

ORGANISATION INTERSEX INTERNATIONAL EUROPE

ANNUAL REPORT 2016



WE THANK OUR FUNDERS!



 **HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG**

AND WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE SUPPORT BY OUR ANONYMOUS DONORS

Organisation Intersex International Europe e. V. - OII Europe is a charitable non-for-profit organisation registered in Berlin, Germany
Court of Registration: Amtsgericht Berlin-Charlottenburg - VR 34983 B



Coffee-Break during the Steering Board Meeting in Nikosia, Cyprus, 2016

INTRODUCTION

OII Europe's year of 2016 spanned a whole range of emotions; the year was exciting, exhausting, ambitious, intense, at time overwhelming but first and foremost immensely successful. Over the course of the year, OII Europe managed to reach all the goals initially set forth for the year as well as additional goals set forward as the year progressed.

On an advocacy level, we managed to strengthen and raise awareness on intersex issues with the European Commission and the European Parliament as well as member states representatives.

We furthermore managed to create an immense amount of awareness through further engagement with institutions we already had established relationships with and to engage with other organisations on various projects aimed at increasing the knowledge base for relevant stakeholders and the general public.

2016 was a wonderful year and we are looking forward to all the opportunities, excitements and hopefully successes that 2017 will bring to us.

The OII Europe Steering Board

OVERVIEW



Creation of the **Toolkit** “Standing up for the Human Rights of Intersex People - how can you help?” aimed at **Intersex allies**, now available in English, French and Turkish

OII Europe co-chair Dan Christian Ghattas was the **first intersex person** to officially speak in the **European Parliament**.

OII Europe made suggestions for amendments to the European Parliament “Report on Promoting Gender Equality in Mental Health and Clinical Research”. They were all accepted, making the report the **first EU document including intersex health**.



First ever hearing of the Bioethics Committee of the Council of Europe on the **human rights situation of Intersex youth**.

First steps were taken towards engaging with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (**PACE**) on an **Intersex resolution**.



Intersex issues addressed for the **first time** within the **OSCE** at the HDIM.

Over 100 NGOs, national equality bodies and governments as well as EU, CoE and international bodies and agencies learned more about intersex issues through meetings, conferences workshops, trainings and bilateral conversations.

Intervisibility.eu, OII Europe's community building and awareness raising website, was launched with information about intersex available in **27 European languages**.

OII Europe Flyer is available in **6 languages** to increase knowledge about intersex issues (English, French, German, Bulgarian, Serbo-Croatian and Spanish).

OII Europe is now in touch with **several new intersex activists** from Turkey, Ukraine and Russia, Denmark and Italy.

The **first ever youth study session on Intersex issues** was facilitated by OII Europe and IGLYO; the study session drafted a Parents Guide.

"We are here" Intersex youth awareness raising video translated into **11 languages**.

8 videos produced for **Intersex day of solidarity**.

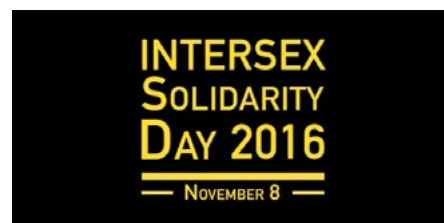
OII Europe was **officially registered** and received charitable status in Berlin, Germany.

9 days of in person steering board meetings.

OII Europe went **from no funding to US-\$ 90000,-** in funding for the fiscal year 2016



Welcome to the increasingly visible world of intersex



HIGHLIGHTS AND SUCCESSES

OII Europe was founded on Human Rights Day, 10 December, during the Second Intersex Forum at Stockholm in 2012. After having some years to grow, and after completion of statutes, OII Europe registered as a legal organisation on the 25th of September 2015. On the 21.6.2016 OII Europe got approved as a registered organisation in Germany and obtained charity status soon after. This

was a very happy ending to one year of administrative work.

The Toolkit “Standing up for intersex human rights – how can you help?” published in cooperation with ILGA-Europe was a huge step in educating allies on how to best engage on intersex issues. It has been used widely since then in Europe and other regions of the world. As of the end of December a

Turkish translation, produced by Kaos GL, and a French translation, produced by OII Europe, had been published.

