

Organisation Intersex International Europe ANNUAL REPORT 2022



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SIGRID RAUSING TRUST



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We also thank our cooperation partner
 HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG

Introduction

The year 2022 has been a year of changes: of very good changes, like OII Europe's first European Commission framework partnership agreement which has resulted in substantial stability and the much needed increase of the organisation's policy staff. But it has also been a year of feeling the impact of the still ongoing Covid-19 crisis. Whilst, at the beginning of 2022 we all hoped that the Covid crisis was finally starting to be on its way out, Russia decided to (again) bring war to Ukraine. OII Europe, and especially our wonderful member organisations in the countries adjacent to Ukraine, jointly took on the challenge to support intersex persons affected by the war in Ukraine to the best of our possibilities. While Covid now seems to be less and less powerful, the war is still ongoing as of the date of writing this introduction.

If there is something positive to say at all about times like these, it could be that they bring the chance and the need to reflect on the importance of human rights and the importance of joining forces to protect and defend them. The challenges that intersex persons, trans persons and the

LGBTIQ community face in Europe are currently increasing due to a growing anti-gender movement. This movement has become stronger and stronger over the past years and has strong ties to the wave of right-wing backlash that has equally become more powerful across Europe.

Meanwhile, what we also witnessed during 2022 was the increased awareness of all of us, particularly including politicians and policy makers across the EU and in the Council of Europe regions, that joining forces with civil society and with each other is the prerequisite for successfully working towards guaranteeing the human rights of vulnerable minorities, including intersex persons and the broader LGBTIQ+ community.

The challenges are manifold. But the resistance and the strong will, including the political will, to not let the challenges and threats win is there. In this report you will find the various activities of OII Europe in 2022, towards the goal to create a better Europe for intersex persons. Enjoy.

The OII Europe Staff and Steering Board

Covid-19 & the situation of intersex people

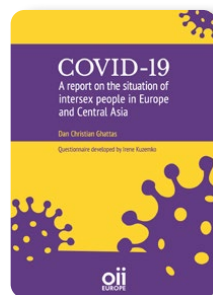
Follow up survey

We created a follow up survey questionnaire to better learn how the Covid-19 pandemic continued to impact the intersex community in Europe. This survey was disseminated and promoted within the European intersex community and with OII Europe member organisations. The OII Europe's Covid-19 Follow-Up Survey was launched in August, 2022 in English, French, German, Greek, Russian and Turkish.

Unlike the 2020 survey, this time there was no Polish translation done upon requests of Polish intersex activists, who had limited capacity due to their focus on supporting intersex refugees from Ukraine. Instead, the survey included a short

text in Polish, offering help with translation to Polish-speaking people who might want to fill in the survey.

The findings of the initial 2020 survey were disseminated in the form of a short report, available on the OII Europe website: <https://www.oii.europa.org/covid-19-survey-report/>



The War in Ukraine

Support of community

The Russian invasion of Ukraine shocked us all and created new unprecedented challenges for intersex people in and from Ukraine. After the initial shock, OII Europe decided to mobilise our resources towards helping the Ukrainian intersex community. Staying in constant contact with intersex people from Ukraine and their family members, we helped organise funds and accommodation for them, as well as collaborating with other activists, to provide them with electricity generators and medicine when required.



“Support of Intersex People From Ukraine” (Micro-Campaign) ongoing

- To give and share their support and solidarity with intersex persons that have been directly affected by the war in the Ukraine;
- to raise awareness & solidarity;
- to provide information to affected persons in three languages (English, Russian, Ukrainian) e.g. for getting access to funds, medications or hormones, and bringing them into contact with national intersex organisations;
- to collect donations to support intersex persons that have been directly impacted by the war in the Ukraine.

<https://www.oii.europa.org/support-of-intersex-people-from-ukraine/>

<https://www.facebook.com/oii.europa/>

<https://twitter.com/OIIEurope/status/1506206183752884229>

POLICY & ADVOCACY I

In 2022, OII Europe's policy and advocacy work included monitoring policy developments at national, and EU-level, working together with Council of Europe and European Union bodies and institutions to secure the rights of intersex people. OII Europe collaborated closely with partner organisations on various legal initiatives and files. Our advocacy efforts included offering support to our national member organisations.

Advocacy at the European Union level

In 2022, OII Europe's Executive Director and two Policy Officers contributed to many European Commission initiatives. Throughout the year, we submitted detailed policy papers to the European Commission and European Parliament officials, as well as strategizing with our European LGBTI network partners on those initiatives.

1 - Advocating for intersex inclusion in the European Commission's proposal for a Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence

In May 2022, OII Europe sent its feedback[☞] to the European Commission on the proposal for a Directive[☞] on combating violence against women and domestic violence. The Directive aims to effectively combat violence against women and domestic violence by proposing measures, such as criminalisation (of rape, female genital mutilation and certain forms of cyber crime), as well as measures to ensure the protection of victims and access to justice; victim support; prevention; coordination and cooperation. OII Europe's submission contained statistical data about the various forms of violence intersex people are exposed to, as well as a detailed explanation of the need to include intersex people – who are also victims of gender-based, domestic violence and harmful practices such as intersex genital mutilation (IGM), in the text of the Directive.

In September 2022, OII Europe, together with ILGA-Europe, TGEU, EL*C and IGLYO, published joint policy recommendations[☞] and advocated towards European Parliament co-rapporteurs, shadow



rapporteurs and MEPs in order to ensure stronger protections, access to justice and reparation as well as support services for LGBTI women and LGBTIQ people in the Directive;

On the 27th of October 2022, OII Europe participated in the stakeholder consultation hosted by the European Parliament co-rapporteurs Frances Fitzgerald and Evin Incir. Our intervention focused on advocating for the inclusion of intersex women and girls as victims at an increased risk of experiencing gender-based and domestic violence in the Directive. Our intervention also drew parallels between the harmful practices of IGM and FGM, which are both forms of gender-based violence rooted in misogyny and based on harmful gender stereotypes.

The draft report released by the co-rapporteurs in December 2022 was receptive of several of our joint policy recommendations, especially regarding the inclusion of LGBTI women among groups at an increased risk of violence.

2 - Advocacy in the context of the European Commission's initiative on strengthening Equality Bodies

In January 2022, OII Europe disseminated a guide for its member organisations to help them fill out the European Commission's public consultation questionnaire;

In March 2022, OII Europe submitted its responses to the European Commission's questionnaire. This submission made the point that the concepts of discrimination on the ground of sex and equality between women and men, enshrined in the EU Treaties, must be interpreted in line with the recent legal and policy developments on European and international level that point to including sex characteristics. Therefore, discrimination based on sex characteristics should be included in the mandate of Equality Bodies.

3 - Submission to the European Commission's public consultation for the revision of the Victims' Rights Directive

In May 2022, OII Europe sent its feedback[☞] to the European Commission's public consultation in the context of the revision of the EU Victims Rights Directive[☞]. The Directive aims to set minimum standards for measures to be implemented by Member States to ensure that all victims of crimes in the EU receive adequate support and protection throughout their interactions with competent authorities and support staff. Our recommendations aimed at ensuring that victims *in all their diversity*, including intersex victims of crimes and bias motivated violence, are explicitly included in the directive and are treated in a non-discriminatory manner, by recommending the explicit inclusion of sex characteristics as a protective ground.

