



Organisation Intersex International Europe
ANNUAL REPORT 2021



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We also thank our cooperation partner
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Organisation Intersex International Europe ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Contents

INTRODUCTION	4
COVID-19 & THE SITUATION OF INTERSEX PEOPLE	6
European COVID-19 Survey.....	6
Global COVID-19 Survey.....	7
POLICY & ADVOCACY.....	8
Advocating for mainstreaming intersex rights in many European Commission initiatives.....	8
Advocating for increasing the integration of intersex people and issues in relevant CoE documents.....	9
Advocating for an intersex-inclusive perspective on international level.....	9
Intervening as a third party before courts.....	10
Sharing research and other resources with the intersex movement	10
Advocacy Work and Awareness Raising at relevant events.....	11
AWARENESS RAISING.....	14
1. Good Practice Map 2020	14
2. Our website is growing.....	15
3. Covid-19 Report Infographics.....	15
4. Intersex Awareness Weeks.....	16
Statistics (Websites, Downloads, Social Media)	17
COMMUNITY & MOVEMENT BUILDING.....	18
OII Europe Online Community Event and Public Conference 2021	18
Virtual Campfires	18
OUR PROGRAMS.....	22
EU-Project RISE & Capacity Building of the European Intersex Movement.....	22
Making our resources available in multiple languages.....	23
Intersex Asylum Seeker & Refugee Project.....	24
European Intersex Strategic Litigation (EISL) Network.....	24
Training & Education	25
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & FUNDING.....	26



INTRODUCTION

The year 2021 was again shaped by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, and it continued to impact our activities and processes within OII Europe. Yet we were able to carry on with our work towards advancing intersex human rights in Europe. You will find many examples of our accomplishments on the following pages, from engagement with the European Commission and other

European Union and Council of Europe bodies, to our On-line Community Event and Public Conference that included several panels and music sessions with intersex musicians, ...and much more.

But instead of prolonging this introductory text, this year we decided to preface our report with a few quotes from our extended community:



“The experience of the 2021 Community Event was without a doubt a sense of growth! A safe space where truthful information, personal experiences and activism converged. I love an intersex person, I walk together with her to advance the rights of intersex people. Thank you for giving me a place for interaction and learning. We are still in the fight!”

*Gloria Casanova Molina,
Researcher and Volunteer IntersexualesChile*



“I enjoy being a guest at meetings of the intersex movement. The space has a special flavor – one of connectedness and a tender way of relating.”

*Claudia Bollwinkel, Senior Program Advisor Dreilinden gGmbH,
who attended the 2021 OII Europe Online Public Conference*

”

“Especially with the isolation we experienced during COVID, the OII Europe community event gave us a very welcome opportunity to make new friends and reconnect with old ones. The panels were very informative and interesting. We are already looking forward to the next one and hopeful that it will be in person”

Intersex Ireland

”

“It was a great experience for us at XY Spectrum being a part of OII Europe’s project RISE. The capacity building by OII Europe during the project helped us in our intersex human rights work in Serbia, and we hope it continues after the end of the project. When we held the „Entre Deux Sexes“ Documentary Screening in Belgrade on June 1st 2021, it was a real milestone for establishing the topic of intersex rights in Serbia, and has led to many opportunities for XY Spectrum, like establishing the dialogue the Serbian ombuds person and the office of commissioner for protection equality, which in the end resulted in introduction of sex characteristics as an anti-discrimination ground in Serbia.

Please continue your great work!!”

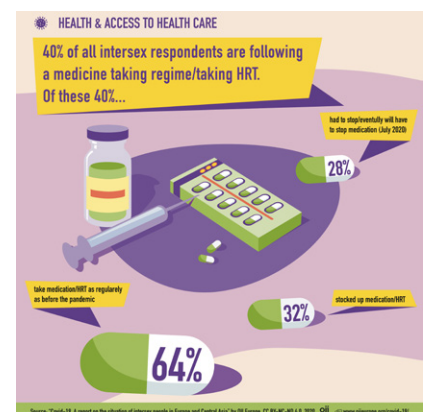
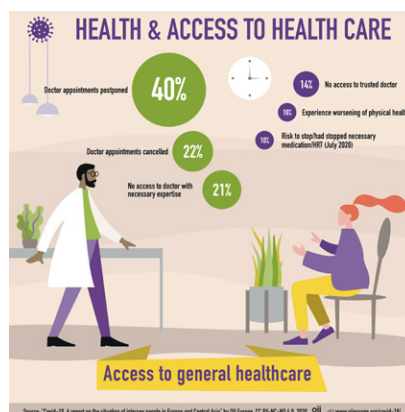
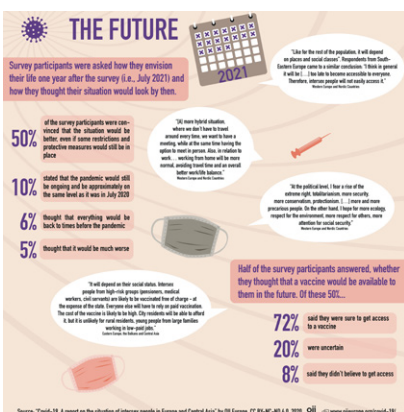
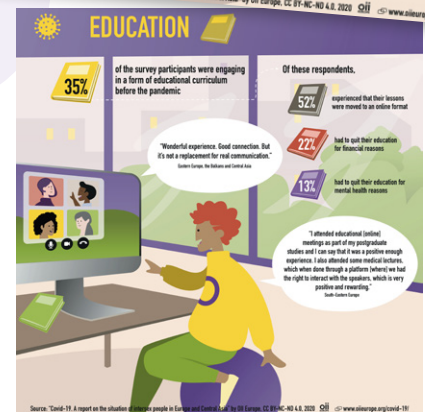
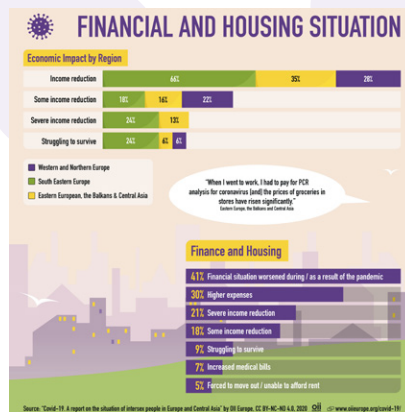
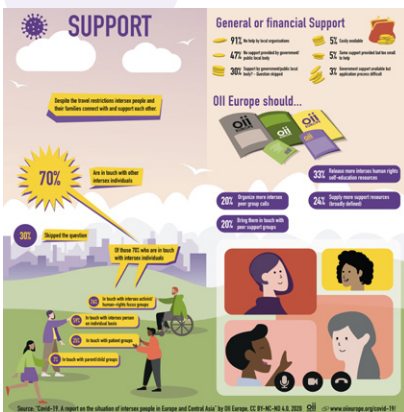
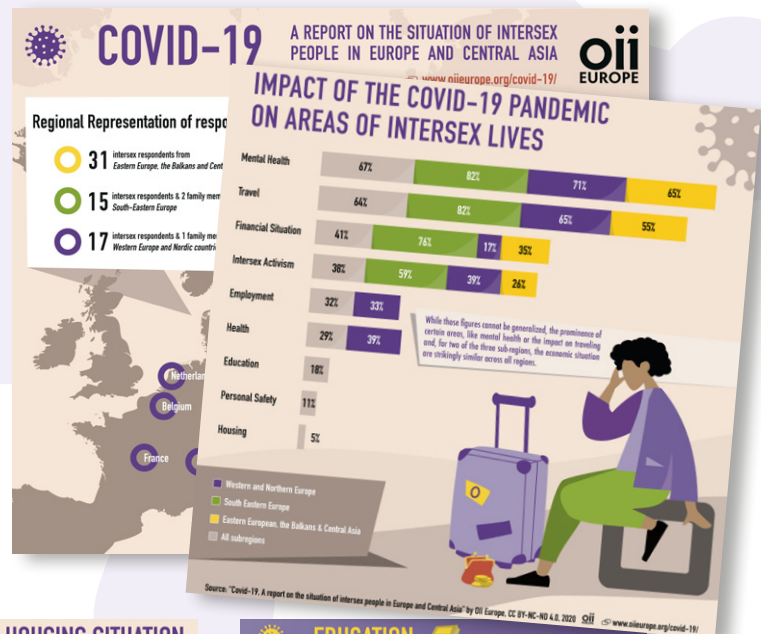
Kristian Randelović, Executive Director of XY-Spectrum and OII Europe Board Member

