

openSAP Invites Thought Leaders, Episode 16

THE ECONOMIC (AND HUMAN) POWER OF THE LGBT+ COMMUNITY AND THEIR ALLIES

Transcript

Jens Schadendorf: The mere fact that companies or other institutions are blamed to pretend to be LGBT+ friendly is a good sign because it reflects a dramatic change of values and expectations vis-a-vis corporates or other workplaces.

Elisabeth Riemann: Welcome to a special Thought Leaders episode for Pride Month with Jens Schadendorf, economist, and book changemaker, in which we learn why it's important to invest in LGBT+, diversity and inclusion to drive positive results at corporate, societal, and personal level. Jens chats about work and family relationships, his own personal struggles as a gay white man serving in the German army, his bilingual studies, and the fascinating global research behind his latest and extremely successful book, "GaYme Changer: How the LGBT+ Community and Their Allies are Changing the Global Economy". We also talk about sports, good pasta, dachshunds. I'm your host, Elisabeth Riemann. Let me introduce you to Jens Schadendorf. As an author, keynote speaker, and panelist, Jens focus on LGBT+, equality, responsible business, organization, and social change and thought leadership. He's written several books and his latest "GaYme Changer: How the LGBT+ Community and Their Allies Are Changing the Global Economy" was published in spring 2021 and is the first of its kind. He's also written for leading German media, including Financial Times Deutschland, Zeit online, and Spiegel, and is an independent LGBT+ researcher at the Chair of Business Ethics at the Technical University of Munich, Bavaria, where he lives. Jens is also a passionate runner and a sports, books, and arts enthusiast. He loves baking and good wine, his Danish husband Karsten, and their extraordinary dachshund, Nelly, the headstrong lady who governs their household. Let's say hello. Hello Jens, welcome to openSAP Invites Thought Leaders.

Jens Schadendorf: Thanks for having me, Lizzie. Thank you.

Elisabeth Riemann: You're welcome. Jens, it's fabulous that you're with us today to talk about your work as an economist, researcher, author, and speaker for diversity,

inclusion, corporate responsibility, and social change topics. I'm also really looking forward to learning more about your latest book, "GaYme Changer: How the LGBT+ Community and Their Allies Are Changing the Global Economy." Jens, as we were preparing this episode, you told me that you're a sports enthusiast. So, let's warm up with a sports-related question. What is it that you love about sports exactly?

Jens Schadendorf: What I love most about sports is, of course, first moving the body, because one thing is that I'm a thinker and a writer, but I think from very early on I understood, that's only one thing. The other thing is to move your body and to have a healthy spirit and a healthy body. The other thing is the passion. So, what really inspires me, and I'm interested in many kinds of sports, is sort of the emotions and passions you can you can sense when you're looking at a football game or a basketball game, or I was running a marathon, for instance, the people standing there, the crowd shouting.

Elisabeth Riemann: It really unites people, right? It's that kind of shared passion for sport, it's doing our physical health good and also good for our mental well-being as well.

Jens Schadendorf: Yes, and when you start early with sports, as I did, for instance, because I had an older brother and my father who was a passionate football coach, we both ended up in football as well. We are pushing each other, but of course, then was very important for my parents was that through engaging in sports that you, of course, learn a team spirit. And I think there is a connection as well to the business world and to the economic world, putting yourself into a competitive scenery as part of a team, within a team as to who will be who will play next Saturday, who won't sort of show up, as well as somebody who wants to be chosen to be in the team.

Elisabeth Riemann: Jens, we curated this podcast series to learn from inspirational thought leaders like yourself, and so I'd like to know that beyond sport, who or what inspires you and your life and work?

Jens Schadendorf: Well, there are many things the one thing is, of course, books, because I'm also a writer and you were mentioning my book. So, when my husband, for instance, was saying what for other people is churches, for you is bookshops. So, I'm writing non-fiction books, but it's also fiction. So, I'm very inspired as well by very good

fiction. Another thing is, great leaders bringing forward great ideas and getting on stage to make these great ideas alive, like, for instance, the LGBT community. So, the spirit of making something which seemed to be impossible some 50 years ago is now part of our reality and like to be inspired by many things. So, when I met my husband some 11 years ago, he had two dachshunds. So, there was a long tradition with dachshunds in my life, but I never had an own dachshund. So, when the two dachshund ladies, Anna and Molly, unfortunately passed one day getting old, we decided we now buy an own. So, for me it was the first. And Nelly she is just amazing. And perhaps you know as well dachshunds are special. They have a very own and a strong character, their own sort of very strong will, which very often runs counter to what you want. That's a tough challenge, but it's also it's a very inspiring and also relaxing experience we are having. So, she's enriching very much our life.