In May 2016, the Council of Europe’s Bioethics Committee held a hearing on the Human rights challenges of Trans and Intersex Youth, the first of its kind. Presenting on the Human Rights challenges that face Intersex youth were Mika Venhola, a Paediatric

In early 2016 OII Europe worked with IGLYO to hold the very first study session for youth, „I Have Rights, focused solely on intersex issues and fully grounded in a human rights perspective. OII Europe’s secretary engaged with IGLYO as an intersex expert on behalf of OII Europe and became a member of the Preparation team. The study session was held in the European Youth Centre in Budapest and brought together LGBTQ youth, and even more importantly Intersex youth, from all regions of Europe. Furthermore, Intersex youth from INTERACT (USA) and the Blue Diamond Society (Nepal) also attended.

Over the course of five days, participants attended various workshops, designed to increase their understanding of intersex issues and utilising non-formal education methods. Participants learned about intersex issues from multiple perspectives, learned valuable campaign skills which they then used in a campaign challenge to produce posters, infographics and videos and learned to utilise UN conventions in intersex work. A lot of fun and laughter was also present, with some intersex youth meeting other intersex people from outside their country for the first time.

Intersex youth present at the meeting held the first



“We are here” is an Intersex youth awareness raising video that was launched on Intersex Awareness day 2016 with subtitles in 11 European languages.

ever European Intersex youth strategy sessions, and this has led to discussions and work commencing on the first ever European Intersex Youth Network meeting which OII Europe will hold in co-operation with IGLYO in late 2017- early 2018.

They furthermore drafted IGLYO’s position paper on Intersex issues which was approved at IGLYO’s last AMC and produced the first draft of a Parent’s Guide that will be co-published by OII Europe, IGLYO and the European Parents Association in late 2017.

An awareness raising video was also produced and launched on Intersex Awareness day 2016 with subtitles in 11 European languages.

surgeon from Oulu University Hospital and Kitty Anderson, Secretary of OII Europe. Mika Venhola's presentation focused on the damage caused by old treatment paradigms and how they do not reflect modern knowledge of gender and childhood development, finalising with concrete recommendations for a new treatment paradigm focused on providing information and support. Kitty's presentation focused on the influence of medical practitioners advice on parental choice, current indicators for lack of psychological support and lack of understandable information to parents.

A historic first took place in the European Parliament when they invited OII Europe Co-chair Dan Christian Ghattas to present at the hearing on "The situation of fundamental rights in the European Union in 2015" (Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, 16.6.2016, Brussels). This invitation is a definite step towards recognising the lack of protection of intersex people's fundamental rights in the European Union.

Advocacy measures included an extensive study visit to Brussels in the summer of 2016, kindly organised and facilitated by ILGA-Europe, where OII Europe Steering Board members met with representatives of European Commission Directorates and with Members of the European Parliament representing the whole spectrum of European parties. The study visit enabled us to lay a strong groundwork for OII Europe's further advocacy within the EU political structure. During this

visit OII Europe met with DG Justice, DG Education and Culture, DG Research, the LGBTI Intergroup, the children's rights intergroup, FEMM, ALDE, LIBE and various MEP's.

During the Human Dimension Implementation meeting of OSCE, our Secretary was the first intersex person to address the main plenary. During the thematic day of children's rights, she provided representatives present with a brief overview of who intersex people are, the issues they face and the particular dangers that intersex children face in situations of displacement. Earlier in the day, she presented at a side-event, organised by the Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union, at the HDIM gave a presentation on the situation of Intersex young people in the EU and beyond as well as recommendations for safer school environments for intersex children.

OII Europe launched www.intervisibility.eu, the first ever Pan-European website on intersex giving Intersex people from all over Europe a chance to find information about what it means to be intersex in their own language. For many countries, this was the first information available in the local language that was not entirely pathologising. From the start [intervisibility.eu](http://www.intervisibility.eu) included information on intersex and intersex human rights issues in 27 European languages. As of the end of February, the website had been visited by more than 15000 individual IP's with a peak in November with over 7000 visits.

During the ILGA E Annual in Cyprus OII Europe instigated conversations with representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) about an intersex resolution of the PACE. The conversations continued with PACE rapporteur Piet de Bruyn at the ILGA World Conference in Bangkok and the High-Level Ministerial Conference on LGBTIQ Equality Mainstreaming in January 2017. Similar to the transgender resolution adopted 2015 an intersex resolution will be a historical document and a huge stepping stone for acknowledging the existence of intersex people and the challenges they face in the Council of Europe Member States.