COVID-19 & the situation of intersex people

European COVID-19 Survey

Since its release in 2020, the *OII Europe's COVID-19. A report on the situation of intersex people in Europe and Central Asia* report has been widely disseminated and referenced as one of the main sources about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the intersex community. For instance, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights has referenced the OII Europe report in their 2021 publication "The coronavirus pandemic and fundamental rights: A year in review" talking about the pandemic's impact on the intersex community.

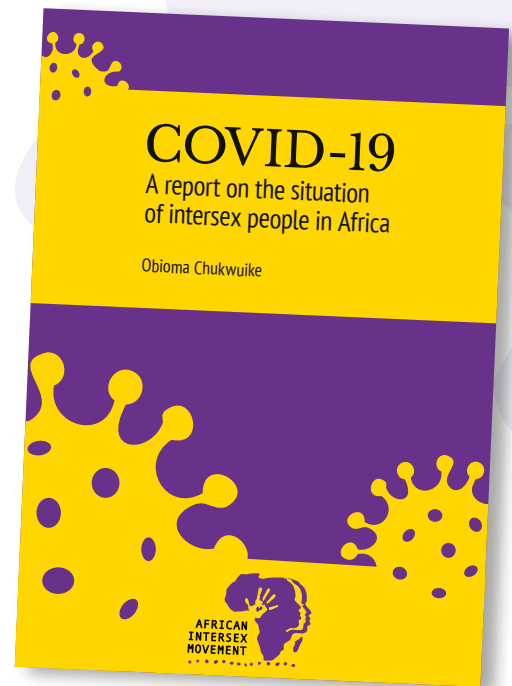
In 2021, the year following the report, OII Europe launched 16 infographics¹², based on the contents of the report, providing a visual representation of the data from the report.



Global COVID-19 Survey

With the COVID-19 pandemic still being far from over, the Global Intersex Movement showed incredible unity and resilience, joining together forces to conduct the COVID-19 survey within the intersex movement in different regions of the world. Using the OII Europe COVID-19 survey questions as a template to adapt, change and edit, intersex activists from Africa, Asia and Latin America have conducted COVID-19 surveys in their regions.

The “Covid-19. A report on the situation of intersex people in Africa” by Obioma Chukwuike from the African Intersex Movement was released in July 2021. The African intersex-led survey was the first survey in Africa to specifically focus on the impact of Covid-19 on intersex people. One of the biggest findings of the report was the highly increased risk intersex people face in not being able to access financial support, as well as increased difficulty in accessing employment. It also highlighted the negative impact of the pandemic on the mental health of intersex individuals. Other findings included impacts on intersex activism, employment and safety.



The “Invisibility Amplified: A report on the impact of COVID-19 on intersex people in Asia” report by Prashant Singh and Hiker Chiu from Intersex Asia was released on June 1st, 2021, the first day of Pride month. Including data from around nine Asian countries, the report shows a negative impact in the areas of finance, employment, community organizing and other areas. A significant portion of intersex participants are reluctant to seek medical help due to their prior experiences of medical violence and trauma.

The Latin American survey was conducted by Gaby Gonzalez and Eli Rubashkin. Having the biggest number of participants of all regional surveys, the upcoming results are promised to bring to light a detailed view of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the intersex movement in Latin America.

OII Europe was delighted to be able to support those activists with technical means and support. The four regional reports will be compiled into a Global COVID-19 Intersex report later this year.

POLICY & ADVOCACY I

In 2021, the policy and advocacy work of OII Europe included monitoring policy and legal developments, discussing and shaping advocacy strategies together with its partners and continuing the conversation with Council of Europe and European Union bodies and institutions. OII Europe also offered its support to national organisations who wished for and consented to it.

Advocating for mainstreaming intersex rights in many European Commission initiatives

In 2021, OII Europe continued its advocacy work with the European Commission (EC), by participating in public and targeted consultations, and maintaining communication with EC officials. With the aim of mainstreaming intersex rights in various fields of action, it contributed to the following policy initiatives.

1 - Extension of the list of EU crimes to include hate speech & hate crime

The European Commission has [proposed to extend](#) the list of EU crimes - i.e., particularly serious crimes with a cross-border dimension which thus require EU level minimum rules – to include hate speech & hate crime. In April 2021, OII Europe sent its [submission](#) to ensure that any future legislation would be inclusive of intersex people's rights and needs. Based on its own research coupled with the key contributions of three member organisations from different parts of the EU, OII Europe provided data showing that intersex people are victims of hate crime, that they are victims of hate speech – also amounting to public incitement to hatred, violence and discrimination – and increasingly targeted by online hate speech, which takes the form of hateful comments on social media,

hateful posts on forums, offensive pathologizing articles and intersexphobic rhetoric in the public discourse of cross-border groups connected to the so called “anti-gender movement”.

The [Supporting study](#) (p. 80) published after the consultation and the resulting EC communication (p. 14) explicitly addressed bias-motivated violence and speech against intersex people, which is a great achievement for us and the whole intersex community.

2 - Preventing and combating gender-based violence and domestic violence

In its May 2021 [submission](#) to the [fitness check of EU legislation](#), OII Europe outlined that: Intersex Genital Mutilation (IGM) and other forms of bias-motivated violence against intersex people are forms gender-based violence, similar to

Advocating for increasing the integration of intersex people and issues in relevant CoE documents

In March 2021, a coalition of European networks working on LGBTI rights and including ILGA-Europe, EL*C, TGEU, OII Europe and EGLSF submitted a [briefing note](#) on violence and discrimination against LGBTI women in sport to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). Its objective was to support the PACE in its formulation of the report on “The fight for a level playing field – ending dis-

crimination against women in the world of sport” and a consequent resolution. It included data on structural discrimination against intersex women athletes and the imposition of medical treatments on them in the absence of health needs.



Advocating for an intersex-inclusive perspective on international level

In May 2021, OII Europe participated in the United Nations global consultation on a common statistical framework on gender-related killings of women and girls (Femicide/Feminicide). Our [submission](#) drew attention to the fact



that intersex people suffer from a specific form of gender-based violence – along with other forms shared with other groups of the population – that is IGM. This harmful practice, in some regions, can reportedly have fatal consequences. We recommended intersex inclusion in the questionnaire to allow for an even more accurate picture of femicide of women in all their diversity.

