

5 Years of CILD Impact

A message from Patrizio Gonnella

CILD Co-Founder and Inaugural President

We established CILD in 2014 and since then, we have tried to give the word ‘freedom’ the meaning it once had in years past, which has diminished over time – a meaning where inclusivity and emancipation are focal. Along with the member associations which gave initial life to the Coalition, us founders understood freedom to be a word intimately connected with dignity.

We understood freedom to be about both positive freedom – the ability to do something – and negative freedom – being free of barriers – as Amartya Sen would espouse. We understood freedom to be self-determination, inclusion, and the ability to claim one’s own true identity. We have always recognised freedom as never conflicting with equality and being intimately connected with civil rights. The two concepts are interdependent and indivisible. In Italy, many groups have attempted to reduce freedom, civil liberties and human rights to being akin to matters of minor significance and, at times, public nuisance.

In response, in the past 5 years, the Coalition has established itself as a force for freedom, intertwining protecting rights in a number of different thematic areas. As a Coalition, we constantly strive to amplify the work of all our member associations, and we have united organisations that deal with immigration, anti-racism, justice, prisons, drugs, LGBT rights, women’s rights, children’s rights, transparency, integration, Roma and Sinti rights, creating a hub for the fight against all forms of discrimination in our Nation. The founders and original member organisations of CILD knew that through the promotion and protection of the rights to which we are all entitled, a paradigm shift was, and is, possible. 5 years on we still believe we can, and must, contribute to the construction of a more cohesive, supportive and equitable society.

- In the last half-decade, we have worked with international organisations, from the Council of Europe to the EU and the United Nations and have focused on many issues at the centre of discourse for the international community, including homophobia, discrimination, denied asylum, living conditions in prisons and prisons, racism and torture.

On a more local level we have focused on: the fight against racism and xenophobia; the fight against discrimination based on sex or gender; a change of the “criminal” narrative in matters of immigration, enlarging pathways to citizenship, overcoming prejudice against Roma, Sinti and nomadic populations, a less arbitrary penal and prison system, the legalisation of cannabis and treatment of drug offences as a social rather than criminal issue; and the fight against corruption and transparency in public administration.

As the many associations which initially formed CILD had originally intended, CILD has acted as a single interlocutor with institutions, the media and public opinion and this has increased our strength and impact in interacting with Italian and European institutions.

The successes of the past 5 years and our tremendous growth from 2014 until now in the face of much adversity has truly shown that in acting together as a united body, none of our associations has lost its identity, but indeed as a Coalition, we have gained strength and visibility. We will use this sure footing to continue to go from strength to strength in the future.



Patrizio Gonnella

CILD Co-Founder and Inaugural President

Who we are

Founded in 2014, the Italian Coalition for Civil Liberties and Rights (CILD) is a network of 41 civil society organizations that protect and expand the rights and liberties of all, through a combination of advocacy, public education and legal action.

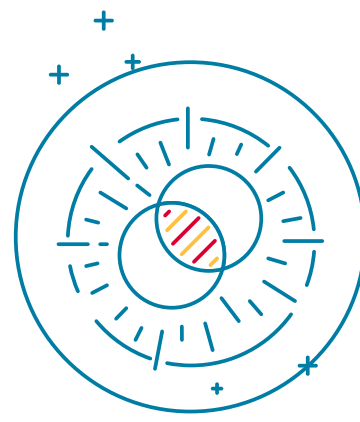
Currently we focus on **Advocacy**, **Capacity Building**, **Legal Action**, **Research**, **Public Education & Information**.



Asylum & international protection



Immigration



Equality and anti-discrimination



Justice



Civil liberties in the digital age



National security

Organisations

24 Marzo

A Buon Diritto

Ansi

Antigone

Arci

Arcigay

Arco

Asgi

Associazione 21 Luglio

Associazione Luca Coscioni

Avvocati Per Niente

Bambini Senza Sbarre

Bin

Certi Diritti

Cie Piemonte

Cipsi

Cir

Cittadinanzattiva

Cittadini Del Mondo

Cospe

Differenza Donna

Diritto Di Sapere

Diversity

Fondazione Leone Moressa

Forum Droghe

Gruppo Umana Solidarietà

Hermes Center

K_alma

Lunaria

Magen David Keshet Italia (Mdki)

Movimento Difesa Del Cittadino

Naga

Parsec

Progetto Diritti

On The Road

Rete Lenford

Società Della Ragione

Societàinformazione

Strali

Tefa Colombia

Volontari In Carcere

Zabbara

Our goals

We will know the work we set out to do is done when in Italy there is:

- 1** **A change of perspective on irregular immigration**, where it is not immediately seen as criminality but instead through the lens of the right to asylum and our duty to welcome refugees.
- 2** **Policy more respectful of human rights** as regards citizenship law, pathways to legal immigration, immigration detention, and access to justice.
- 3** **A change in perspective towards LGBTI issues**, drug policy reform, civic space and the democratic role of rights-based CSOs.
- 4** **A penal and penitentiary system** which is less arbitrary and **more respectful of human rights**.
- 5** **Improved, ethical drug policy** including the legalisation of certain drugs.
- 6** **A public system not obsessed with mass surveillance that is respectful of privacy**, including less corruption and more transparency in public administration.