OII Europe submitted suggestions of amendments to the European Parliament's FEMME "Report on Promoting Gender Equality in Mental Health and Clinical Research" in co-operation with ILGA-Europe and TGEU. All the amendments were included in the final version, making it the first human rights based EU document on intersex health. With clear and human rights affirming language this document serves as an important foundation to build on in future engagement with the European Union. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/votes.html?tab=order#banner_session_live A second submission handed in by ILGA-Europe, TGEU and OII Europe suggested amendments on the FEMME "Report on equality between women and men in the EU in 2014-2015".

PLANS FOR 2017

In 2017 OII Europe plans to increase its funding opportunities. Since OII Europe's registration process was completed in June 2016 and we gained charitable status in Germany. We have managed to increase the organisations funding from no funding to US-\$ 90000,- for the fiscal year of 2016. Already we are expecting funding of US-\$ 108000,- for 2017. Before the end of 2018, OII Europe must increase its funding to at least US-\$ 200000,- to ensure the organisation's sustainability and continued operations. Without staff and secure office space, the organisation will not be able to continue with work along the lines it has in the previous two years without serious risk of activist burn-out.

In 2016 OII Europe members engaged with the UN Independent expert on SOGI in two different consultations taking place at the ILGA World Conference in Bangkok. One consultation focused on the situation for LGBTI people in Europe while the other focused specifically on intersex issues in a global context. In 2017 we plan to engage further with the UN IESOGI with plans in place to attend the public consultation on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and provide interventions on the challenges as well as opportunities for intersex inclusion in the IESOGI's mandate.

Of utmost importance will be OII Europe's continued engagement with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, an intersex resolution from PACE would serve as an immensely important foundation to build upon, especially for CoE member states that are not EU members.

In late March of 2017, OII Europe will hold its first community event in Vienna in co-operation with local member organisation VIMÖ. The community event will bring together Intersex people from across Europe offering Intersex people the chance to share skills, learn from each other's best practices and grow and strengthen the European Intersex movement. Some will be attending an event of this nature for the first time in their lives, and we hope this event will lead to even more growth for OII Europe empowering participants to speak up about the issues they face and hopefully engaging further with OII Europe. Work has already started towards OII Europe's 2018 community event which is planned for Copenhagen in 2018.

With Intersex issues receiving more attention at the IDAHOT forum, OII Europe's hope to utilise the forum in a strategic way to raise the visibility of intersex issues amongst states that have shown real commitment to furthering the rights of LGBTI people. While the focus of the 2017 IDAHOT forum

is unclear at the moment, OII Europe is committed to advocating for meaningful intersex inclusion within the setting of the Forum.

OII Europe plans to engage further with OSCE at the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw in September. The OSCE offers an opportunity to bring the issues that intersex people face to representatives of states where intersex visibility is non-existent or states that we have limited opportunities to engage with in other settings. This is especially important for the Post-Soviet region, where few countries have visible intersex advocates and activists.

In 2017 OII Europe is also planning to develop several advocacy tools like the OII Europe Map, which will give an overview of key challenges and current best practice examples within the Council of Europe Member States and will over time develop into an more detailed map, similar to the ILGA-Europe Rainbow Map and the TGEU Trans* Rights Europe Map. Another tool we are currently developing is a brochure that will include testimonies of intersex people that have been subjected to invasive treatments as well as current research findings of the impact of unconsented treatments. Last but not least OII Europe, IGLYO and EPA will publish the first Parent's Guide for parents of intersex children.