In July 2021, OII Europe, TGEU, ILGA-Europe and IGLYO submitted a [statement](#) about a proposal for “Guidelines for the promotion and implementation of gender equality”, in the framework of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). As the proposal had shown an exclusive binary perspective on sex and gender, our statement recommended a shift to a perspective inclusive of intersex, trans and non-binary people and outlined that “equality between women and men” cannot be achieved by leaving those with diverse gender identities and sex characteristics behind.

FGM; data revealed that homelessness is often related to domestic conflicts; current protection measures are not sufficient. It gave recommendations to strengthen protection in legislation and policy, data collection and victims’ support.

3 - Pathways to School Success

Together with IGLYO, TGEU and ILGA-Europe, OII Europe advocated for increasing inclusion of LGBTI learners in schools by participating in the Commission [consultation](#) about education, in September 2021. This joint submission offers data about ongoing discrimination, harassment, violence, drop-outs and lack of training among teachers and school staff. It includes recommendations on ensuring safe and inclusive school environments for LGBTI children and youth.

4 - Evaluation of the Victims’ Rights Directive

In October 2021, following the EC call to send feedbacks for the [evaluation of the Victims’ Rights Directive](#), OII Europe submitted that: intersex people are specifically vulnerable to bias motivated violence and crimes; they have specific needs which must be accounted for through individual assessment and the provision of targeted support.

5 - European Statistics on Population

The EC has sought feedback about the relevance of the current [European Statistics on Population](#). In December 2021, ILGA-Europe, TGEU, IGLYO and OII Europe sent a joint [submission](#) to advocate for the inclusion of data on LGBTI people. It also contained good practice examples on how to frame questions to obtain accurate SOGISC data.

POLICY & ADVOCACY II

Intervening as a third party before courts

■ National cases

In Bulgaria, the Supreme Court of Cassation asked the Constitutional Court how legal gender recognition of a person is compatible with the Bulgarian Constitution, namely the right to private life (Art 32(1)) as well as Bulgaria's international obligations arising out of the European Convention on Human Rights and EU law.

OII Europe submitted a [letter of observations](#) to the Bulgarian Constitutional Court with contextual information regarding practical obstacles faced by intersex people seeking legal gender recognition, and in the matter of the interpretation of the concept of sex under the Constitution.

■ Cases before the European Court of Human Rights

After the first case ever on intersex issues reached the European Court of Human Rights in 2020, in 2021 new cases were communicated by the highest human rights court in the region and once again OII Europe intervened as a third party. In February 2021, we sent our observations together with ILGA-Europe and OII Europe's French member organisation Collectif intersexes et allié-e-s, related to the [M v. France case](#), application no. 42821/18. This case concerns the breach of bodily integrity through non-vital surgical interventions on intersex children and the obstacles faced when seeking reparation before the Courts.

OII Europe also joined a consortium led by the European Council on Refugees and Exiles, together with other partners, and sent its observations about the [L.B. v France case](#), application no. 67839/17, in September 2021. The latter concerns the deportation of intersex asylum seekers and the authorities' assessment in deportation decisions under Articles 3 (prohibition of torture) and 8 (respect for private life) of the Convention.

If the Court finds that the Convention has been violated, its decisions will have impacts beyond this specific case and will result in increased protection of intersex people's rights across Europe.

Sharing research and other resources with the intersex movement

In March 2021, OII Europe published on its website the results of the research conducted in preparing the submission for the [Y v. France case](#), application no. 76888/17, sent in November 2020. The [document](#) collects the legal and policy developments regarding the legal gender recognition (LGR) of intersex people in Europe. It detects a trend towards enabling legal gender change based on self-determination

(even though mostly still within a binary system) and, at least in some countries, towards granting non-binary options.

With regard to other resources to support the advocacy work of the intersex movement, OII Europe further continued to monitor, list and share [intersex specific shadow reports](#) to UN mechanisms and [intersex specific recommendations](#) from UN and European bodies.

Advocacy Work and Awareness Raising at relevant events

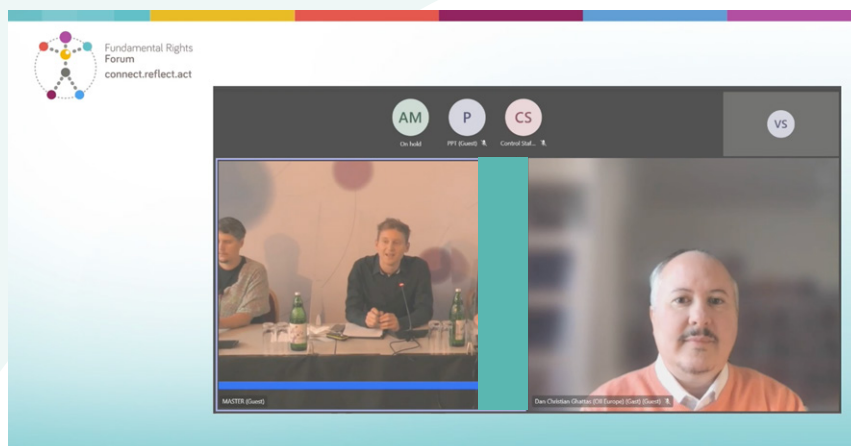
In 2021 OII Europe organised the following sessions

18.08.2021 **The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the global intersex community**, online, Session, **Copenhagen 2021 Human Rights Conference**. [Link to the Session Recording](#)

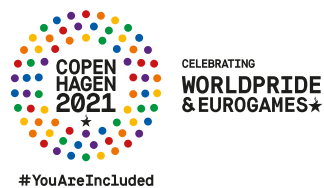
19.08.2021 **Intersex 101**, online, Session, **Copenhagen 2021 Human Rights Conference**. [Link to the Session Recording](#)

12.10.2021 (in cooperation with VIMÖ/OII Austria), online/ Vienna, Session: **Ending Intersex Genital Mutilation in Europe, Fundamental Rights Forum 2021**, organised by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA). [Link to the Session Recording](#)

26.10.2021 (in cooperation with TGEU, IGLO, ILGA-Europe), online, **Workshop: How can the EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy support your work on trans, intersex rights and the protection of young people, ILGA-Europe Gathering Online 2021 - The Power of Us**, organised by ILGA-Europe



Ending Intersex Genital Mutilation in Europe, Fundamental Rights Forum 2021 - Tinou Ponzer, VIMÖ/OII Austria, Paul Haller, Project Coordinator at OII Europe, Dan Christian Ghattas, ED OII Europe - screenshot of session



OII Europe served as an Executive Partner of Copenhagen 2021 WorldPride and EuroGames, held on 12–22 August 2021.

The inclusion of OII Europe as an Executive Partner allowed for

an even greater inclusion of the topic of intersex human rights at the event. A lot of work was put into organising the sessions, and most intersex attendees choose to participate online due to the pandemic. We were happy to have had this chance to contribute to this event.