Elisabeth Riemann: Wonderful and a very headstrong dachshund lady in your household. I love it. Jens, as a society, of course, we're all unique and very different individuals, and I think we thrive when we can be ourselves and really feel like we belong. So, whenever we feel singled out, judged by others, and made to feel different in any way, this can result in a lot of personal suffering. So today, prejudice unfortunately is still something that remains a problem in the workplace. What's been your own personal experience, perhaps with overcoming prejudice in the workplace?

Jens Schadendorf: Let me perhaps say two or three things about this and perhaps connected those to a personal story. So, I joined the military and was there working in a hospital, German army, Bundeswehr, as it's called in Germany. In the mid-80s around that time. And there was still a very dark time. I had it coming out and it was coming in again. And at that time in the military was tough. I mean, I had a girlfriend, but nevertheless, it was obvious that there was another possibility. But then in a military setting where you had a very obvious rejection of homosexuality, it was at the time of the Cold War. So, the whole spirit of what it means to be masculine and was, of course, different when you're in a male setting at that time, at least you're good in sports and football. And I was a good runner. So, of course, then you're protected because this is something which counts. But on the other hand, I realize this is very painful because there was as well no possibility to really speak up. Couldn't really make something out of it in the sense that I said, well, I have to change my life or so I just wanted to survive. But nevertheless, the spirit was there, and it was tough to hear these not very nice jokes

and words about faggots and so on. I think of the military world is still a tough world. When I did write my first book on LGBT and business and society some 8 years ago, and it was only in German, a German book called The Rainbow Factor, Der Regenbogen-Faktor. I wrote a chapter on the army world and the German army world and the Dutch army world, which is a lot more liberal in Switzerland and Austria and so forth. And this was the time when things changed. And since that time, I'm a member of Queer B W, BW, which is the unit which works for LGBT inclusion in the German army. Last year I got a request by NATO from Brussels. They wanted me to write something about unconscious bias. They even started this year an initiative around LGBT within NATO, which I think is a great sign because at NATO there are small countries like Turkey in there and which are less liberal and then the UK or Germany or France. I'm thinking about it very often because, of course, it's connected to my past when I was still very young. But of course, it's still a very relevant question today.

Elisabeth Riemann: Mm hmm. And I think it's really wonderful that you share that personal experience with us. It's a very courageous and brave story. And I think whoever we are, we've always had experience in our past when we're growing up. It's a very confusing time for anyone. And I guess if you bring in issues of identity, gender, it just complicates things. Right. And if we're listening to jokes, things that are said in jest, they're not meant to hurt people. But depending on what's going on in your own mind at that time, it can really have a massive impact on individuals. So, I think it's really amazing work that you and the community is doing today.

Jens Schadendorf: Yeah, yeah, that's you're absolutely right. So we sometimes we tend to forget that, especially the experience we were faced with in our younger ages are determining what we are choosing then or living then an our later age and sometimes if we then don't take them on, is sometimes very painful challenges. I think they can hit back. One of my personal goals and motivations for writing these things and to engage in these things is of course to contribute to equal rights and culture and opportunities for LGBT people are not just LGBT people, but to equal rights and opportunities for everybody independent of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, et, etc.. So that's a strong motivation which has increased the whole older I got. The general promises of a society says everybody has the same rights and opportunities. We all know that in every society, even those who have become more liberal and more open, that's a lot to do to make this promise of equal rights and opportunities reality.

Elisabeth Riemann: Mm hmm. Certainly it's, as you said, is when we look at workplace equality in a globalized world, there are a lot of key challenges there that we need to deal with head on and a lot of cultural differences there between the different countries. I mean, they're all in different stages of this journey then, I guess, as well. So can you talk us through that a little bit, please?