4 - Submission in the context of the European Commission's recommendation on the prevention of harmful practices against women and girls

In April, May and June 2022, OII Europe attended four workshops organised by the European Commission's Gender Equality Unit, which focused on gathering input from civil society organisations about harmful practices against women and girls in the EU.

In June and July 2022, OII Europe sent its submission to the Gender Equality Unit in light of the forthcoming recommendation on the prevention of harmful practices against women and girls. Our submission focused on highlighting the fact that intersex individuals, including but not limited to intersex women and girls, continue to experience severe fundamental rights violations across the EU. OII Europe encouraged the European Commission to ensure the protection of intersex women and girls against harmful practices such as IGM in the recommendation, which aims to tackle such practices by addressing prevention, support, training of professionals and victim-centred access to justice.



5 - Submission to the consultation of civil society on the implementation of the LGBTIQ Equality Strategy

In November - December 2022, OII Europe provided inputs to the Non Discrimination and Roma Coordination Unit of the DG JUST of the European Commission, in the framework of the process of evaluating the implementation of the LGBTIQ Equality Strategy. OII Europe acknowledged and praised several positive developments, including the Commission having taken an intersectional approach in drafting the Recommendation on the prevention of harmful practices against women and girls. OII Europe also asked the Commission to close remaining gaps, including calling for more cross-sectoral cooperation among the various Directorates General of the Commission.

OII Europe's Good Practice Map 2021



In 2022 we published the newest edition of our annual Good Practice Map. This year's map included a new 'In the Making' section, which features newly adopted legislation banning IGM. This new addition focuses on analysing the protective elements of a ban, pointing out the remaining gaps in protection as well as identifying ways forward if EU Member States want to establish and

implement similar laws on a national level. The Map was launched Online on 17 May 2022, the International Day Against Homo-, Bi, Intersex- and Transphobia (IDAHOT or IDAHOBIT). Find the 2021 map here: <https://www.oii-europe.org/good-practice-map-2021/>

➔ Read more about the Good Practice map on page 14.



POLICY & ADVOCACY II

Advocacy at Council of Europe level



1 - Contributing to the process towards a Committee of Ministers (CM) Recommendation on the equality of rights for intersex persons

In 2022 the work towards a Committee of Ministers (CM) Recommendation on the equality of rights for intersex persons started. The aim of the Recommendation will be to set standards for an adequate legal framework and policies needed to ensure full enjoyment by intersex persons of their human rights in relation to a wide range of areas, including: medical, psychological and social care; legal gender recognition; private and family life; protection from discrimination and hate speech, including preventive measures through education and awareness raising. The CM mandated the Working Group of the Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity, and Inclusion (CDADI) on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics (GT-ADI-SOGI) to draft the text. OII Europe participated in two GT-ADI-SOGI meetings and one CDADI meeting, where a background document was presented, discussed and approved. OII Europe has been – and continues to be – consulted to make sure that the future recommendation meets the needs of the European intersex community.

2 - Participation in the Seminar on Early intervention on intersex children: Promoting the Rights of the Child, organised by the Council of Europe Committee on Bioethics.

In May 2022, OII Europe participated in the Council of Europe seminar[☞] entitled “Early intervention on intersex children”. The Seminar was foreseen by the Strategic Action Plan on Hu-



man Rights and Technologies in Biomedicine (2020-2025)[☞], adopted by the Committee on Bioethics (DH-BIO) in 2019. Interventions from a range of speakers focused on the topic of children as rights holders and the safeguarding of children’s rights in relation to medical practices which have future or long-term implications for them. This event marked an important recognition at Council of Europe level for the need to shift from medicalising and pathologizing stances to ones that champion children’s autonomy above all else – which can be conceptualised as “the child’s right to an open future”, meaning a right to have one’s future options kept open until one can make one’s own decisions.

3 - Contribution to the Council of Europe stakeholder consultation on the draft Guide to the participation of children in decision-making processes regarding their health

In November 2022, OII Europe submitted input to a Council of Europe stakeholder consultation[☞] by responding to a questionnaire addressed to various stakeholders working in the area of children’s rights. The *Guide to the participation of children in decision-making processes regarding their health* is being prepared by the Council of Europe’s Steering Committees for Human Rights in the fields of Biomedicine and Health (CDBIO)[☞] and the Steering Committee on the Rights of the Child (CDENF)[☞]. OII Europe’s contribution aimed at ensuring that the draft guide includes the explicit mention of the need for free and informed consent, and that all decisions regarding health are made in the best interests of the child. We also highlighted the need for comprehensive provision of information, psycho-social support and peer counselling and human-rights based training for health-care professionals.

4 - Participation in working group for a Council of Europe online HELP Guide on LGBTI persons in the Asylum Process

In October and December, OII Europe participated in 2 working group meetings organised by the SOGI Unit of the Council



OII Europe Executive Director Dan Christian Ghattas and Intersex Greece Board Member Rinio Symeonidou attending the “Seminar on Early intervention on intersex children: Promoting the Rights of the Child”, organised by the Council of Europe Committee on Bioethics

of Europe in preparation for an upcoming online HELP Guide on LGBTI persons in the asylum process[☞]. The online course, made up of 3 separate modules, will be made available in the second quarter of 2023. OII Europe’s oral and written contributions during the working group meetings focused on highlighting the specific needs and challenges of intersex asylum seekers during the asylum process. Our contributions hope to ensure that the online guide, aimed at various actors working on asylum, are sensitised to the specific reality of intersex people seeking international protection in the European Union.

5 - Engaging in the Council of Europe’s thematic review on hate crimes

In 2022, the Council of Europe conducted a thematic review of the Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity[☞]. The review focused on the area of hate crime, and analysed the legal and policy measures implemented across the region to tackle bias-motivated violence against LGBTI people. Along with a European report, the Council of Europe also commissioned national reports on Romania, France, and Albania. OII Europe provided written contributions to the preparation of all the reports. In the case of France, the contribution was prepared together with OII Europe’s French member organisation, Collectif Intersexe Activiste - OII France. OII Europe participated in the national roundtables (Albania: 23 September, Romania: 04 October, France: 14 October) which gathered the respective

consultants in charge of drafting the national reports, with representatives of the competent national authorities and representatives of the civil society. OII Europe also participated in the European roundtable[☞] held on 27 October in Dublin, where it gave a presentation on the hate speech and hate crime experienced by intersex persons across Europe. This presentation was received very well and feedback showed an increased understanding of the relevance to protect intersex persons from bias motivated violence, including by adding the specific bias motive “sex characteristics” in relevant legislation, policy measures, and recording mechanisms.



“Without a ground that encapsulates the specific experience of intersex persons with living with a non-normative body in society from the moment they were born, without the protective ground of sex characteristics, bias motivated intersexphobic hate crimes will continue to happen unnoticed, unmonitored and without being prosecuted.”