During the event OII Europe held the following sessions during the Copenhagen 2021 Human Rights Conference:

18.08.2021 **The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the global intersex community online session**

Invited speaker included:

- **Obioma Chukwuike, Executive Director Intersex-Nigeria**
- **Hiker Chiu, Intersex Asia Chair & Executive Director**
- **Gaby Gonzalez, Coordinator and Human Rights Activist**
- **Aeli Rubashkyn, Intersex programme officer at ILGA World**
- **Irene Kuzemko, OII Europe**

19.08.2021 **Intersex 101 Online session** with Irene Kuzemko & Luan Pertl

And we participated in the following sessions:

16.08.2021, **Copenhagen 2021 Sports Leader Conference, Workshop: Violence and discrimination against LGBTI women in sports**, in cooperation with EL*C, ILGA Europe, TGEU and EGLSF

Personal Intersex & Youth Message by Irene Kuzemko was screened on 19.08.2021 during the Copenhagen 2021 Closing Plenary.

POLICY & ADVOCACY III

Advocacy Work and Awareness Raising at relevant events – cont.

In 2021 OII Europe spoke at the following events:

- 09.02.2021, online, **Online Roundtable** with Human Rights Defender - **LGBTI rights in Europe: current threats to equal rights, challenges faced by defenders and the way forward**, organised by the **Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights**
- 19.03.2021, online, **46th Human Rights Council Side Event: Intersectional human rights framework: LGBTI and disability**, organised by ILGA together with CREA, ILGA Oceania, OII Europe, OHCHR, Permanent Mission of Mexico, Permanent Mission of New Zealand
- 18.05.2021, online, **IDAHOT+ Forum 2021**, organised by the United Kingdom and Cyprus Governments
- 10.06.2021, online, **Supporting trans and intersex inclusion in the workplace**, organised by the European Commission
- 29.06.2021, online, **London Ontario Pride Festival**, Online Discussion, [link to the recording](#) ▶
- 01.06.2021, online/Belgrade, **“Entre Deux Sexes” Documentary Screening** by XY Spectrum, Project RISE Serbian Public Event ▶
- 09.06.2021, online, **Intersex Rights in Greece** by Intersex Greece, Project RISE Greek Public event ▶
- 30.06.2021, Helsinki, **5 x i – talks about intersex at Helsinki Pride** by Intersukupuolisten ihmisoikeudet – ISIO ry, Project RISE Finnish public event ▼
- 16.08.2021 (in cooperation with EL*C, ILGA Europe, TGEU and EGLSF), online/Copenhagen, Workshop: **Violence and discrimination against LGBTI women in sports**, Copenhagen 2021 Sports Leader Conference
- 19.08.2021, Copenhagen, **Personal Intersex & Youth Message**, Copenhagen 2021 Closing Plenary
- 28.09.2021, online, **White House Intersex Community Listening**, organised by the US Government, the US State Department, GATE
- 30.09.2021, online, **High Level Roundtable on Equality Data**, organised by the European Commission
- 25.10.2021, online, **Intersex? Variationen der Geschlechtsmerkmale? Eine Veranstaltungsreihe zum Lernen und Lehren**, organised by Intersex & Transgender Luxembourg and supported by the Ministère de la Famille, de l'Intégration et à la Grande Région & Ministère de la Justice



1. Flyer of the online event "Intersex Rights in Greece", with Intersex Greece, 09. June 2021
2. 29. June 2021 Online discussion during the London Ontario Pride Festival
3. 26. October 2021 Intersex Interactive: A Dialogue with International Activists for Intersex Awareness Day, organised by the US State Department
4. 01. June 2021 Screening of the documentary "Entre Deux Sexes", Belgrade, with XY Spectrum

26.10.2021, online, **Intersex Interactive: A Dialogue with International Activists for Intersex Awareness Day**, organised by the US State Department ▶

27.10.2021, online, plenary panel, **The Power of Us: Rallying Around a Common Purpose**, ILGA-Europe Gathering Online

05.11.2021, online/ Pretoria, **EU-South Africa Policy Dialogue on the Rights of Transgender & Intersex Persons (24-26.10.2021)**, organised by the Republic of South Africa, the SA-EU Strategic Partnership The Dialogue Facility, Gender Dynamix, iranti, ACMS, ISSA

Attendance and dissemination of information about intersex at the following events

19.05.2021, online, **27th Roundtable of the European Governmental LGBTI Focal Points Network**, organised by the Council of Europe

11-12.10.2021, online, **Fundamental Rights Forum 2021**, organised by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)

18.10.2021, online, **ECRI annual seminar with Equality Bodies: Joining Forces to Promote and Protect the Human Rights of LGBTI Persons**

25-29.10.2021, online, **ILGA-Europe Gathering Online 2021 - The Power of Us**, organised by ILGA-Europe

24.11.2021, online, **28th Roundtable of the European Governmental LGBTI Focal Points Network**, organised by the Council of Europe

26.11.2021, online, **Online Legal Seminar on Non-discrimination and Gender Equality**, organised by the European Commission and the European Equality Law Network



AWARENESS RAISING

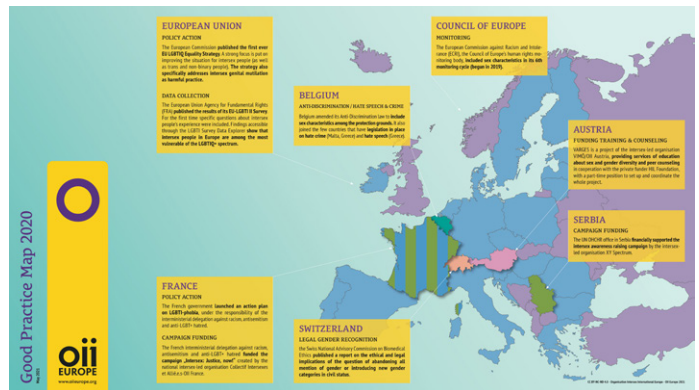
Raising awareness is one of OII Europe's key measures used to inform policy makers, stakeholders, professionals, media and the general public about the situation of intersex people living in Europe. Our goal is twofold: to foster human rights-based language and terminology that is depathologizing, destigmatising, empowering, appreciative, affirmative and developed by the intersex community and to make intersex people in Europe more aware of their human rights.

In our continuous work throughout the year we transform existing, comprehensive OII Europe resources into concise, topic-specific awareness raising materials. Here are four highlights of our awareness raising work in 2021:

1. Good Practice Map 2020

In 2021 OII Europe published the newest edition of its annual Good Practice Map. It highlights positive activities and actions in Europe the previous year, including Policy Action, Data Collection, Legal Gender Recognition, Campaigns, Anti-discrimination / Hate speech & crime, Monitoring, Funding Training & Counselling.

We also began to include what we call "Missed Opportunities", highlighting the the promising aspects of specific activities and actions whilst pointing towards information on how to turn these into good practices.

