



**EMPOWER  
CHALLENGE  
TRANSFORM**

**ERA**

ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
PODGORICA | MONTENEGRO  
20-23 SEPTEMBER 2017

# EMPOWER, CHALLENGE, TRANSFORM

## ERA Annual Conference

20-23 September 2017

Podgorica, Montenegro

### BACKGROUND:

Main theme of this year's conference is **"Empower ourselves, Challenge the system, Transform societies"**. Our common struggles in the region continue to revolve around three main areas:

- a) LGBTI community and activists alike are highly vulnerable to discrimination, exclusion or violence. Self-harm and isolation play an important part;
- b) The systems we live in are still not fully inclusive to LGBTI communities, and in many aspects LGBTI rights remain marginal, neglected and in many cases openly opposed. LGBTI people's access to democratically elected institutions, justice and services continue to face serious challenges;
- c) Working with societies, changing public attitudes and perceptions continues to be done only by LGBTI organizations and activists, while mainstreaming these rights is still a challenge.

Through this conference we want to focus on our movement and discuss our personal views, experiences, challenges, needs, expectations, frustrations, hopes, ideas and use our imagination and creativity to inspire ourselves and the others around us. We want to make sure that the vibrant and diverse members of community and movement that make our movement can mingle around different subjects and topics, confront and challenge each-other, our concepts and ideas.

For this purpose, [Open Space Technology](#) (OST) will be the used methodology. Through OST, participants will be driven by their personal passions, similar interests and priorities, and come up with concrete follow up results whether they are recommendations, plans of cooperation, projects, activities and campaigns or simply getting inspired either on a personal or professional level.

# The very short agenda...

Following the OST principles, the Conference agenda will be finalized by all participants at the very beginning of the first day.

However, the overall program is distributed in the following way:

**19 September:** Arrival of participants (who plan to attend the ERA General Assembly as members or observers);

Steering Board and Organizing Committee meeting;

**20 September:** Arrival of participants (those who are attending only conference and not General Assembly)

ERA General Assembly (only for representatives of ERA member organizations or per specific invitation)

ERA Annual Conference Opening Event

**22-22 September:** ERA Annual Conference

**23 September:** Montenegro Pride March

Food Fair

Closing Event / Party

**See detailed agenda below.**

---

**You are kindly invited to use the hashtag**

**#ERAcon2017**

**for publications and posts on your social media posts**

# The detailed agenda...

## 19 September - Arrival

12:00 – 18:00 ERA Steering Board and Conference Organizing Committee meeting;  
Venue: Hotel CentreVille  
Address: Cetinjska 7, the Capital Plaza

---

## 20 September – ERA General Assembly and Opening Event

08:30 – 18:00 ERA General Assembly (detailed GA agenda to be sent separately to members and observers)  
Venue: Parliament of Montenegro (TBC)  
Address: Bulevar Svetog Petra Cetinjskog 10, Podgorica

19:00 – 22:00 ERA Conference Opening Event, Exhibition and Dinner  
Venue: Bar “Biro”;  
Address: Bokeška 10, Podgorica

---

## 21 September – ERA Annual Conference, Day 1

08:30-09:30 Registration of participants

09:30-10:00 **Welcome Speeches**  
Amarildo Fecanji, ERA  
Danijel Kalezić, Queer Montenegro

**Keynote Speeches**  
Institution of the Ombudsperson of Republic of Montenegro  
Axel Hochrein, Hirschfeld-Eddy-Foundation

10:00-11:00 **First Plenary: Empowering Ourselves**  
**Moderator: Jelena Čolaković**  
**Speakers: Anja Koletnik (Institute TransAkcija), Janset Kalan (Trans Activist), Jovan Džoli Ulićević (Spectra);**

LGBTIQ community and activists in our region are still vulnerable to discrimination, exclusion and violence. Whether said or not, visible or in-visible, all forms of ill-

treatment have an effect in the quality of our lives, our physical and mental health, our motivation to do something for our community, to be part of the community or the societies we live in. What can we do to live fulfilling lives as LGBTI people while still struggling with the discrimination around us?

11:00-11:15	Coffee Break
11:15-13:00	<b>Pitch-in Session and Setting up Conference Agenda</b> <b>Location: Conference Hall</b> <b>Facilitator: Aleksandra Vidanović</b>
13:00-14:30	Lunch
14:30-17:30	OST Sessions (coffee and snacks available in main hall)
17:30-18:30	<b>Closing Plenary day 1: Remarks, presentations, speeches and feedback from working groups.</b> <b>Moderator: Aleksandra Vidanović</b>
18:30	End of Day One
19:30 - 21:00	Dinner

---

## 22 September - ERA Annual Conference, Day 2

08:30-09:30	Registration of participants
09:30-10:30	<b>Second Plenary: Challenge the System</b> <b>Moderator: Dragana Todorović</b> <b>Speakers: Kocho Andonovski (LGBTI Support Centre), Xheni Karaj (Alliance against Discrimination LGBTI), Hasan Metehan Özkan (LISTAG);</b>

Most of us – if not all of us – live in countries where LGBTI people are far from full members of society. Regardless of whether there are laws protecting us from discrimination or hate crimes or positive laws allowing to enter into civil unions, LGBTIQ identities remain marginal, neglected and regularly opposed. Extreme right wing political groups, authoritarian governments, nationalism, patriarchy all contribute to us never fully living our lives, always feeling

less represented and accepted. How can we keep challenging the systems we live in, how can we keep making them inclusive in the contexts of Western Balkans and Turkey?

10:30-10:45

Coffee Break

10:45-13:00

OST Sessions

13:00-14:30

Lunch

14:30-15:30

**Third Plenary: Transforming society**

**Moderator: Biljana Ginova**

**Speakers: Dragoslava Barzut (Da Se Zna), Marija Vuletic (CURE Foundation), Simon Maljevac (Legebitra)**

Despite slight progress in a few countries, public attitudes towards LGBTI people remain very negative across the Western Balkans and Turkey. Changing those opinions and attitudes requires creativity, courage, organizations and above anything else visibility. How can we keep transforming our societies in the region?

15:30-18:00

OST Sessions (Coffee and snacks available in main hall)

18:00-19:00

**Final Plenary – Ending remarks, presentations, speeches and feedback from working groups.**

**Moderator: Aleksandra Vidanović**

19:00

End of conference

19:30 - 21:00

Dinner

---

**23 September – Podgorica Pride and Closing Event**  
**(for more accurate information please check Montenegro Pride calendar online)**

12:00 (noon)

Pride March

20:00

Closing Event / Party

Venue: Bar “Biro”

Address: Bokeška 10, Podgorica

Participants who wish to continue their sessions and meetings, can utilize the conference space also on September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Those planning to do so are kindly asked to inform Jelena Pilipović during Friday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Conference registration desk.

---

***This conference is being organized in partnership with Queer Montenegro, Juventas, LGBT Forum Progress and Spectra.***



***This conference is financially supported by the European Commission, Federal Foreign Office of Germany and Hirschfeld-Eddy-Foundation.***



The project is co-financed by the European Union



Federal Foreign Office



HIRSCHFELD-EDDY-STIFTUNG