POLICY & ADVOCACY III

New Collaborations

Over the course of 2022, OII Europe was able to strengthen its collaboration with partner organisations on various topics from intersectional municipal policies, to promoting gender equality in education and countering intersex-exclusionary narratives.

1 - Input to the Mind The Gap project

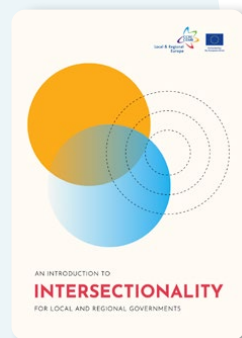
In November 2022, OII Europe participated in an on-line international exchange meeting between education professionals and European civil society organisations, organised by EndFGM European Network in the context of the Mind The Gap project[☞]. Through the creation of a guide, the project aims to highlight ways to promote gender equality in schools and to build inclusive and safe educational contexts. OII Europe was able to ensure that the recommendations to EU Member States, schools and teachers were inclusive of intersex people, by for example recommending that gender-sensitive language be used and that harmful gender stereotypes and norms be tackled.



2 - Input to the CEMR guidelines for European municipalities on intersectionality

In October 2022, OII Europe was in Brussels for an in person workshop to provide our input to the CEMR's (Council of European Municipalities and Regions) Intersectionality primer[☞] – a publication which aims to raise local and regional governments' awareness on intersecting inequalities

and discrimination. OII Europe's contributions focused on mainstreaming intersex equality, and ensuring that all gender mainstreaming initiatives put forward in the publication included comprehensive, inclusive action plans, so as to best protect intersex people. We also advocated for the publication to include specific mention of the need for gender-sensitive language guides, general awareness raising for municipal staff on intersex issues, for intersectional equality data collection efforts to be strengthened at a regional level and – where national legislation allows – for training on LGR to be strengthened.



Cover of the CEMR Primer on Intersectionality (2022)

3- CFFFP Countering Trans-and Intersex exclusionary narratives 3-day workshop

In October 2022, OII Europe attended and participated in a 3-day workshop in Berlin on "Countering Trans and Inter* Exclusionary narratives". The workshop was organised by the Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy and brought together representatives from civil society organisations working for the protection of trans, intersex and women's rights. The participants were able to share about the impact of exclusionary narratives and the anti-gender movement on our work, as well as brainstorm strategic actions to counter the backlash they encounter.

Support to advocacy on national level

From April to August 2022 OII Europe provided advocacy support to our member organisation Intersex Greece as they advocated national members of parliament and prepared and oversaw the voting process of a draft law banning intersex genital mutilation (IGM)[☞] on intersex minors. OII Europe supported Intersex Greece in these efforts and submitted a letter supporting the draft law addressed to Members of the Hellenic Parliament. The Parliament adopted the law[☞] on the 19th of July 2022. The vote marks a historic moment for ensuring that the human rights of intersex minors are recognized and legally protected in Greece.



Consultancy for data collection & research

In 2022 OII Europe was consulted throughout several data collection and research projects:

As a member of the Steering Committee set up for the project, OII Europe contributed to the **European Commission Study on Intersex People in the EU**, which will be finalised and published in 2023. We participated in meetings and had regular email consultation exchanges with the Committee and the institute commissioned to do the research.

OII Europe was consulted by the **Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union (FRA)** in the process of evaluating the **FRA LGBTIQ II Survey** and of gathering inputs

for the preparation of the **FRA LGBTIQ III Survey**. The consultation entailed participating in meetings, responding to questionnaires and submitting written comments.

OII Europe continued its collaboration with the research network INIA (**Intersex: New Interdisciplinary Approaches**) funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme. It participated in the Advisory Board meetings, provided consultations on various aspects of the network's work, held two training sessions for INIA researchers, and hosted a researcher for their online secondment.

➔ See more about our INIA collaborations on page 29.

Advocacy Work & Awareness Raising events in 2022

OII Europe spoke at the following events:

18.03.2022, Rome, in-person and online, first meeting of the **CDADI working group on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics (GT-ADI-SOGI)**, organised by the **SOGI Unit of the Council of Europe**.

12-13.05.2022, Limassol, in-person, **IDAHOT+ Forum 2022**, organised by the **Government of Cyprus' Ministry of Justice and Public Order** and the **UK Government's Equalities Office**.

31.5.2022, Strasbourg, in person, **Seminar on Early intervention on intersex children**. Promoting the Rights of the Child, organised by the **Council of Europe Committee on Bioethics**. (➔ See also on page 8)

15.06.2022, Brussels, in-person, meeting of the **High Level Group on combating hate speech and hate crime**: Exchange of good practices on tackling anti-LGBTIQ hate speech and hate crime, organised by the **European Commission**.



POLICY & ADVOCACY IV

Advocacy Work & Awareness Raising events in 2022 (cont.)

OII Europe spoke at the following events (cont.):

13.09.2022, Belgrade, in-person, **Intersex Human Rights in Europe panel**, held as a part of **Human Rights Conference, EuroPride** ▼



17.09.2022, Belgrade, in-person, **EuroPride Parade**

27.09.2022, Brussels, online, **Stakeholder consultation on the Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence**, organised by MEPs **Frances Fitzgerald & Evin Incir**.

10.10.2022, online, **Intersex Thoughts: Virtual Expert Panel on the Mental Health of Intersex People**, organised by **GATE and ILGA World**.

14.10.2022, Paris, online, **Roundtable on Hate Crime towards LGBTI people in France** - Thematic Review on the implementation of the Council of Europe recommendation CM/Rec (2010)5, organised by the **French Government** and the **Council of Europe SOGI Unit**.

27.10.2022, Dublin, in-person, **European Roundtable Right to life, security and protection from violence: combating SOGIESC-based hate crime across Europe**, organised by the **Council of Europe SOGI Unit** and the **Irish Government**.

28.10.2022, Dublin, in-person, **second meeting** of the **CDADI working group on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender**

expression and sex characteristics (GT-ADI-SOGI), organised by the **SOGI Unit of the Council of Europe**.

28.10.2022, Taiwan, online, **Protection of Intersex People's Rights panel** of the **2022 EU-Taiwan LGBTI Human Rights Conference** – Intersex, Transgender & Protection of Lesbian and Gay Rights, organised by the **Department of Gender Equality, Executive Yuan/the Ministry of Foreign Affairs R.O.C.(Taiwan)** and the **European Economic and Trade Office (EETO)**. ▼



08.11.2022, Norway, online, **“Who are Intersex People? Insight into the Topic of Intersex Human Rights” session** at the **Pink Competency conference**, organised by **FRI – Foreningen for kjønns- og seksualitetsmangfold**

14.11.2022, Brussels, in-person, **meeting** on **“legal gender recognition & inclusion of trans and intersex people in the workplace”**, organised by the **LGBTIQ Equality Subgroup**

16.11.2022, Brussels, in person, **launch of Victim Support Europe (VSE) paper** on the National Support Framework, organised by **Victim Support Europe**

30.11.2022, Brussels, online, **LGBTIQ Equality Strategy Civil Society Roundtable**, organised by the **European Commission (DG JUST)** - OII Europe provided inputs for the assessment of the implementation of the Strategy

Attendance and dissemination of information at the following events:

21.03.2022, online, **EU Anti-racism Summit**, organised by the **European Commission** in cooperation with the **European Parliament Anti-racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI)** and the **Council of Europe's European Commission Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)**.