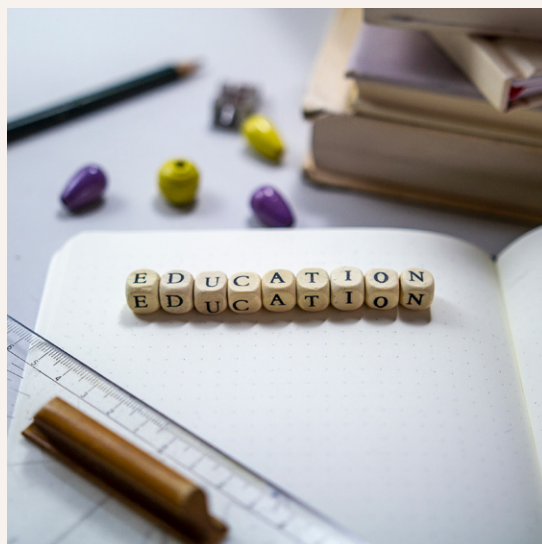


Front and back sides of the unfolded Good Practice Map 2020 ▶

Download as PDF available under: <https://oiiurope.org/good-practice-map-2020/>

2. Our website is growing

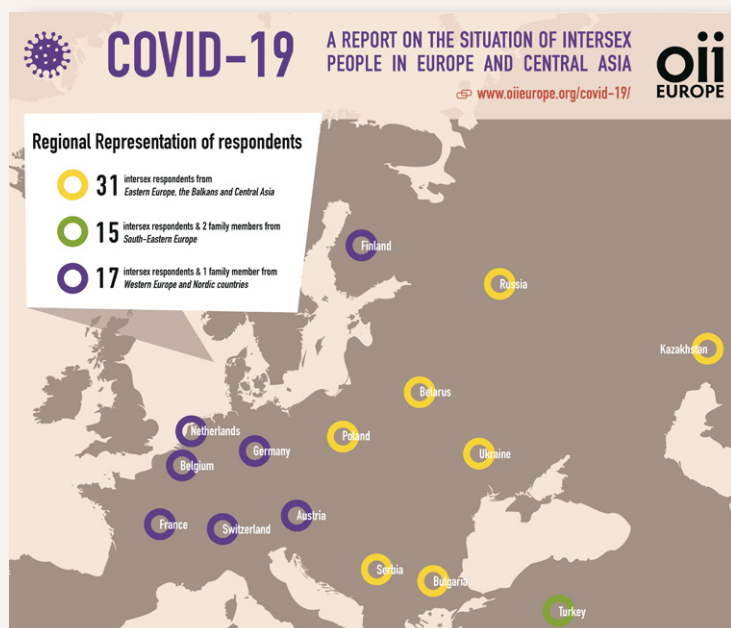
The OII Europe website is continuously changing and expanding, and for 2022 a larger update is currently in the works. In 2021 we added a section called “**Topics**” that features posts on specific issues such as “**Intersex and Sports**”, “**IGM**”, “**Education**”, “**Refugees**” or “**Employment**” that are being updated and revised regularly. With our topic pages we assemble valuable content from our advocacy work and provide an additional accessible way of transferring knowledge to the public and the intersex community. → [Link to the Topics pages](#)



3. Covid-19 Report Infographics

This leads to the visualisation of content to facilitate our advocacy and findings, such as in the case of our 2020 **Covid-19 Report**. In 2021 OII Europe created 16 **infographics** that accompany the report and call attention to its findings. These infographics have been added to our [Infographic sub website](#) and are available for download in different sizes, e.g., for presentation purposes or for social media use. As with most of our materials, we provide these for free under the Creative Commons licence CC BY-NC-ND 4.0, which requires attribution and non-commercial use, and no derivatives.

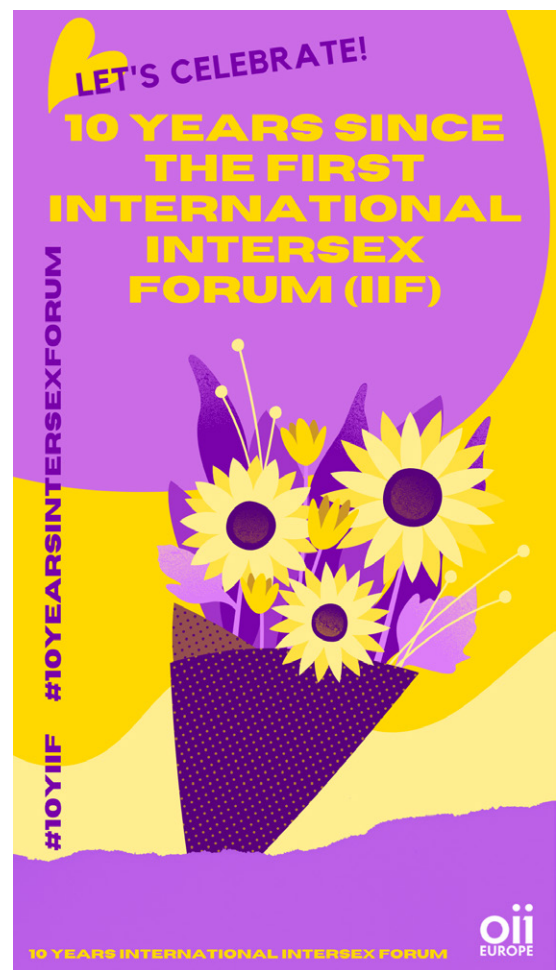
→ Also see details on Covid-19 and the situation of intersex people on page 6



AWARENESS RAISING II

4. Intersex Awareness Weeks

Our 2021 Intersex Awareness Weeks Campaign brought into focus the celebration of the **10-Year-Anniversary since the First International Intersex Forum (IIF) took place**. We asked several participants of past IIF's to look back on and to feature impacts that these fora had and continue to have on our lives, both as activists and on a personal level. Over the 14 days of the Intersex Awareness Weeks we shared stories on our Social Media with quotes, highlighting developments in selected countries, presenting the fora statements to a larger audience, and on Nov 8 (Intersex Day of Remembrance) we paid homage to two intersex activists and forum-participants (Sally Gross and Deborah Lambillotte) who both have passed since then. The campaign stories can be revisited on its dedicated website → <https://10yiif.ojieurope.org/>



Statistics:

OII Europe website

- In 2021 the OII Europe website had over 280.000 visits with an average of 24.000 visits per month, and an average of 190.000 hits per month. Visits came from all continents, for the month December 2021 with the most hits from the USA with over 18.000 hits.
- Legal Toolkit English version “**Protecting Intersex People in Europe**” (2019) downloads apprx. over 100 times a month. Total downloads until 12/2021 apprx: over 3.700 times.
- Parents toolkit “**Supporting your intersex child**” (2018) has been translated now into 17 languages and is our most downloaded toolkit with a current total of over 13.000 downloads, and an average of monthly 200-400 downloads. **Most downloaded versions are in English** (total: 3.360), followed by **Turkish** (tl: 1.911), **Russian** (tl: 1.788), **French** (tl: 1.588), **Czech** (tl: 1.468), **Greek** (tl: 1.384) and then **Croatian** (tl: 1.283).
- The allies toolkit “**Standing up for the human rights of intersex people**” (2016) has now been translated into 12 additional languages and has had over 8500 downloads, with an average of monthly 100 downloads for the english version alone.
- The **Testimonial book “#MyIntersexStory”** has so far been downloaded almost 8.000 times.
- Our several **submissions to the European Court of Human Rights** have been downloaded together over 200 times since their posting on our website.
→ See also the *Policy & Advocacy* section on page 8.



Intervisibility website

- In 2021 the Website had over 107.000 visits with an average of at least 7.000 visits/month and an average of 50.000 hits per month. The visits come from all continents, and all regions of the world.
- The intervisibility startpage provides **basic information on intersex in 28 languages** - most hits received the English startpage with an average of 3.000 hits per month, followed by Arabic with an average of 200 hits a month;
- The **recommendations of the CHRCoE** page provides the infographic as a media package in 23 languages - the English page had an average of 400 hits a month and has received over 19.000 hits in total; The media package was downloaded (numbers total) in English over 300 times, followed by the Czech version (180 downloads) and the Arabic version (150 downloads).

