

OII Europe Press Release

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) launches report of the 2019 EU-LGBTI II survey

Today, 14th of May 2020, the EU Fundamental Rights Agency published the results of the new LGBTI Study. Almost 140.000 LGBTI people from 28 countries participated, making the study the largest survey of its kind to this date. For the first time specific questions about intersex people's experience were included.

"With over 1500 intersex persons participating in the survey, it is the largest data set to date. For the first time, we have statistical data on the experiences of discrimination and abuse that intersex people face in areas of education, housing, work place, family and other areas of life", says Dan Christian Ghattas, Executive Director of OII Europe, and continues: "The figures are alarming. It is high time for EU Member States to follow the call of the 2019 EU Parliament Resolution to protect intersex people from unconsented surgical treatment and all forms of discrimination."

According to the report, more than half of the intersex respondents (62 %) who were subjected to surgery did not provide – and were not asked for – their own or their parents' informed consent before their first surgical treatment to modify their sex characteristics. Almost half of the intersex respondents (49 %) said that fully informed consent was not provided for hormonal treatment, or for any other type of medical treatment.

More than one in three intersex people (34%) felt that being discriminated because of their sex characteristics was a major and regular every-day life experience they face in their country, followed by experiencing bullying and/or violence (33%), and that intersex is seen as pathological or as a disease (29%).

"Even though we already knew, based on our community knowledge, how grim the living situation for intersex people is throughout Europe", Co-Chair of OII Europe Kitty Anderson states, "now we have statistical proof to back up what before was defamed as anecdotal evidence."

"These findings will be a valuable resource for our work in the next years to come", adds Miriam van der Have, Co-Chair of OII Europe, "they will give us insight into the intersectional forms of discrimination and of human rights abuses intersex people face in the EU. And we need legal protection. The 2019 Eurobarometer results have shown that with specific laws and legislation in place to protect LGBTI people from discrimination and abuse, acceptance and tolerance rates also increase".