30.03.2022, Brussels, online, **Roundtable on Rebuilding a fairer Europe after Covid-19** by extending protection against discrimination to new grounds, organised by **Equinet**.

31.03.2022, Brussels, in-person and online, meeting with **Italy's Special Envoy for the Human Rights of the LGBTIQ+ Persons**, **Fabrizio Petri**.

04.04.2022, Brussels, online, **Participatory conference on the legislative initiative on binding standards for equality bodies**, organised by **VVA**, a Brussels-based public policy consultancy mandated by the **European Commission (DG JUST)**.

06.04.2022, online, webinar **European Citizens' Initiative: how can civil society organisations make use of it?**, organised by **FRA (Fundamental Rights Agency)**.

19.04.2022, Brussels, online, exchange on the proposal for an **EU directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence**, organised by the **Greens/EFA group** in the **European Parliament**.

25.04.2022, online, **People Before Borders webinar**, organised by **EQUINOX**.

02-06.05.2022, Long Beach California, online, **ILGA World Intersex Pre-Conference and Conference 2022**, organised by **ILGA World**.

09.06.2022, online, **(Un)Safe to be Me? Exploring the Rights and Lived Experiences of LGBTI people in the UK conference**,

organised by the **Human Rights Implementation Centre (University of Bristol)** and **Centre for Cultures of Reproduction, Technologies and Health (University of Sussex)**.

14-15.06.2022, online, **FRA EU LGBTIQ Survey III Consultation meeting**, organised by **FRA (Fundamental Rights Agency)**.

09.11.2022, online, **Improved security for LGBTI NGOs through risk assessment and management webinar**, organised by **Pivot Brigade**.

10.11.2022, Malta, in person, **EUAA Consultative Forum plenary meeting**, organised by the **European Union Agency for Asylum**.

21.11.2022, Berlin, online, Launch of publication **“Anti-Gender Actors disrupting the multilateral order”**, organised by **Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy**

27.09.2022, Brussels, online, hearing on **depathologization of trans and non-binary persons**, organised by the **LIBE-ENVI Committees of the European Commission**.

28-29.09.2022, online, **EU Forum on the Rights of the Child**, organised by the **European Commission**.

30.11.2022, Brussels, online, **workshop on the Directive on Combating violence against women and domestic violence**, organised by **Amnesty International**.

01.12.2022, Brussels, online, **hearing on discrimination on sexual orientation grounds**, organised by the **PETI Committee of the European Commission**.

02.12.2022, online, **EU Law Equality Network seminar**, organised by the **European Commission**

AWARENESS RAISING

Raising awareness is one of OII Europe's key measures to sensitise policy makers, stakeholder, professionals, media and the general public about the situation of intersex people living in Europe. Similarly to previous years, in 2022 OII Europe continued to place great importance on promoting a fundamental rights based perspective and language to speak about intersex in all communication activities. This included paying attention to continuously using and promoting a form of communication that is inclusive, destigmatizing, depathologizing, non-discriminatory, positive and affirmative in all our publications, materials and communications, including gender and bodily diverse representations of intersex people.

Good Practice Map 2021

The Good Practice Map 2021 assembles good practice examples of the respective previous year (2021) as a means to inform EU and national policy makers and politicians about national and regional developments in the areas of **anti-discrimination law, hate crime & hate speech legislation, national action plans, research projects, training programs, official apologies issued by governments, and commitments made by governments pointing towards increased political will to protect intersex rights.**

This Map included a **new section** titled: **IN THE MAKING: PUT AN END TO IGM** that highlights and compares countries that have implemented legislation to protect intersex children from harmful practices.

Front and back sides of the unfolded Good Practice Map 2021 ▶

Download as PDF available under: <https://oii-europe.org/good-practice-map-2021/>



Intersex Awareness Weeks Campaign 2022

[Campaign website](#)



Our 2022 campaign collects our first findings and recent research into the issue of **intersex and ageing**, to raise awareness about this topic for the general public, and especially for persons working with elderly persons (such as care providers, social workers or researchers). It also includes personal testimonials of elderly intersex persons and artwork portraying elderly intersex persons in a positive way.

The campaign aims to:

- raise awareness and sensitise professionals working with elderly persons on the under-addressed topic of elderly intersex persons, and call attention to their needs and to gaps in protection and services;
- raise awareness of researchers on the existence of elderly intersex people and the need to include them into research projects;
- low-threshold introduction on the topic of ageing intersex in an empowering and fundamental rights-based way.



AWARENESS RAISING II

Intersex Refugees and Asylum Seekers Flyer

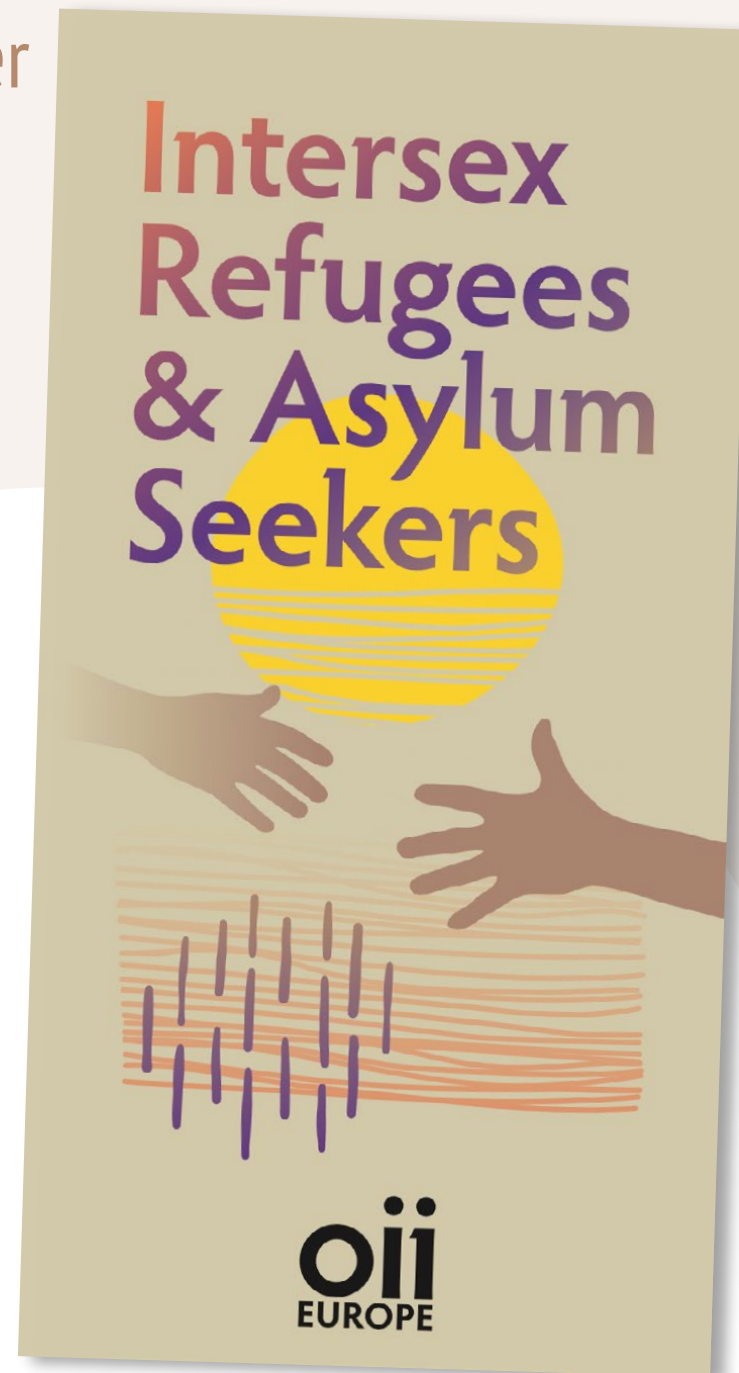
Intersex refugees and asylum seekers can often experience a range of additional problems due to being intersex. OII Europe is working towards increasing intersex sensitivity and knowledge among professionals working with intersex refugees and asylum seekers.