Jens Schadendorf: If I look at my current book, "GaYme Changer: How the LGBT+ Community and Their Allies Are Changing the Global Community", GaYme Changer is spelled "g a Y" from gay. So, of course, it uses the word game changer, which we all know, but has been put in the Y there to make reference to, of course, the topic of LGBT inclusion and equality. So, the first idea came up in 2017 Allianz Global Investors, so they invited me for a reading and launching their LGBT+ network in Frankfurt. When I was there, I was something has changed and I said I have to dive into this because there was some development on the global arena which was stronger than the years before, a lot stronger. The change in the global working world and the change in the global business world and the global economy. This touches not just the workplace, this touches the whole life, the community, communities we are living, and we are engaged with. When I did my research, I was traveling then in many countries, for instance, in Brussels, attending a meeting of the EU. In Amsterdam, talking to people there, in Paris, in Vienna. I was travelling to your Johannesburg in South Africa, which was again, is still very different perspective because I was as well another minority because I was white there when I was attending there the first LGBT+ business conference ever on the African continent. So, I experienced cultures very consciously in the frame of LGBT and D&I efforts by companies, for instance. Or in efforts by the different states what the corporates are doing, the other thing, what the states are doing with their laws or not doing with the laws. We have to look as well at the multilateral level. What the UN is doing, primarily starting with 2013, with the free legal campaign, with educating and informing a global public, especially those countries which are very hostile to LGBT people. So, we have to look at these different levels of very strong finding of my book is that the differences in culture are stronger than many people would admit. We have a very strong spearheading of a US dominated or Anglo-Saxon dominated companies. The Stonewall Movement started in sixty nine. We have as well as Stonewall as an institution in the UK. We have many powerful players in the US with the Human Rights Campaign, Out & Equal, leadership, the other the NGOs you see. So that's a very

strong ecosystem. This leads to a strong influence as well. And of course, with the US, despite the rise of China, still the most powerful economic country in the world and a certain kind of debating culture. And we have a strong individual, a very strong committed by many individuals to dive into this, not just in NGOs, but also in the corporate world. So, the kind of activism of people in companies, even including some CEOs, to show that LGBT+ inclusion in the workplace and equality matters. And it's important, it's not just lip service. Companies which are in this Anglo-Saxon corporate cosmos, they are spearheaders. Traditional mainstream economic thinking tends to say that there is a journey and at the end of this journey, we have all the same level. You compare this with the spear header, so the US, and that's the ultimate way of progress. And everything was after this is just following. I was born in Hamburg, a very international city, port city, strong connection as well to Rotterdam, to Antwerp, to London. When I left Hamburg in order to continue my studies in Switzerland, I was then going to Fribourg, three quarter French and one quarter German and at the time was the only university in Western Europe where you could study bilingually. So, microeconomics was in German and macroeconomics was in French and this was in the late eighties. Even at that time, the university had more than one hundred different nationalities. It was founded by the Catholic Church. Every day I would see the monks. So very strong philosophical focus as well, so very colorful. Although I was studying economic and social sciences, and of course, this has determined my perception of the world in some way and the colorfulness not just in terms of religious liberalism, but also in terms of different kinds of thinking. And that's I think of it determines as well still today my perception on how we should look, for instance, on LGBT equality and LGBT+ inclusion and to acknowledge that there may be different paths to go forward and don't fall into the trap to be too deterministic. I got a fund from the Swiss National Fund for studying almost a year in Southeast Asia so in Singapore and Thailand in the early 90s. Singapore, as you may know as well, three different cultures at least. And then I was in Thailand and Bangkok, of course, Buddhist, completely different. And I was there studying at the Asian Institute of Technology and there was many South Asian people from India, from Pakistan, but also Southeast Asia, but also South Asia. But I think, so what I've learned over the year and especially again, intensified through the research for my book, that we have to pay more attention on the cultural differences and not just pay lip service to different cultures, but also to allow differences to emerge also in the context of LGBT+ equality.