OII EUROPE ACTIVITIES LIST

European Union

- 29.2.-1.3.2016: Health and health issues of intersex people were of a specific concern at the LGBTI Health Awareness raising Meeting, organised by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency. At this meeting representatives of associations of health practitioners, civil society organisations, and health policy makers discussed the health needs of different constituencies within the LGBTI spectrum and brainstormed on possible ways to address these needs from a human rights based perspective.
- 10.-11.5.2016: IDAHO 2016: Building Bridges and Alliances took place in Copenhagen, 3 board members attended and an offer was extended by Copenhagen Pride to host an Intersex community event in 2018.
- 15.-16.6.2016: Intersex study visit in Brussels with DG Justice, DG Education and Culture, DG Research, the LGBTI Intergroup, the children's rights intergroup, FEMM, ALDE, LIBE and various MEP's.
- 16.6.2016: A historic first took place in the European Parliament when they invited OII Europe Co-chair Dan Christian Ghattas to present at the hearing on "The situation of fundamental rights in the European Union in 2015" (Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, 16.6.2016, Brussels). This invitation is a definite step towards recognising the lack of protection of intersex people's fundamental rights in the European Union.
- 29.9.2016: During the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting of the OSCE, the Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union held a side event focusing on LGBTI children and youth. There OII Europe's secretary, Kitty Anderson gave a presentation on the situation of Intersex young people in the EU and beyond as well as recommendations for safer school environments for intersex children.
- 29.-30.9.2016: Good practice exchange seminar on "Legislation and policies on gender identity and sex characteristics" (Berlin), organized by the European Commission Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers. OII Europe had the opportunity to further engage with representatives of EU member states and to highlight the challenges intersex people face in relation to equality and non-discrimination.
- 2016: OII Europe submitted suggestions of amendments to the European Parliament's FEMME "Report on Promoting Gender Equality in Mental Health and Clinical Research" in co-operation with ILGA-Europe and TGEU. All the amendments were included in the final version, making it the first human rights based EU document on intersex health. A second submission handed in by ILGA E, TGEU and OII E suggested amendments on the FEMME "Report on equality

between women and men in the EU in 2014-2015".

Council of Europe

- 31.5.2016: The Council of Europe's Bioethics committee held a hearing on the Human rights challenges of Trans and Intersex Youth, the first of its kind. Presenting on the Human Rights challenges that face Intersex youth were Kitty Anderson, Secretary of OII Europe and Mika Venhola, Paediatric surgeon from Oulu University Hospital. A video with testimonials from them both was produced at the event.
- Oct. (Cyprus), Nov. (Bangkok) 2016 ongoing: During the ILGA E Annual in Cyprus OII Europe instigated conversations with representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) about an intersex resolution of the PACE. The conversations continued with PACE rapporteur Piet de Bruyn at the ILGA World Conference in Bangkok and the High-Level Ministerial Conference on LGBTIQ Equality Mainstreaming in January 2017. Similar to the transgender resolution adopted 2015 an intersex resolution will be a historical document and a huge stepping stone for acknowledging the existence of intersex people and the challenges they face in the Council of Europe Member States.
- 17.11.2016 Presentation at the LGBTI Focal Point Network Roundtable in Strasbourg on the Human

OII EUROPE ACTIVITIES LIST CONT.

rights challenges of intersex children and young people.

- 2016 ongoing: OII Europe's Eastern European Steering Board Members as well as OII Europe have been invited to present intersex issues at several conferences held on national levels in Eastern Europe, among them the "It's time for Equality" conference in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the 22.02.17 organised by Sarajevo. This is a fantastic development considering the fact that there was practically no awareness about and visibility of intersex issues in 2015.

International

- 13.-15.7.2016: OII Europe participated in the Equal Rights Coalition's Global LGBTI Human Rights Conference and Pre-Conference (12.7.) in Montevideo and raised awareness about intersex issues; OII Europe contributed to the Civil Society One-pager "Shrinking Civil Society Space".
- 19.9.2016: During the plenary session of the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting of the OSCE, for the first time that the issues of intersex people were brought up at the OSCE. OII Europe's secretary Kitty Anderson, attending the event on behalf of member organisation Intersex Iceland raised the issue of the rights of children in situations of displacement, a presentation on the specific risks facing Intersex

children and youth in situations of displacement was provided. The Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM) of OSCE participating States is Europe's largest annual human rights and democracy conference.

- 28.11-02.12.2016: OII Europe participated in the ILGA World Conference and Intersex-Pre-Conference in Bangkok. At the world conference, OII Europe advocated to ensure that ILGA statutes remain and become even more intersex and trans-inclusive and also increase representation of other minority groups (e.g. native groups) within ILGA World. During the conference OII Europe provided information to the IESOGI in two meetings about intersex issues. One meeting focussed about LGBTI in the European region, the other specifically on intersex issues.
- 24.-25.1.2017: Public consultation convened by the UN Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Together with other international intersex activists OII Europe's Co-Chairs Miriam van der Have and Dan Christian Ghattas gave an intervention. Together with Steering Board member Alessandro Comeni, they presented challenges as well as opportunities for intersex inclusion in the IESOGI's mandate at two closed meetings.