With our new flyer we highlight the specific needs of intersex refugees and asylum seekers and provide a list of recommendations about what current migration policies should do.

Our flyer was launched in December 2022 on International Migrants Day via social media and on the OII Europe website in a digital format (PDF) available for download. The flyer will be printed in the upcoming year.

The flyer includes information about:

- general information about intersex refugees & asylum seekers and the heightened risks and human rights violations they encounter in situations of forced displacement and migration
- recommendations regarding changes to current migration policies
- list of specific needs of intersex refugees & asylum seekers
- list of specific needs of families and parents with intersex children
- OII Europe contact information



→ <https://www.oiiurope.org/oii-europe-intersex-refugees-asylum-seekers-flyer/>

 Flyer Webpage

Newsletter

The new OII Europe newsletter is currently published bi-annually, providing important news and updates to our subscribers. With our newsletter we share our newest activities and materials, and other significant information related to our work and our organisation. It is a great tool to easily inform our subscribers about our activities and to build relationships with them, especially as an alternative that cuts through the noise of social media.

Subscribers and interested individuals potentially turn into volunteers, multipliers, allies or even donors by regularly engaging with them via news, updates, and calls-to-action. Our newsletters will also increase traffic to and regular engagement with our website, garner more support, and help to publicise our cause.



“Supporting Intersex People in Ukraine”



Within a week of the attacks on Ukraine that began in February 2022, we started our micro-campaign. Our postings aimed at creating opportunities to give and share support and solidarity with intersex persons that have been directly affected by the war in the Ukraine.

With this micro-campaign we worked towards raising awareness & solidarity and to provide helpful information to affected persons in three languages (English, Russian, Ukrainian) e.g. for getting access to funds, medications or hormones, and bringing them into contact with national intersex organisations. We also began to collect donations to support intersex persons that have been directly impacted by the war in the Ukraine.

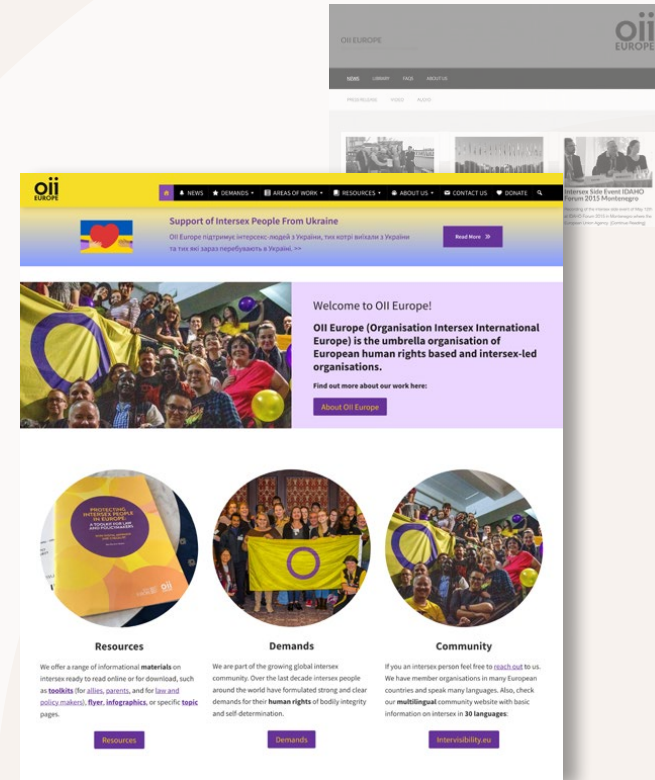
→ Link to our website post in three languages (English, Russian, Ukrainian): <https://www.oiiurope.org/support-of-intersex-people-from-ukraine/>

AWARENESS RAISING III

Websites update

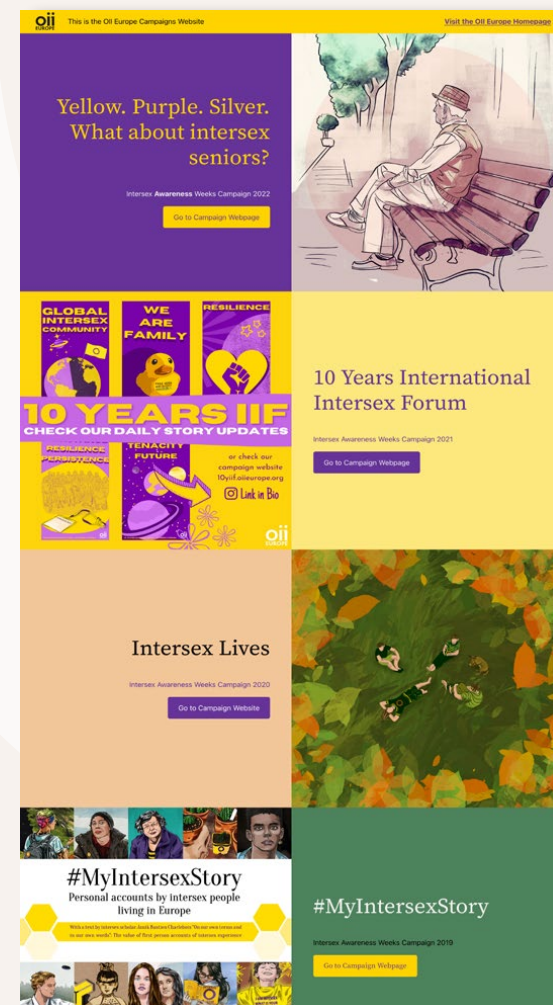
The OII Europe website has got new clothes