Elisabeth Riemann: And I think this is something that you convey really effectively in your book "GaYme Changer" as well, and the fact that you take your own life experience and you look really at this global view, the impacts of different cultures, and I think that's put to great effect there as well. So, one question, you mentioned lip service, again, just there and in your book, you really explain how critically important it is for all businesses to invest in compelling LGBT+ diversity and inclusion management. And I think it's really important that you describe it's not about pink washing, it's not about just effective advertising campaigns, it really is about driving real and authentic change. Can you tell us a little bit more about that and the topics you explore in your book?

Jens Schadendorf: So, first of all, let me draw on a word that you were just using, which is pink washing. Sometimes I'm asked when I'm sitting on a panel or so or giving a keynote or so what I think about pink washing. I love pink washing and then everybody is confused. Of course, what I do is we tend to forget that 10 years ago, the word didn't even exist. It didn't exist in the context of LGBT+ equality, advocating for it, and working for it. The mere fact that companies or other institutions are blamed to pretend to be LGBT+ friendly is a good sign because it reflects a dramatic change of values and expectations vis-a-vis corporates or other workplaces. We have good reasons to criticize companies if they only pretend to. When, for instance, companies ask me what should I do and start bold and don't be afraid to be criticized, be prepared that people watch. So, if you start this project, which is really strong and has an impact with the CEO involved and so forth and sort of the building, then rainbow colors. We all know these games, I think.

Elisabeth Riemann: We've seen on the White House haven't we.

Jens Schadendorf: Yeah, exactly. Usually before companies are doing this, it takes some time. There are harsh discussions, should we do this and what do we promise? But now they are discussing this.

Elisabeth Riemann: So, it's a step in the right direction that they're discussing it to start with.

Jens Schadendorf: Yes, they are sending a strong signal to people who are LGBT in the company, and that's a growing number of allies, so they look as well. What is our

company doing and is our company trustworthy? Can we trust what they are saying? Not just what is the team leader saying? Or I see CEO, a C level is saying, but also what is what is the company, institution doing? What does it mean for us as a symbol, as a sign? Can we be prepared that they then keep this promise in daily life? It's very important to differentiate as well to look at what industries you are in. Are you a technology company? Are you a finance company? Within the finance industry? Are you more in banking or in hedge funds or in insurance? Are you a law firm? Are you a manufacturer? Are you a pasta company, like Barilla?

Elisabeth Riemann: I was going to mention that because you mentioned in part one of your book, and it's the example of Barilla and their D&I program that they introduced after a lot of criticism. I'll let you explain the example as well. But I think that's really a wonderful example. The reason I think what you said before about the different cultural differences about religion, about the country, national setting, and the type of company as well, can you talk us through Barilla did to trigger this project and a few of the milestones along that journey? Because it wasn't a very easy path for them to take, but an excellent example that you do share with us in the book.

Jens Schadendorf: Yeah, I love this example for many reasons, one reason is that very often D&I and LGBT and inequality in the corporate world and discussed around the sort of the big brands from the consulting, technology, and finance world. And these are important because they are pushing this in many ways. But Barilla, I think, is to me very emotional because pasta is the Italian way of life. And it's you know, it's easy going life, red wine and pasta, and cheese, and cooking at home, meeting family and friends and the sea. There's a lot of Italian connections, and I love pasta.

Elisabeth Riemann: I do, too.

Jens Schadendorf: So, I love good pasta. Barilla is as a company, it's a family owned business. When we look at what has been researched so far and discussed in media and so very often things are focused on the global corporates. Barilla really it's a global company, a very strong in the US, also in some other parts of the world. This business, which is century old one, which is located in this lovely city called Parma. So, Guido Barilla, one of the owning brothers, was making this unfortunate LGBT+ or homophobic remarks. That was the first time a public outcry triggered by the young generation

through the social media. And 2013, the social media didn't have the state as they have it now, but they were had an impact. And so, the Harvard University reacted to taking out Barilla from the lunch menu and other things. Actors were speaking up. The Nobel Prize winner for literature was speaking up initially. So many as many interviews as well around this. They were understanding this had an impact and that there was a damaging reputation. And this through the damaging of reputation, especially by the young, by the general public. This would affect their market not today, but in the long run. And so that was a very strong discussion within the company, and they understood, they apologized, but nobody believed them. And then they started a really fascinating journey and I think very fascinating journey of educating themselves and learning and to do something like an LGBT+ turnaround. So fantastic journey, learning in the US that went to foundations to understand what it means to be an LGBT, to be as a parent, because it was about family life as well, traditional values.