Social Media:

- 📘 In 2021 our Facebook page gained a total reach of 33.611, the highest reach of a single post was the one on the **European Parliament resolution on the situation of sexual & reproductive health & rights in the EU** with a graphic showing two intersex individuals holding up signs saying “**Our body, our choice!**”. In November 2021 we had 3.400 page followers. ◀
- 🐦 Our twitter account reached over 2.000 followers in June 2021. Our reach gained an annual mean of 23.000, with the top tweet of our annual Good Practice Map with over 26.000 impressions.
- 📷 We increased the number of followers of our instagram account to over 1.000 in May 2021. During the **Intersex Awareness Weeks** (Oct. 26-No. 8) we posted daily instagram stories (*see opposite page*) and increased our reach to over 1.000 accounts during a 30 day time period.

COMMUNITY & MOVEMENT BUILDING

Oii Europe Online Community Event and Public Conference 2021



Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 Oii Europe Online Community Event and Conference for the first time was held completely online. Under the theme of “Staying Connected” we were delighted to once again be surrounded by our amazing community during the 3-day event consisting of a one-day public conference and a two-day closed community event. Over 94 participants registered for the event, for many this being their first ever Community event.

The program of the Public Conference on September 24th included **panels on the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic**, a **dialogue with allies on examples of good allyship** and – last

but not least – a **session by intersex musicians!** As always we were amazed by our speakers and their words. A big thank you to all our invited speakers and musicians!

The program of the Public Conference was one of the first events, to our knowledge, to include panels on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the intersex community with speakers from most regions of the world, as well as a panel on research ethics for allies working on the topic of intersex. All the panels also featured simultaneous interpretation into Spanish and French and live captions. Despite some minor technical difficulties the event went smoothly and successfully!



Top left to right: Obioma Chukwuike, Intersex-Nigeria & African Intersex Movement; Manuela Falzone, Intersex-Esiste; Dan Christian Ghattas, OII Europe; Dr. Nikoletta Pikramenou, Aristotle University; **Center left to right:** Eliana Rubashkyn, ILGA World; Crystal Hendricks, Intersex South Africa; Régine Abadia, film director; Amets Suess Schwend, Andalusian School of Public Health, Granada; **Bottom left to right:** Hiker Chiu, Intersex Asia; Mauro Cabral Grinspan, GATE Trans, Gender Diverse and Intersex Advocacy in Action; Gaby Gonzalez, Organisation Orquidea Intersexual; Surya Monro, Professor in Sociology and Social Policy, University of Huddersfield, UK.

The program of the Public Event included the following sessions:

■ **Keynote speech by Silvan Agius, Cabinet Expert of Commissioner for Equality Helena Dalli, European Commission**

■ **COVID-19 and Intersex Panel, with the following speakers:**

- Dan Christian Ghattas, Executive Director of OII Europe
- Hiker Chiu, Chair of Intersex Asia
- Gaby Gonzalez, Coordinator and activist for the human rights of intersex people in Argentina. Organisation Orquidea Intersexual
- Obioma Chukwuike, intersex and human rights activist, founder and Executive Director Intersex-Nigeria, and member of the African Intersex Movement


■ **One Year Later: Intersex Activism in COVID-19 Times Panel Discussion with the speakers:**

- Eliana Rubashkyn, intersex pharmacist, chemist and human rights activist, ILGA World Intersex Programme Officer
- Crystal Hendricks, Chair of Intersex South Africa
- Hiker Chiu, Chair of Intersex Asia
- Manuela Falzone, activist of IntersexEsiste and member of AISIA
- Mauro Cabral Grinspan, Executive Director, GATE Trans, Gender Diverse and Intersex Advocacy in Action

■ **Good Practice in Research by Allies Panel Discussion with the speakers:**

- Dr. Nikoletta Pikramenou, Aristotle University, ally-member of Intersex Greece
- Amets Suess Schwend, INIA, Intersex - New Interdisciplinary Approaches, Andalusian School of Public Health, Granada
- Dr. Ulrike Klöppel, member of the advisory board of Internationale Vereinigung Intergeschlechtlicher Menschen - OII Germany
- Surya Monro, INIA, Intersex - New Interdisciplinary Approaches, Professor in Sociology and Social Policy, University of Huddersfield, UK
- Régine Abadia, Film Director, director of the documentary "Entre Deux Sexes"

■ **Intersex Musicians Session with Tinou & the Emancipatory Jukebox and Annelies Tukker, International Policy Officer of NNID**

 Stay tuned for the recordings of the Public Event on our YouTube channel [👉](#)

COMMUNITY & MOVEMENT BUILDING II

OII Europe Online Community Event and Public Conference 2021 cont.

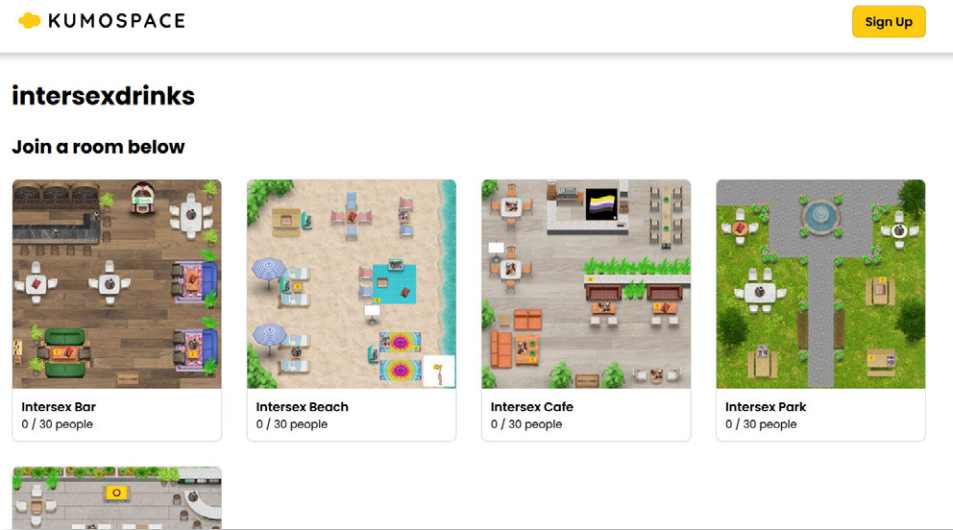
The program of the Community event included **advocacy and capacity building sessions, informal hangouts, conversations,** and more **fun and relaxing sessions,** as well as **sessions for family and loved ones.** Split into three separate tracks that were held simultaneously along with a dedicated hangout space, the sessions included a wide variety of topics, from **documenting hate speech and hate crime to intersex characters in the media,** from **intersex advocacy with European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) to personal activist self-care,** from **intersex artists music listening sessions to intersex and sports...** We can go on and on, there was so much! *We are also proud that we were able to pay all intersex speakers for their amazing contributions.*

Of course, it is sad that we were unable to hold the Community Event in person on 2021, but the online format allowed the Community Event 2021 to have attendees coming from all regions of the world. Also, throughout the entire event simultaneous interpretation into Spanish and French was available, as well as live captioning. According to the feedback OII Europe received afterwards, many attendees found the event empowering and many appreciated the option of staying in touch after the end of the event. Even in the online format it felt like a real Community Event, and we are hopeful to come back to holding such events in person soon.