Our websites require ongoing and regular maintenance, updates and server-side adjustments. Due to the growing complexity of resources and materials OII Europe provides in several European languages, by the end of 2021/beginning 2022 we saw the need for a **restructuring of our resource section** in the form of an extensive resource navigation menu to make the OII Europe material and content more easily available and accessible. This included a general modernisation and partial **redesign** of the whole website. → [Link to the website](#)



Introducing: A new campaign-sub-website

In October 2022 we introduced our new subdomain website for all our thematic campaigns: **campaigns.oiiEurope.org**. We are still in the process of migrating content to the new campaign site, which helps us to mainstream our backend workflow and to separate and organise our web content for each of its specific functions. As our Intersex Awareness Weeks campaigns are usually very content and information-heavy, they also include a dedicated website or webpage which can be easily accessed so as to allow revisiting its valuable information long after the campaign has concluded. → [Link to the campaign website](#)



IAW Campaign 2022 in Numbers (Statistics)

The newly created campaign website, that includes the latest Campaign on intersex seniors, was launched in October 2022. Based on data by our web hosting service it had received over 16000 Hits / 700 Visits in that month alone. By the end of the year the campaign website had around 3500 visits in the first three months.

Also the social media postings throughout the two Intersex Awareness weeks reached several thousand accounts on each platform (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram).

Statistics

OII Europe Websites

The newly created **campaign website**, that includes the latest campaign on intersex seniors, was launched in October 2022. Based on web hosting data it had received over 16.000 Hits / 700 Visits in that month alone. By the end of the year the campaign website had around 3.500 visits in the first three months.

In 2022 the **website visits** for *oiiEurope.org* increased by 62.144 visits from the previous year to a total of 350.319 visits, and our community website *intervisibility.eu* had a total of 90.281 visits.

Social Media:

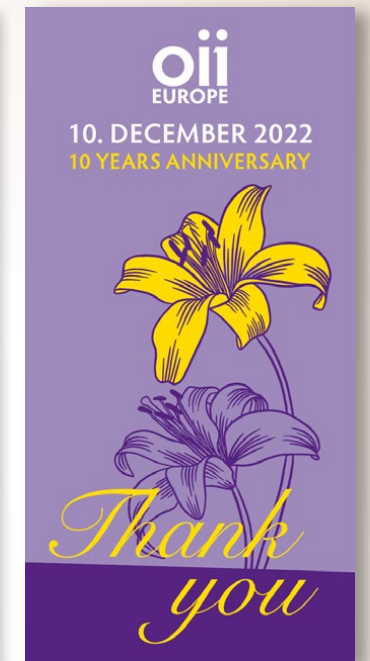
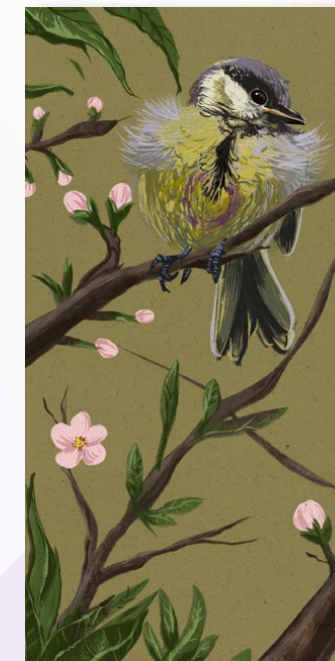
- In 2022 OII Europe's social media **reach** on Facebook gained 30.774,
- Instagram 2.908,
- and on Twitter we gained over 95.000 **impressions**.
- We saw the biggest growth of **followers** in 2022 on Instagram with now 1.500 followers, which was an annual increase that is 3X higher than the average.

Our posting for **supporting intersex people in Ukraine** reached over 6.000 on Facebook, and over 6.800 impressions on Twitter. → See also in our Funding section about the donations we received on page 29.

10 Years of OII Europe as a Network Anniversary

On **Human Rights Day, 10 December 2012**, OII Europe was founded as a network, during the Second Intersex Forum that took place in Stockholm at that time. Ten years later in December 2022 we celebrated this **10-Year-Anniversary** in the form of a staff and board dinner in Berlin (see images on page 31).

We are very thankful to all those who have walked with us in this joint endeavour and journey towards increasing intersex human rights and building this organisation. **Thank you!**



COMMUNITY & MOVEMENT BUILDING



OII Europe Online Community Event and Public Conference 2022

With the COVID-19 pandemic still being with us, and not wanting to put our community's members health at risk, OII Europe decided for the second time to hold the Community Event completely online.

The Public Conference was held on Friday, September 30th, and the Community Event for intersex people and their families, loved ones and support persons was held on Saturday, October 1st and Sunday, October 2nd.

The theme of the 2022 Online Community Event and Conference was "Staying Safe in Troubling Times".

114 participants registered for the event, and included intersex people, their family members, loved ones and support persons, as well as researchers and allies. French interpretation and automatic captioning was available throughout all 3 days of the event, and Ukrainian interpretation was available throughout the entire 1-day Public Conference.



Screenshot of Helena Dalli, European Commissioner for Equality, during the keynote opening speech for the Public Conference

The program of the Public Event included the following sessions:

■ The keynote opening speech of the Public Conference was given by the European Commissioner for Equality, Helena Dalli.

■ Impact of the War in Ukraine on Intersex People and Rights of Intersex Asylum Seekers

MODERATOR: Magda Rakita, Co-chair of OII Europe, also: Fundacja Interakcja, Interconnected UK

SPEAKERS:

- Julia Pustovit, Egalite Intersex Ukraine
- Artem Lapov, Intersex activist
- Gorji Marzban, VIMÖ - OII Austria, Queer Base - Support and Help for LGBTIQ+ Asylum Seeker in Austria, ORQOA - Oriental Queer Organisation Austria

■ Intersex-phobic Hate Crime and Hate Speech: Data Collection, Prevention and Protection

MODERATOR: Irene Amoroso, policy officer of OII Europe

SPEAKERS:

- Dr Nikoletta Pikramenou and Eleni Pateraki, Intersex Greece
- Math Lecomte, Collectif Intersexe Activiste - OII France
- Miriam van der Have, NNID
- Miltos Pavlou, EU Agency for Fundamental Rights
- Tommaso Chiamparino, European Commission



The program of the **Community Event** included multiple **capacity building** sessions, informal **hangouts** and **conversations**, and other sessions, both for intersex people as well as sessions for families and loved ones! Split into two separate tracks, that were held simultaneously along with a dedicated hangout space, the sessions covered a wide **variety of topics**, from **intersex and sports, campaigning, EU mechanisms, intersex activist exchange and working with the media, to family, ageing, youth and general intersex connecting spaces, a session on drawing intersex comics, newbie sessions, and many others**. Community members had an opportunity to contribute to the events program.