Elisabeth Riemann: And there were so many different forms of families, right? It's not just classical, two parents, mother, father, it's.

Jens Schadendorf: Yeah, it's colorful, so it's

Elisabeth Riemann: It's colorful.

Jens Schadendorf: It's colorful and so learning, seeking advice and different institution had an experience as well. What does it mean that at the very high percentage of young LGBT people trying to commit suicide when they are young. Very strong figures compared to not LGBT youth people, what it means for families when there are children who are coming out and especially if they are trans, which of course is a special challenge. He started this process of learning, which was not easy in the beginning because many people would reject that we don't want to do because you just want to pretend that you are LGBT friendly. So, but they managed to do this. There was as well a major contact of then Guido Barilla with David Mixner, one of the leading civil rights activists in the US. Now, more than 70, a long history of fighting, advising many presidents on civil rights issues, including Martin Luther King fighting against the Vietnam War. So, and he's LGBT, so he's gay and he didn't want to meet him in the first place. But then they met, and David Mixner found that Guido Barilla's attempt to really change something in his own thinking and feeling. And with this company, he said he

could trust and then he decided to support them, which I think is very helpful because it was helpful for companies today as well. So, what was the learning effort for companies to today is to engage with civil rights activists, to LGBT activists who know what the life of LGBT activists really are and do this locally, so which again, is linked to the cultural issue.

Jens Schadendorf: So what then, for instance, David Mixner was not only doing to give his expertise as an American being have an expected on the American market of civil rights, if you want, but also then the issues with people in France or in Germany and the step by step increasing going beyond Italy and the US as well to other countries step by step. Still a small company compared to the global players I was mentioning before. But I think this is very convincing, not just the usual thing to have. For instance, teamed with the Thomson Reuters Foundation. So, I was there 2018 when the Times Square in New York, when they launched openly the first LGBT+ news network, they've just renewed their engagement with the foundation. By the way, the guy who is now leading the foundation, which is the charity arm of Thomson Reuters. And we all know, I think Reuters US one of the major business and economic and financial news service worldwide. And the CEO is Antonio Zappulla, who is Italian as well. He's gay. So, there was, of course, some connections. And but this is how business is going. If you, people find people who are not just in your what your interests are like, but also if you like people, you know.

Elisabeth Riemann: It's finding common ground, I think, in having this affinity with different people, and I think that you always find some common denominator, even if you don't initially think so, like you said in the example with Barilla and with Mixner. I think that's a fabulous example there. And I just think it's such a good, can I call it a success story? Because I really like the transition that they make that you describe and the fact that they're willing to see the error of their ways, the statements that they made, the offense that they caused to younger generations. Right. Because I think depending on the generation, we belong to also really impacts how critically we look at companies and their D&I approach. I think that that's true to say as well. I don't know if you'd want to elaborate on that, how important it is looking at the younger generation and why it's critical for companies to really embrace the LGBT+ community and really be seen to having a positive role model and to really embrace people of every different denomination.

Jens Schadendorf: Yeah, that's a very good point. In 2013, 2014, and then getting stronger since then, since the day people and companies and beyond realized we are losing good talent, but also, we are losing the support of the general public. We are losing the support of the media because in the media are working as well, people and young people. We are losing investors. Of course, if they don't see a possibility for long-run success and they only see the possibility of long-run success when they see it within the business model, companies reflect unchanged values as well. So, and what the young generation has shown, 2013 and then thereafter, is that if you don't get our support, so of the younger generation, you lose us. And I think this is a lesson learned which has become stronger and it's connected as well to the changing values of the young generation as a whole. For them, it's not important what gender there is or what sexual orientation somebody has. It's other things. It's like, what is the purpose of a company? How can I contribute? And is there a sense of equality and justice? Of course, money is important, but it's not that important as generations before. The younger generation are looking very carefully at is this just a nice-looking Website or is this something only addressed once or twice in a speech by the CEO or by the team leader? But what we need at the same time is that these things are felt and experienced in daily life. And I think that's something we can as well learn from Barilla, because in a small company, the contribution of every person matters even more compared to a company where you have five hundred thousand people.

