

TheSextant

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Photo: Michael Sitte

Sitting at the pool, enjoying a mojito and a cigar while having a casual chat about science; this is how some people may imagine a conference works when it takes place in Cuba. Well, this is not how reality is, at least almost not. I work in the Gender Cage research project together with colleagues from a German and an Austrian University. As researchers it is important to us to share our thoughts and research ideas and results with our scientific community, meaning people who do research in the same field. Such exchange mostly takes place at conferences. This one was organised by the European Group for Organisation Studies. They call the conference LAEMOS what stands for Latin American and European Meeting on Organization Studies and takes place every second year.

After applying with a proposal, I was accepted and allowed to present a paper at the conference on our research project and get the chance to discuss it with several international scientists. As the conference last for 4 days, we had a busy schedule with roundtables, presentations, discussions, keynotes and evening receptions. The conference itself was a great event and the exchange with the

other researchers was very open, constructive and I was even invited to write an article for a South American journal.

However, the conference was quite different to what I have experienced before. We had frequent power blackouts, the food was far away from what I had expected at a Caribbean hotel and yes, there was a pool and a live band right next to the conference rooms. It was also funny, as we had pretty much no internet access, neither in the hotel, nor at the conference itself. Enjoying a drink at the pool while discussing research papers was an unusual but great experience. This atmosphere allowed comfortable small talk as well as in-depth discussions with the other 250 participants. So I also learned by chance that researchers from Latin America use quite different methods and approaches when they conduct research in our field. It was quite valuable to get to know so many people during such a short time. This especially as we as a research team are organising a conference in England later on this year, where I will see most of the people again who I met here at this conference in Habana. *MS*