The program of the Community Event included the following sessions:

- **Personal self-care and handling the emotional impact of human rights work** by Erin Vlahović, Executive Coordinator and Intersex Program Coordinator at kolekTIRV (ex Trans Aid) and Magda Rakita, co-founder & Executive Director of Fundacja Interakcja and chair of trustees at Interconnected UK
- **Youth&I publication** by Steph Lum, founder and editor of YOUth&I, intersex advocate and poet
- **Session about the Emergence of the Intersex Movement from 2006 to 2015,** by Audrey Aegerter, Chair of InterAction Suisse and Board Member at OII Europe
- **Session about intersex advocacy with the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) Advocacy** by Cianán Russell, Senior Policy Officer, ILGA-Europe
- **Intersex Artists Music Listening Session**
- **Intersex Characters in the Media Talk**
- **Documenting hate crime/Hate speech**
- **Intersex and Sports session** with invited speakers Annet Negesa, former Ugandan middle distance runner, Urs Vanessa Sager, 65 years old intersex activist from Switzerland, Vice President of InterAction Switzerland, and Dr. Payoshni Mitra, Athlete rights activist & scholar
- **2020 OII Europe Good Practice Map Presentation + Exchange** with community about new good practice from their countries
- **ILGA-Europe Rainbow Map Intersex Indicators Discussion**
- **Education (and queering) of Medical Professionals About Intersex Matters** by Mirjam Werlen, InterAction Suisse
- **Family and Loved Ones Conversation and Writing Spaces**
- **Chill music listening space**
- **As well as Intersex Drinks in the evening!**

For dedicated meeting spaces during our community event we used the free online platform Kumospace that simulates being together in a room. Acoustically and visually you could approach a group seated in a bar area, and while coming closer you would be able to hear and join the conversation. Or you could walk on the beach and listen to the ocean for a while.



The incredible **Awa_stern collective** was responsible for the Awareness during the event, making sure everybody felt safe, heard, comfortable and had the option to receive emotional support whenever needed, during and after the event. We have also learned lessons for the future online events about the need to have funds and procedures in place to cover internet data for attendees who might not be able to attend without it.

We received highly positive feedback regarding the event, and we were delighted to once again get the feeling of a real Community Event and community unity, even despite it having been held in the online format. We had a fantastic time and we're so grateful to our community! We are also grateful of the kind support by *Zoom* for providing a temporary extended number of participants package for this event. ❤️



Virtual Campfires

Started in 2020 as a bi-weekly call and a way to support the community during the challenging pandemic times, the “Campfire” calls became a continued tradition and were held all throughout 2021. During the Campfires participants have a chance to talk and hang out in nice warm company, as well as watch publicly available videos and documentaries, while chatting with other intersex people in the chat and discussing the videos afterwards.

In September 2021 we also hosted the first call of our future **Parents/Family/Loved Ones/Partners of Intersex People Network** call. We see support and creation of a network of parents and loved ones as being essential to guaranteeing the strengthening of the intersex movement and creating a supporting and loving environment for intersex children of the future!

OUR PROGRAMS

EU-Project RISE & Capacity Building of the European Intersex Movement



In 2021 OII Europe continued its second year of our RISE project, based on the EU grant with the Horizon2020 / European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020).

The project goals include building the capacity of the European intersex movement, providing low-threshold and easily accessible online information on intersex topics and increasing intersex visibility and awareness about intersex as an issue of social acceptance and not a medical issue.

With the second year of the project OII Europe has finished the Beginner stage of Online Training for the European intersex movement and has moved on to deliver the **Advanced Online Trainings**, this time going deeper into more advanced areas. The topics of the Beginner Online Training included

Intersex Advocacy with The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) (we thank our invited host, Cianán Russell Senior Policy Officer, ILGA-Europe), **Hosting Intersex Community Events/Meeting, Advanced Intersex Fundraising and Advanced Intersex Awareness Raising.** The efficiency of the project and relevancy of topics presented and tools used was monitored and adjusted via ongoing feedback from the community and organisations involved.

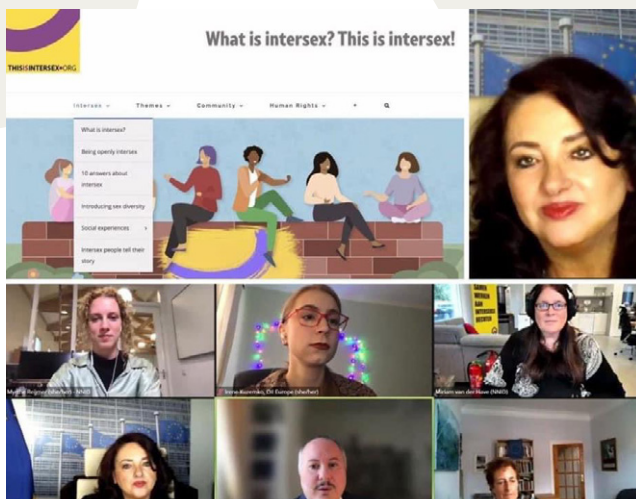
Five intersex organisations from different regions of Europe, all involved in the project, received tailored trainings from OII Europe throughout the year, and exercised their new skills by each successfully organizing public events, including a **conference, a panel** and a **film screening with Q&A.**

- 01.06.2021, online/Belgrade, "**Entre Deux Sexes**" **Documentary Screening** by XY Spectrum with a Q&A with Ins A Kromminga ▶
- 09.06.2021, online, **Intersex Rights in Greece** by Intersex Greece, the first ever **public event** about intersex rights in Greece. The page of the event on Facebook reached 27.957 people and the events stream on Facebook Live currently has 1.460 views.
- 30.06.2021, Helsinki, **5 x i – Talks about intersex at Helsinki Pride** by Intersukupuolisten ihmisoikeudet – ISIO ry ▶



The project „RISE! Fighting discrimination and increasing visibility of intersex people through capacity and knowledge building” was funded by the European Union’s Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020).

The content of this project represents the views of the authors only and is their sole responsibility. The European Commission does not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains.



- **Keynote Speech by Helena Dalli**, European Union Commissioner for Equality
- **Piet de Bruyn**, Belgian politician and Flemish Member of Parliament
- **Miltos Pavlou**, Socio-Legal Researcher at the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights
- **Magda Rakita**, co-founder and Executive Director of Fundacja Interakcja and Chair of trustees at Interconnected UK
- **Kaisli Syrjänen**, Chair of ISIO, Finland
- **Surya Monro**, INIA, Intersex - New Interdisciplinary Approaches, Professor in Sociology and Social Policy, University of Huddersfield, UK

Our project partner NNID has finished the preparation stage of the thisisintersex.org website and, together with OII Europe, launched it on Intersex Awareness Day, October 26th 2021 with a dedicated event, invited speakers and panelists of which included:

Making our resources available in multiple languages

OII Europe is dedicated to making its policy work and empowering material available to intersex communities who can use it for their advocacy work across the Council of Europe region. In the light of limited funding for intersex organisations it is crucial to share materials among intersex activists and organisations. In order to make the content available in more languages we work with translators from the intersex community to ensure the quality of terminologies and a human rights based and depathologizing approach and sensitivity.

In 2021 we were able to continue our translation project that included two editions of our **testimonial book** “#MyIntersexStory – Personal accounts by intersex people living in Europe” translated into **Spanish and French**. The book introduces fifteen testimonies by intersex people and their families and fifteen colourful illustrations by intersex artist and OII Europe staff member Ins A Kromminga.