Elisabeth Riemann: It's magnified.

Jens Schadendorf: There is a strong connection now between the sort of strictly internal D&I developments and movements and activities, and the CSR-related activities. So, are you presenting yourself and are you a corporate company acting socially responsible? For instance, Barilla is as well engaging in an LGBT homeless institution in New York and doing a similar thing in France. Or as we were just discussing, about openly LGBT+ network so that there's a very small indication that Barilla is the sponsor is very hard to see.

Elisabeth Riemann: And that's so authentic, isn't it? They're not really presenting their brand primarily. It really is the supporting good initiatives within their communities and really driving positive social change. And I think it's as we always say, you know, actions

speak so much louder than words. And what better can you do then really drive those practical changes?

Jens Schadendorf: Absolutely, I'm passionate about these things, but I'm also an economist and you have to look at the facts and the fact is that businesses do have a legitimate interest to make good business. There's a strong incentive for them for economic sense of business incentive to invest in LGBT, D&I, and CSR. I fully understand that people are looking critically at companies when they are sort of presenting themselves at moral institutions. They have to earn money. A company is not just a company. It's also a place to live. It's a place to contribute, not just to work and to your team and to engage with people socially and live a purposeful life. But it's also going beyond that to see how this this company who is then earning money can contribute to communities and the society they live in. And this young generation is determining on the long run everything we are in. If we don't get them in and if you don't respect what their values are and what their expectations are, then you're losing them.

Elisabeth Riemann: There are many examples that you listed in the book as well and you explore there as well. And what really comes across is what you summarized just now as well. Companies do need to make money, right, because they are our employers. That's what we live off. We need our jobs. But I think what's really well conveyed in the book is the fact that if we want to perform well as employees, we want to feel respected and understood as full human beings and not just an employee. We bring so much of our creative talent, our time, our love and attention to the work that we do ideally, and we're only able to do that I think if we feel that we can really thrive in a working environment where we feel that we have our own place, that we can be ourselves. And that's why in the book, I really recommend our listeners to read through the different leadership stories that you present there, the different personal accounts where people have shown real bravery in transforming their lives, also having a positive impact on the companies that they work for. So really exploring the risks and the worries that they had maybe prior to coming out or transitioning their gender. And I just think these are wonderful, uplifting stories. So, I really think it's fantastic with the economic side, but also the human stories that you present for us there as well. And one of the questions that I have for you, Jens, as well in your subtitle, so it's "How the LGBT+ Community and Their Allies Are Changing the Global Economy" and I think this aspect

with allies, with the supporters, is so important there too. What is the role of the allies and what can we do there to really support this?

Jens Schadendorf: Thank you for mentioning this explicitly. Let's look at ourselves. Who we are. So, in the peer groups we are in and the bubbles we are in. Everybody. We are all in bubbles. So, we tend to reproduce the structures we are part of. For understanding and modeling and advancing LGBT, D&I, and CSR in the workplace, it's not enough to just be in your own bubble. For instance, the gay white male with a gay white male. Of course, it's important to have a safe space. Many companies have understood that it's important to open up these closed circles, which they may have been in the beginning, and perhaps that's a natural development. In an open liberal setting, you have to be open to everybody in some way. So, the promise we are making and diving into LGBT, D&I, and CSR is that you're promising an open and inclusive environment for everybody.

Elisabeth Riemann: And I think not everyone wants to be defined by certain aspects of their character or their personality, their sexual orientation, their hobbies, their interests, it's only one tiny, tiny part of us.

Jens Schadendorf: Absolutely.

Elisabeth Riemann: And at the core of it, we're all humans. Right? And we all have feelings, emotions, ambitions. And it's about bringing the positive aspects out of that and really opening these bubbles up and bringing out the best in people.