The **video recordings** of the Public Conference are available on OII Europe's website:

- **Link to all recordings:** <https://www.oii-europe.org/-ce-pc-2022-recordings/>
- **Link to transcript** of the panel "Impact of the War in Ukraine on Intersex People and Rights of Intersex Asylum Seekers": <https://www.oii-europe.org/impact-of-the-war-in-ukraine-on-intersex-people-and-rights-of-intersex-asylum-seekers-panel-transcript/>

COMMUNITY & MOVEMENT BUILDING II

OII Europe Online Community Event and Public Conference 2022 cont.



According to the feedback OII Europe received following the event via the OII Europe feedback form, attendees reported finding the event helpful, interesting, “an enormous pleasure”, including finding the topics relevant and the space as safe.



Mental health support provided by the AWA_stern awareness team was available throughout the entire 3 days of the event. We are happy to say that we were able to pay the Awareness Team members as well as invited speakers and translators for their work.



Membership guide



The Membership Guide was created to lay down the ground rules of OII Europe membership, including available types of membership, the process of becoming a member, possible reasons to apply for OII Europe membership, information about membership fees and rules members should follow, among other points.

The membership page now also includes a list of full and supporting members of OII Europe and links to their websites! Only members who provided their consent to be featured on the page are included.

The Membership Guide is available as a webpage on OII Europe's website:

<https://www.oiiEurope.org/membership-application/>



Some of the participants that were attending the hybrid intersex pre-conference during the ILGA-Europe Annual Conference in Sofia, Bulgaria, October 2022

ILGA-Europe Sofia Intersex Pre-Conference

Held in Sofia, Bulgaria, the 2022 ILGA-Europe Annual Conference was an exciting opportunity to connect with the European intersex movement. Prepared in collaboration with ILGA-Europe, the intersex pre-conference was held in hybrid form on October 19th, and its program covered **strategic planning** for the European movement

and OII Europe, IGM ban standards discussion, as well as planning regarding intersex participation and raising intersex visibility throughout the upcoming conference. ▲

The chill “Intersex Drinks” **hangouts** were held every day of the conference, providing intersex people with relaxing hangouts.

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 tradition and were held all throughout 2021, and continued throughout 2022 as well.

These calls provide space to share, connect and to spend time in the warm company of peers and family members. They serve to strengthen the cross-national bonds between members of the European Intersex Community and allow for networking in a relaxed atmosphere. Participants watched publicly available videos, movies and documentaries on various subjects, while communicating via chat during the video screening, and discussing after the viewing per video chat.

We are happy to see the Campfires, which were set up as a COVID-19 measure right at the beginning of the pandemic, still being attended by intersex people from across Europe even after 3 years of being held!



OUR PROGRAMS

Refugees & Asylum Seekers Program

In 2022, OII Europe continued to increase the work we do to advocate for the protection of intersex refugee and asylum seekers' rights. In September, OII Europe was able to join the EUAA's (European Agency for Asylum) Consultative Forum, as well as participate in Council of Europe workshops in the preparation for an online HELP guide on LGBTI persons in the Asylum procedure. OII Europe was also able to provide support to intersex persons in and fleeing from Ukraine.

In July and August 2022, OII Europe contributed to the Regional Gender Task Force's report, entitled "Making the Invisible Visible: An evidence-based analysis of gender in the regional response to the war in Ukraine". The Regional Gender Task Force is the leading advocacy and information and coordination platform on gender in humanitarian action in Europe and Central Asia. OII Europe's contributions helped to raise awareness about the needs and challenges of intersex persons fleeing the war in Ukraine - including ensuring access to hormones, gender-sensitive medical care and the need for awareness raising about the

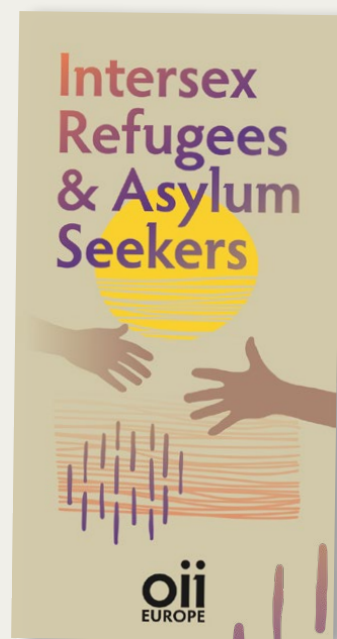
specific double discrimination intersex people face whilst fleeing conflict zones.

Throughout the year, OII Europe worked on our forthcoming toolkit, which will focus on outlining the needs and challenges of intersex refugees and asylum seekers, as well as providing recommendations for diverse actors working in the sphere of LGBTIQ asylum. Between September and November 2022, OII Europe conducted interviews with 6 intersex asylum seekers and other experts on intersex asylum/LGBTIQ refugees and asylum seekers' rights in preparation for the toolkit's creation.

➔ Read more about the flyer OII Europe published about the needs and challenges of intersex refugees and asylum seekers in the Awareness Raising & Campaigns section.



In November 2022, OII Europe attended the first plenary meeting of the European Asylum Agency's (EUAA) Consultative Forum in St. George's Bay, Malta.



Funded by the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV) of the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Commission. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

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.

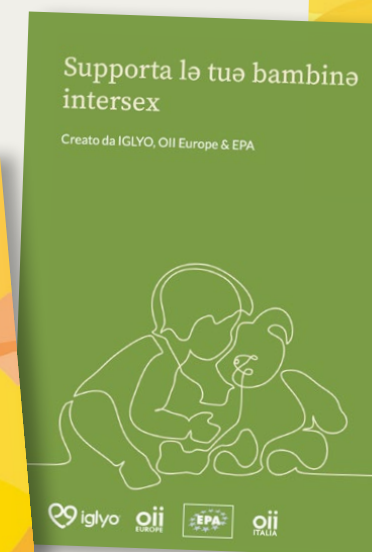
In 2022 we continued to provide translations of our materials, sometimes in collaboration with our member organisations and based on their initiative.

One ongoing mission is the translation of the **legal toolkit checklists**: It is a simplified but complete list of the recommendations from the Toolkit *Protecting Intersex People in Europe*. It is designed as a quick reference guide for policy makers, lawmakers and public servants working to protect the rights of intersex people. Making the checklist available in more EU member states' languages allows national intersex NGOs and their allies to better raise awareness about intersex protection gaps with national law and policy makers and allows the latter

to increase their understanding and enhance their efforts to implement protection of intersex people as laid out in the EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy. It was translated into **Spanish, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Italian, Maltese, Polish, German and Greek**.

Other translations in 2022 included:

- Our Testimonial Book *#MyIntersexStory* into Turkish (which will be digitally published early in 2023)
- The Parents' Toolkit in Italian ▼
- The Legal Toolkit in Polish ▼
- The Final layout & launch of Legal Toolkit in Serbian ▼



OUR PROGRAMS II

European Intersex Strategic Litigation (EISL) Network

The European Intersex Strategic Litigation Network, established in 2020, continued its activities in 2022. It comprises intersex experts/activists and legal experts and lawyers from different parts of the European region. The two 2022 meetings (held in June and October) mainly focused on:

- exchange on the EU funding opportunity (CHAR-LIT call) to fund activities on strategic litigation - to strengthen capacity to effectively engage in litigation practices at national and European level, and to increase awareness of and enforcement of the fundamental rights as enshrined in the EU Charter.
- discussion of potential cases to launch by intersex people members of the Network.