This book also contains a text by intersex scholar and sociology professor Janik Bastien Charlebois “On our own terms and in our own words”: The value of first-person accounts of intersex experience. ▶

Another highlight of our translation work is the **Serbian** edition of ILGA-Europe’s and OII Europe’s **legal toolkit** “**Protecting Intersex People in Europe: A toolkit for law and policy makers**” that was realised in cooperation with our member organisation XY Spectrum and the Heinrich Böll Stiftung. ▼



■ Also in 2021: Legal Toolkit in German (with OII Germany), Parents Toolkit in Italian, Czech (with Trans*Parent), Albanian.

OUR PROGRAMS II

Intersex Asylum Seeker & Refugee Project

In 2021 the Intersex Asylum Seeker and Refugee Project of OII Europe focused on securing funding. We also continued to reach out to intersex refugees and strengthened our existing contacts with them, and continued to engage with advocates working in the field of LGBTIQ refugees and asylum seekers. Several meetings were organised by OII Europe with legal advisers from Germany, Austria, and the Netherlands. We received valuable input from intersex refugees that assisted us during the application process, and that eventually allowed us to apply for funding for a two-year period.

The situation of intersex asylum seekers and refugees is still very invisible within the LGBTIQ community, and legal

advisers remain unaware of the dangers intersex people face in their countries, or about their needs when going through the asylum procedure. And lastly, many authorities still have a serious knowledge gap in regards to intersex issues, therefore we believe a dedicated toolkit on this topic is urgently needed.



European Intersex Strategic Litigation (EISL) Network

The European Intersex Strategic Litigation Network, established in 2020, continued its activities in 2021. It comprises intersex experts/activists and legal experts and lawyers from different parts of the European region.

The Network held two meetings, the first one in July and the second one in December. The participants had fruitful discussions about potential cases to be initiated in relation to Intersex Genital Mutilation and Legal Gender Recognition; further exchanged about funding opportunities; brainstormed

about the structure and content of a toolkit to support the capacity of intersex and legal experts to engage in strategic litigation; analysed arguments and counter-arguments that can be used in lawsuits about IGM.

The Network expressed a clear need to maintain and extend its activities and identified its key role in providing support to the community, increasing awareness among legal practitioners, courts and also the general public, and in the long-term fostering legal and societal change across various countries.

OII Europe is currently working to attract funds to sustain the work of this Network, to fully utilise its potential and to use it as a new advocacy tool.



Research, Training & Education

■ Intersex: New Interdisciplinary Approaches (INIA) 2021-2024

INIA is an international research network, the first of its kind, and it is funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme.

It aims to train a cohort of ten early-stage researchers working collaboratively to develop knowledge that will inform policy making and practice about intersex across a range of key sectors. The research conducted within INIA addresses key issues for intersex wellbeing and rights, including e.g. education, age, ethics, research, policy, family support and activism.

INIA consists of a consortium of 21 organisations from ten countries and was established by the University of Huddersfield in partnership with the Université Libre de Bruxelles, Dublin City University, the University of Zurich, the Escuela Andaluza de Salud Pública / Andalusian School of Public Health and the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona as the main partners.

OII Europe has acted as a key consultant to the University of Huddersfield and the INIA network since the beginning of its establishment in 2018 and, in 2020, became part of the then established advisory board of the network.

In 2021 we were very happy to welcome the first two doctoral research students to OII Europe and to provide expertise and advice during their secondment.

While in-person secondments were initially planned, we had to switch to an online format, due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Since OII Europe has an international team and board, with members sometimes located in different time zones, we already had a good online infrastructure in place and experience in remote-working. We extended this capacity during the pandemic, and our team has continued working from home almost exclusively during this time.

We invited and integrated the research students into our online structures and platforms for daily meetings and regular video calls during the week, and we could uphold the process in an efficient and professional way.

During their secondments we introduced the research students to OII Europe's work including policy and advocacy work, and they contributed by supporting our work for example through research for submissions and statements, and taking part in team meetings and processes. At the same time, OII Europe provided information and exchanged ideas for their research projects.

■ Bring-In

For the EU-cofunded project 881824 - Bring-In - REC-AG-2019/ OII Europe supported its member organisation and Bring-In project partner Bilitis in Bulgaria with the development of a Learning Resource Guide on Intersex Rights. We also prepared a Trainers Guide on Intersex Rights and held a trainers training for them and their colleagues.

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & FUNDING

Staff & Board Meetings

2021 was another year of living with the Covid-19 pandemic, therefore in-person meetings and working together as a team in the office continued to be very challenging. We mostly carried out our work remotely, and even though we are now very proficient when it comes to working and meeting online, we do really hope to be able to work in-person very soon again.



OII Europe Team and Board members during an online meeting in 2021

Staff Development

Nevertheless, there is positive news regarding the further development of our team. Our previous Finance and Administrations Officer Luan Pertl moved to the new role of Training and Education Officer in mid-September. Also in mid-September, our new Finance and Administration Officer Aleks Jahn joined our team. We were particularly pleased that, at the beginning of December, Irene Kuzemko finally was able to come aboard our team here in Berlin as the Community and Communication Officer.

Staff Trainings



- **ILGA EUROPE Online Gathering 2021**
- **FRA - Fundamental Rights Forum 2021**
- **Joined FRA & EC Webex call: Webinar on the Citizen, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV)**

Organisational Knowledge Management

Working in a growing international organisation includes and often requires remote-working, on one hand due to an international team and board, but particularly since the Covid-19 pandemic. For this reason we have been seeking tools and platforms that could improve our online workflow. One important aspect was to integrate a tool that could support us in our organizational knowledge management and that would improve sharing and transfer information and overall communications within our team. At the same time the platform needed to be easy and familiar to use, and help us to improve and work more efficiently. After testing different options we decided to work with a platform called “Slab” that allows us to create and exchange our internal knowledge base and to better structure and document the growing content of information needed in our daily work and processes.



Covid-19 wellbeing measures



The pandemic is creating challenges for many people these days, and especially intersex people are often faced with additional difficulties in their lives. To make sure OII Europe's staff is getting through the pandemic in the most healthy way possible, both mentally and physically, OII Europe provided a monthly wellbeing measure: This could mean having a day for a joint outdoor team excursion, or taking a day off for personal wellness.

+5

Membership

■ In 2021 five new member organisations joined OII Europe, including three full members and two supporting members. We're excited to see our membership grow and to have more organisations joining us!

Funding

In order to further establish and strengthen our work for the intersex community, we have also made many efforts in 2021 to acquire additional funding opportunities for OII Europe. Even though not every application for funding resulted in a funding commitment, we can look back on very positive developments. First of all, we continued to receive financial support from our existing funders. In addition, we were informed at the end of the year by the European Commission that our application for a Framework Partnership Agreement was to be approved. This has further increased the planning security for our organisation.

We are thankful for the support, the trust and the appreciation of OII Europe's work expressed through these grants by the following donors:

Anonymous Donors • Astraea • Council of Europe • Dreilinden • European Commission • Malta Ministry for Justice Equality and Governance • Sigrid Rausing Trust • Wellspring

For OII Europe's Fiscal Year 2021 we can report a funding income of 296.292,05 €

We also thank our cooperation partner:
Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung





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