Jens Schadendorf: Absolutely, but I think it's not easy because it's also fully understandable that you need the safe spaces. I think, as well, too far-fetched to expect that you would have the same degree of openness and inquisitiveness in the whole company. We are human beings because of our anxieties, we have our fears. I think we have to dream high. But of course, we have respect as well that human beings are human beings. And the challenge is, I think, to make an offer to get out of this bubble and to gradually to adapt to this. And also, if I may say so, give an example. What I was really impressed by this when I was invited to the DKOM, the major SAP developer conference on my birthday. I remember this very

Elisabeth Riemann: Ok.

Jens Schadendorf: 2020, 9th of January. So, I was invited to give a first reading of my English book. But this meeting was sponsored by Women in Tech branch. The majority of the people in this reading were women, eighty percent, and very colorful mix as well, ethnically mixed and generations mixed. So, I think this is something we should aim for. Corporates should be aim more to mix more in that respect. And I think, and that's, you know, summarized as well under the heading of Intersectionality. This is definitely something which has to be pushed forward momentum as well for a new next level of inclusion that we should as well include, of course, the learnings of the pandemic. So, speaking about leadership, of course, many people have been traumatized and are traumatized. And there is not just this digital enthusiasm, there's also digital fatigue and there is loneliness. And all these things, by the way, which to which LGBT+ people in general can contribute a lot based on their own experience to be excluded for a long time. Even the younger sometimes have problems still to come out, as we know, still. If we think about diversity and inclusion, to think as well beyond the traditional categories of D&I terms of gender or sexual orientation or ethnicity, but also go beyond and look as well on the social status. And I think there are already developments and companies to look at the fact that, of course, there is not that society is also the American society, the British society, the French society, the German society are not keeping their promise to give equal chances and to for people who are working hard and wanting to rise up to the top. And we know this. We know the figures of growing economic equality, of reduced chances. Companies have to be perhaps more political in that respect, in their own interests. We have this matching of business interests and human rights interests because it's only human that, of course, a son or a daughter or a person who defines as non-binary. Take some examples who's born into a rich family has the same opportunities as a person who's not and who is perhaps black or born in Tennessee or wherever. Or of course, I know that's something which is an ideal. We need these ideals to become better economically in our economic lives and careers, but also as human beings in our communities and our families.

Elisabeth Riemann: Jens, how can we follow you on social media and keep in touch with what's going on with "GaYme Changer" and become allies ourselves and really support the movement? What can we do?

Jens Schadendorf: You can find me on LinkedIn, or you can Google me and can see that I'm also doing other things than LGBT, D&I, equality, research and writing books on these things. There is a Website, gaymechanger.com. Don't forget the Y between the A and the M. On the Website, you will find a journey of this book. So how it came about, some sort of basic information, how it all started, where did I travel, the organizations and companies I'm featuring in my book. You will as well see the companies and universities I've visited so far for readings and presentations and also these things which are about to come up.

Elisabeth Riemann: We'll include all those notes in today's show notes as well, and we consider ourselves very, very lucky that we've managed to secure the time with you today, because I know that you're very much in demand on many, many levels. So, thank you very much. Jens, to conclude today's episode, can you share with us briefly what will the next level of LGBT+ equality look like in the future?

Jens Schadendorf: Well, first of all, I think we are in a very challenging, turbulent time, which is at the same time a promising time for all of us. We all experience, of course, a high degree of disruption, economic disruption. We are facing the pandemic. We don't know yet how the traumatic effects of the pandemic will influence our further work life and life in general. We see the Black Lives Matter movement. We see the Me Too debate, which is not over yet. We see growing economic disparities all over the world. We have a growing divide between the rich north and the poor south. We have as well as stronger growing divide between China and the US. And I think this is something which will affect our lives in the years to come. So very challenging times. And on the other hand, I think we have the chance now to create a new age of inclusion. So what is a very positive sign, for instance, is to me at least, is that we have a fantastic US administration under Joe Biden now who has changed many things and who has promised to become the most equal administration of all times in the US. Of course, we know that the political and societal situation in the US is challenging, but that's a strong political statement with this bold, which is combined with other measures. He has also promised, when he was still president-elect, at a LGBT plus leaders conference in November, a new age of LGBT rights as well, a new era. And he has delivered certain things already in the US. So that's a very positive sign. Also, very positive is I think that in the European arena we have a European Commission for the first time has formulated an LGBT+ equality strategy for the EU. Of course, again here there are

