) was rejected based on the argument that this is not explicitly stated as such in any Council of Europe countries. The grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity were, however, included in Article 179 (Aggravated Murder), Article 187 (Assault), Article 188 (Light Bodily Injury), Article 189 (Grievous Bodily Injury) and Article 333 (Destruction or Damage to Property). The amendments of CCRK will be sent for review and approval to Ministry of Justice, Kosovo Government, Kosovan Parliamentarian Committee on Legislation, Mandates, Immunities, Rules of Procedure of the Assembly and the Oversight of the Anti-Corruption Agency and the Assembly of Kosovo.



## Bosnia & Herzegovina

○ Another (small) victory for the rights of transgender people! The BiH Ombudsmen for Human Rights confirmed: a personal name does not have to be harmonized with the sex marker in the identification documents of the person. This comes as good news after the August 2017 case when the Ministry of Interior in Tuzla refused the name change of the person to a name that is not harmonized with the sex marker on the identification document, to a transgender person who filed this request. [Read the full story.](#)

○ [Sarajevo Open Centre](#), supported by USAID's Program Marginalized Populations Support Activity (USAID/PPMG) within the project "Development of institutional network of support for LGBTI persons in Canton Sarajevo", held a two-day training with 32 prosecutors and expert assistants of prosecutor's office in the Canton Sarajevo on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> November 2017. This is the first time ever that a judicial institution has delegated this number of its representatives in order to attend a training on human rights of LGBTI persons, and to recognize the importance of such trainings for their further professional work.

○ From January 26<sup>th</sup> until 27<sup>th</sup> Sarajevo Open Centre, for the sixth time organized and hosted the International Festival of Queer Film [Merlinka](#) at the Art Cinema Kriterion in Sarajevo.



## 10 Years of Sarajevo Open Centre, SOC

○ In 2017 The Sarajevo Open Centre marked its 10 years of work and existence. Find out more about SOC's decade endeavors which fundamentally contributed to a great extent to the development of the human rights and encouraged further progress of civil society in Bosnia and Herzegovina in their special [publication.](#)



## Croatia

IGLYO Conference: From the of September 29<sup>th</sup> till the 1<sup>st</sup> of October, the 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference of the international network of LGBTIQ Youth Organizations - [IGLYO](#) (International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer Youth and Student Organization) was held in Zagreb, Croatia. 75 Participants from across Europe had the chance to get familiar with the LGBTIQ situation in Croatia and discuss jointly LGBTIQ topics, share among them first hand information on LGBTIQ rights in their countries. The conference also included a formal visit with representatives of embassies and Croatian institutions at the European cinema.



## Slovenia

Dejan Crnek, the mayor of Ljubljana, opened the two-Day 5<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the [Rainbow Cities Network](#) on November 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. Exchange of good practices, interventions and initiatives between these cities is important to increase the impact of local approaches and to spend budgets effectively. With all developments regarding sexual diversity and gender identity worldwide, exchange between cities from different countries only seems logical.

In September 2017 the Rainbow Cities Network had already 27 member cities from 15 countries. Certainly worth reading from the RCN is the "[One pagers on local LGBTI policies and current good practices 2017](#)".



## Serbia

On February 6<sup>th</sup>, at an event in the House of Human Rights and Democracy in Belgrade, [Gayten LGBT](#), who took part in the creation of the Protocols, presented to the public the drafts of two types of Protocols on police treatment of trans people: "Protocols on police treatment of transsexual and transgender people in situations of frisk and strip search and detention" and "Protocols on treatment of transsexual and transgender people facing criminal sanctions".

In January, Gayten-LGBT legal team member, Ms. Zorica Mrsevic presented a Publication „A transgender face of justice" in Belgrade. The book presents various situations when the trans community is deprived from freedom.

On February 13<sup>th</sup>, Gayten-LGBT participated in a public debate dedicated to the drafted Law on Amendments to the Law on Registers. Newly proposed drafted Law foresees some changes in favor of trans community in Serbia, enabling them to change personal documents. Nevertheless, Gayten-LGBT pointed out reasons and importance of inclusion transgender identity itself regardless of genital and others surgeries. Gayten-LGBT objections to certain parts of the proposed text, such as the fact that only after a full medical transition, the transgender person is entitled to the change of legal documents. Gayten-LGBT also presents [Drafts of Protocols](#) on police treatment of transsexual and transgender people.



## Romania

[Accept Romania](#) is known well for organizing a multitude of activities, a dense program of workshops, movie screening and various cultural performances, but the highlight certainly is the start of an [EU Project](#)! It was announced that from January 2018 till June 2019, a project with European funding entitled "partnership for equality of people" will be supported. Increasing the capacity of public authorities and professionals in the area of justice, health, education and social assistance to connect with members of their community. The project will start with the training of a group of mentors in three key areas to prevent and fight discrimination at a European level.





# ERA @Western Balkans and Turkey

ERA's 2017 Annual Conference, which took place at the end of September 2017, brought everybody to Podgorica, Montenegro and to the theme "Empower ourselves, Challenge the system, Transform societies". Through this conference, ERA wanted to encourage further discussions on these three main themes by using the opportunity to meet activists, experts and allies who joined from the countries of the Western Balkans, Turkey and others. Find out much more in the [Conference program](#), but perhaps also check-out #TheGalleryProject or 5<sup>th</sup> Montenegro Pride, which gave the 2017 ERA conference an extra touch.



**About ERA:** The organization is working to enhance and strengthen the capacities of its members in the fields of advocacy, research and public campaigning; supports members to develop and maintain their strategic development, to build and maintain effective organizational structures and to increase their financial capacities and sustainability. ERA is providing knowledge and expertise and promote regional and inter-regional cooperation.

## About East meets West



Founded in Vienna, Austria in 2013, East meets West (EmW) is a network of LGBTI 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 situation of LGBTI men and women in the different countries. The East-meets West brand has two pillars:

### LGBTI Rights are Human Rights

**East meets West Social** has a catalyst function in the LGBTI organizational ecosystem by connecting NGOs, diplomatic representatives, officials, corporate players, entrepreneurs and variety of other inspiring personalities.

### The Business Power in Society

**East meets West Business** is a facilitator of awareness for businesses and a creator of experiences for the professional European LGBTI Community. In a broader sense, EmW achieves this aim by supporting LGBTI linked, small business set-ups. It is the place for the creation of awareness that LGBTI men and women can be successful entrepreneurs and become role models inside and outside the LGBTI community.

## Imprint

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