The feedback received showed a very high level of satisfaction of participants (very satisfied (80%), satisfied (20%). The participants (intersex persons, legal experts, lawyers, NGO representatives) reported that they felt mostly very safe and secure at the events, and stated that those were very relevant and useful to their current and/or future work. All stated that the meetings were a good learning experience.



Capacity Building of the European Intersex Movement Project RISE

2022 saw the wrap up of our first EU-funded project, project RISE. While done almost completely online due to the ongoing pandemic, the project successfully achieved its goals of increasing the capacity of young intersex organisations and creating resources on the topic of intersex. The project was followed up by EU Framework Partnership Agreement and EU Operational grant for 2022.



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.

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.

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.

→ Find out more about the INIA Project in our previous Annual Report on page 25.

In 2022 we welcomed the second batch of doctoral research students to OII Europe to provide expertise and advice during their secondment.

While all secondments were initially planned as in-person, due to the Covid-19 pandemic we had to be flexible and moved many of these to an online

format. But this year during the warmer season we were able to partially have them in person.

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.

One of this years' focus during one of the researchers' secondment was the topic of our Intersex Awareness Day Campaign: ageing and elderly intersex people – you can find more about this campaign on → page 15.

Training with TGEU (Transgender Europe)

In July 2022, OII Europe and TGEU met, and OII Europe provided them with **training on intersex issues**. Some of the topics that were discussed included: definitions; main violations of intersex people's human rights; available data on protection gaps; information on OII Europe's structure and different work areas as well as discussion about future collaborations between the two organisations. In September, our teams met again and respectively **discussed the two organisations' community building and policy and advocacy work**.



ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & FUNDING

Staff & Board Meetings

Even though there were more opportunities to meet in person and work together in the office in 2022 due to the decline of the pandemic, we held our weekly team meetings primarily online or as hybrid versions. This was due in part to insufficient space in our previous office.

It was finally possible for our Steering Board - in addition to regular online meetings - to meet and consult with each other in person twice in 2022. A key part of the meetings was the work on the Strategic Plan 2023-2027 to set the direction and objectives of OII Europe's work for the coming years.

Staff Development

OII Europe has grown a little again in terms of personnel. In 2022, we welcomed two new colleagues to our team as Policy Officers. Irene Amoroso (right), who has already supported us in the past as a freelance Policy Associate, joined us in March 2022. As a further reinforcement of the policy team, we were then able to welcome Jana Hugo (left) to OII Europe in June 2022. ▶

Staff & SB-trainings

In June 2022 all staff members went together on a three day **staff-retreat** in a conference hotel in Brandenburg. The retreat served several purposes, like reflection about and internal evaluation of our work in the past, discussion of how to proceed and restructure our workflows, tasks and responsibilities considering the fact that OII Europe is a small but growing organisation. Last but not least the retreat was meant to be a team building and well-being measure. ▶

We conducted **four training sessions on racial justice** with an external expert - two for OII Europe staff members in Feb-



The OII Europe Team is growing! From left to right: Policy Officer Jana Hugo, Community & Capacity Building Officer Irene Kuzemko, and Policy Officer Irene Amoroso.

ruary 2022 and two for OII Europe steering board members in September 2022 - in order to increase our level of sensitivity and awareness of racial justice and include this knowledge appropriately in our work.

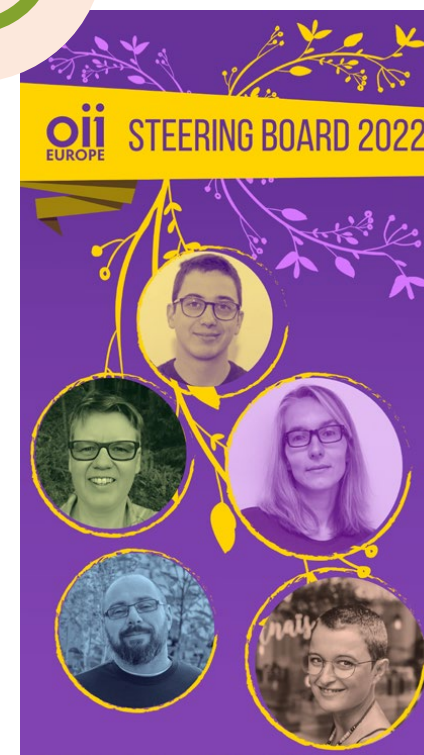


Ukraine support

The Russian invasion of Ukraine shocked us all and created new unprecedented challenges for intersex people in and from Ukraine. As a positive counterweight we could see how values like solidarity and compassion are actively expressed both inside and outside the intersex community. Our call for donations to **support intersex people in Ukraine** was immediately followed by generous support. On the one hand, we received a large earmarked donation from Dreilinden, who have been supporting the work of OII Europe as a funder for years. And on the other hand, many private persons donated to support intersex people in and from Ukraine.

We received 10.000 EUR from Dreilinden and 2.855 EUR from private persons.

So far the donations received have been spent on emergency housing, food and medical support for people. **We thank all donors** for this great gesture of solidarity and will continue making sure that that the money reaches the people.



Organisational development

On February 26, 2022 we held our **General Assembly** including the election of the new **Steering Board** members. Elected as new board members were: Magdalena Rakita (Co-Chair, Executive Board), Kristian Randelovic (Co-Chair, Executive Board), Audrey Aegerter (Treasurer, Executive Board), Tobias Humer (Secretary, Executive Board) and Kaisli Syrjänen (Steering Board member). We would like to express **our heartfelt thanks to our former board members**, Miriam van der Have, Kitty Anderson, Ev Blaine Matthigack and Pol Naidenov for their commitment and many years of trustful cooperation.

We reviewed both our **Governance Manual** and our **Finance Manual** in 2022 in order to continue to improving and simplifying our work with regard to administrative processes, and to meet the requirements of our donors for the use of funds in the best possible way.

After a long time of searching for a suitable and affordable **office space**, we finally signed a rental contract for our new office in December 2022. The physical move will happen in January 2023. We'll keep you updated.



Organisational Development & Funding II

Funding

In the spring of 2022, we had an audit of our 2021 finances, which was successfully completed with no objections.

After two project years (April 2020 - March 2022), we have successfully completed the RISE project funded by the European Commission together with NNID as project partner.

As we mentioned in our Annual Report 2021, we have succeeded in securing a Framework Partnership Agreement with the European Commission for the years 2022-2025. On the basis of this Framework Partnership Agreement, we received an Operational Grant from the European Commission for the first time. This Operational Grant has enabled us, among other things, to expand and intensify our policy work.

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 • Sigrid Rausing Trust • Wellspring

For OII Europe's Fiscal Year 2022 we can report a funding income of 536.108,67 €

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



Saving the best for last

May we introduce our **newest team member: Mx Happy (Wellbeing Officer)** - joined OII Europe in December 2022 and has grown dear to everyone.





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