currently movements, as we know, in Poland with the LGBT free zones or look at the erosion of liberal democracy. And also, in Hungary, the strong value changing moment by the young. So, they are not only pushing for change in the corporate world, but they are pushing overall in society. We should not forget we are not only all economic actors, but we are also political citizens. And I think bringing these things together is a major challenge. It could create a wonderful momentum to reach the new the next level of LGBT equality. Of course, it does not only look at who has to look only at the corporates, which workplaces where you have the white-collar workers are the ones with t shirt and sneakers and technology companies are so, so technical. But we should not forget, I think there are two thirds of the global world is covered by Asia. So, we tend to focus primarily on the so-called Western world, but I think very positive is that in India we have the Section 377, that has fallen, which has punished same sex intercourse, which has been abolished by the Supreme Court. And there is now a strongly developing, small but developing ecosystem of organizations and companies as well, working for LGBT equality as well there and this is more than a billion inhabitants. There's still a lot of discrimination in daily life and in companies. But if we compare this, for instance, to China, which, of course, has about the same amount of people, a bit more, and I think that's important to see when we look at chances to push this momentum, it's about to form corporations and alliances and not just across companies and across the organizations I've mentioned, but also to look at powerful, potentially powerful regions of the world, to bring them into this discourse and these advancements stronger than we did before. And, for instance, Out & Equal, a US institution, has for some time now as well done conferences in China and India and in Brazil. This has to be intensified. It's still too, too Americanized, I would say. But as far as I can see on India, for instance, that's a very strong sense as well to cooperate with many partners around the world and that they are moving on fast. As I said, I'm not romantic, it's in the beginning, but it's moving fast. I'm confident this new level of LGBT equality can be and has to be something which goes far beyond the Western world. And this brings us in, again, back to the cultural issues, which includes that respect for different paths towards LGBT equality. This is part of the next level.

Elisabeth Riemann: Jens, thank you so very much for talking to us today. It's been truly fascinating and I'm really looking forward to keeping in touch with the topic and really trying to drive positive change myself where and whenever I can. So, thank you very much for inspiring me.

Jens Schadendorf: Thank you, Lizzie. It was a pleasure and very inspiring as you may have sensed. Thank you.

Elisabeth Riemann: Thanks for listening to openSAP Invites Thought Leaders with Jens Schadendorf. And thank you to our sound engineer, Miguel Caroli. If you've enjoyed this episode, please share, rate, and leave a review. And be sure to check out openSAP's free learning portfolio of Massive Open Online Courses, Microlearnings, and Podcasts on opensap.com. And don't miss your next invite. Subscribe now.

www.sap.com/contactsap

© 2021 SAP SE or an SAP affiliate company. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or for any purpose without the express permission of SAP SE or an SAP affiliate company.

The information contained herein may be changed without prior notice. Some software products marketed by SAP SE and its distributors contain proprietary software components of other software vendors. National product specifications may vary.

These materials are provided by SAP SE or an SAP affiliate company for informational purposes only, without representation or warranty of any kind, and SAP or its affiliated companies shall not be liable for errors or omissions with respect to the materials. The only warranties for SAP or SAP affiliate company products and services are those that are set forth in the express warranty statements accompanying such products and services, if any. Nothing herein should be construed as constituting an additional warranty.

In particular, SAP SE or its affiliated companies have no obligation to pursue any course of business outlined in this document or any related presentation, or to develop or release any functionality mentioned therein. This document, or any related presentation, and SAP SE's or its affiliated companies' strategy and possible future developments, products, and/or platform directions and functionality are all subject to change and may be changed by SAP SE or its affiliated companies at any time for any reason without notice. The information in this document is not a commitment, promise, or legal obligation to deliver any material, code, or functionality. All forward-looking statements are subject to various risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from expectations. Readers are cautioned not to place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements, and they should not be relied upon in making purchasing decisions.

SAP and other SAP products and services mentioned herein as well as their respective logos are trademarks or registered trademarks of SAP SE (or an SAP affiliate company) in Germany and other countries. All other product and service names mentioned are the trademarks of their respective companies. See www.sap.com/trademark for additional trademark information and notices.