Awareness Raising

- February 2016: OII Europe/ILGA-Europe: Toolkit for Allies: "Standing up for the human rights of intersex people – how can you help?" was published.
- 8.11.2016: OII Europe launched www.intervisibility.eu the first ever European website on intersex. From the start [intervisibility.eu](http://www.intervisibility.eu) included information on intersex and intersex human rights issues in 25 European languages. As of the end of February, the website had been visited by more than 15 000 individual IP's with a peak in November with over 7 000 visits.
- Dec. 2016: OII Europe published (online and print) the French translation of the OII E/ ILGA E Toolkit: "DÉFENDRE LES DROITS HUMAINS DES INTERSEXUÉS – COMMENT ÊTRE UN ALLIÉ EFFICACE?" (English: "Standing up for the Human Rights of Intersex People - How can you help?" <https://oiieurope.org/toolkit-allies-french/> A German version is currently being published in co-operation with OII Germany and will be ready for the 1st Intersex Community Event (30./31.3.2017). A Turkish version "Interseks bireylerin insan haklarını savunmak. Nasıl yardım edebilirsiniz?" has also been made available by Kaos GL.
- Dec. 2016: OII Europe published an OII Europe flyer with basic information about intersex and intersex

OII EUROPE ACTIVITIES LIST CONT.

issues in 6 languages (English, French, German, Serbo-Croatian, Bulgarian, Spanish; online and print). The flyer also aims to help intersex activists from different countries Steering Board members to advocate domestically. More languages will serve to inform about intersex issues and OII E.

- Oct. 2016 ongoing: OII Europe joined forces with IGLYO and EPA (European Parents Association) to create a comprehensive European Parent's Guide for parents of intersex children. The content was contributed by OII Europe. Currently, the guide is in the first feedback round and will be published in 2017.
- 2016: Through meetings, conferences workshops, trainings and bilateral conversations OII Europe raised awareness of over 100 NGOs, national equality bodies and governments as well as EU, CoE and international bodies and agencies.

Community Building

- April 2016 saw the first ever study session for youth focusing on Intersex human rights. OII Europe provided an expert for IGLYO's "I have rights" study session in the European Youth centre in Budapest. This was the first study session in the framework of the European Youth Centers that specifically invited Intersex youth to apply.
- Oct. 2016 until end of March 2017:

OII Europe is preparing the 1st Intersex Community Event (30.-31.3) with a subsequent Intersex Conference (1.4.), that is open to the public. OII Europe is cooperating with VIMÖ, its Austrian member organisation. The aim of the event + conference is to strengthen the European Intersex Community and support the intersex movement in the hosting country. For 2018 the event is planned to take place in Copenhagen, Denmark.

- End of 2016: OII Europe is now in touch with several new intersex activists from Turkey, Ukraine and Russia, Denmark and Italy who will be invited to attend the Intersex Community Event in Vienna end of March as OII Europe scholars.

Capacity and Organisation Building

- 18-20.03.2016 OII Europe held its first in-person steering board meeting of 2016 in Berlin
- 17-19.06.2016 OII Europe held its second in person steering board meeting of 2016 in Brussels
- 21.6.2016: OII Europe got approved as a registered organisation in Germany and obtained charity status soon after. This was a very happy ending to one year of administrative work.
- 2016: OII Europe established a comprehensive and transparent account-

ing system to administer its funds and allow Steering Board members to access information about the current financial status at any time.

- 16-18.10.2016: OII Europe held its third in-person Steering Board Meeting of 2016 in Cyprus.
- 29.11-02.12.2016: OII Europe managed to bring four Steering Board to the ILGA World Conference in Bangkok by its own means, hence ensuring with six Steering Board members the representation of all European Sub-regions. Apart from the huge advocacy benefits, we consider this endeavour to also be a capacity and leadership building measure.
- Dec. 2016: OII Europe's Executive Board members met with TGEU to exchange knowledge and build capacity about administrative, financial and labour law related procedures for a European NGO within Germany.
- Sep.-Dec. 2016: OII Europe managed to increase its 2016 budget to US-\$ 90000,-. We want to thank our donors Astraea, Heinrich Böll Foundation and our anonymous donors for their trust and support.
- 2016: OII Europe has worked closely and cooperated with: ILGA-Europe, IGLYO, TGEU, ILGA, GATE, OHCHR, FRA, OCHRCOE, SOGI Unit of the CoE and last but certainly not least the international intersex community.



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