Some of the things we've accomplished since 2014...

CILD has packed a lot of action into just-over 5 years of operation. See below for just some of our key achievements in that time, in each of our areas of work.



Advocacy

NON ME LA SPACCI GIUSTA

We launched a campaign + web platform on civil liberties and drug policy called '*Non Me La Spacci Giusta*' which was featured during the UN General Assembly in 2016.

We successfully advocated for the Economic Minister to **stop companies selling online surveillance technologies to authoritarian governments.**

We promoted the '*Ero Straniero*' campaign which created legal channels of access for migrants and the regularization of those workers already in Italy.

A citizens' initiative law was launched, **collecting over 70,000 signatures which was presented in Parliament.**

We also promoted the '*Legalizziamo*' cannabis legalisation campaign.

During the campaign the promoter launched a citizens' initiative law which **collected more than 60,000 signatures and was presented in Parliament.**

Capacity Building

In July 2015 we kick-started pro bono lawyering in Italy by creating the **Italian Clearing House (CH)** for PILnet and Pro Bono Italia, **which has to date processed over 165 requests for assistance** from those in need.

Since 2015 we have run the **CILD Awards, which celebrates and encourages the work of prominent activists in Italy** across a wide range of issues.

Legal Action

We set up a **Legal Action Centre (LAC)**, a strategic litigation project which runs strategic cases on **immigration detention, access to health care, access to justice, civil partnership, unaccompanied minors and family reunion**.

Partnered with **ASGI** to **lead a successful FOIA-based piece of litigation about Italy – Niger bilateral deals on migration management**.

Legal Action

Legal Action

In 2018 we ran 4 appeals concerning the violation (amongst others) of articles 3, 5 and 13 of the European Convention of Human Rights against (alleged) illegally detained foreigners in a Lampedusa “hotspot”.

Our work ensured the applicants were liberated and were assisted as asylum seekers. As of August 2020 other proceedings related to these appeals are ongoing.

We undertook action on behalf of a foreign minor (“Liz”) who had been coerced into crime by family and was facing expulsion from Italy despite successfully engaging in social integration activities while incarcerated.

The multi-party effort we coordinated ensured that Liz was saved from expulsion and obtained a residence permit based on the little known “Article 18” – a result never before obtained in the Italian legal system.

We launched a legal project with 2 pro bono law firms, to guarantee rights to family unity for foreigners.

In addition to winning 2 cases, including obtaining an order from a judge to issue a residence permit in favour of a father/husband who had previously been refused a permit for family cohesion, **we are close to likely successful resolution in 8 other cases.**

In 2019 and 2020, with the support of the European Implementation Network, **we intervened and assisted in enforcement of 3 ongoing European Court of Human Rights cases:** Khlaifia et al. c. Italia, Cestaro c. Italia, and Arnoldi c. Italia.

Legal Action

Legal Action

We carried out 3 successful litigation actions on behalf of patients in need of cannabis-based medicines, ensuring they then received them without further delay caused by government failures. Alongside Antigone we sent letters to the Ministry of Health and local/regional authorities regarding drug shortages and non-administration to those who have a prescription. **All-in-all we directly represented more than 25 people affected by this, including “CM”, a person afflicted with anorexia nervosa** who, by December 2017, hadn’t been able to get access to therapeutic cannabis for about six months despite having a prescription and a therapeutic plan.

Following our intervention, **by January 2018, CM had gained access to their much-needed treatment**. We prepared a formal notice and published it online, ensuring other patients could use our template for the same purposes. They too were able to access their medical needs without resorting to costly and stressful legal action.

Alongside ARCO, we wrote to the Italian Minister for Health and prepared an injunction to AIFA (the Italian Medicine Agency) to oppose the disparity of treatment which some chronic asthma sufferers were subjected to due to the sudden suspension of therapy after only 11 months of treatment. Institutions had opted for a limited therapeutic schedule in spite of the chronic nature of this disease. Patients were forced, after 11 months of therapy, to buy the drug themselves, costing approximately 1200 euro per month. **Thanks to our intervention, alongside ARCO, therapy has been extended for a further year**, allowing patients to be treated for a longer period. CILD and ARCO are continuing their work to ensure the therapy remains available on an ongoing basis.

Research, Public Education & Information

In 2016, alongside **Diritto Di Sapere** and the **FOIA4Italy** campaign, we successfully lobbied the government to **adopt a new FOIA law**.

We then partnered with leading CSOs to build capacity in filing requests and challenging refusals and between 2018 and 2019 **filed 30 requests for access to information which produced, in about 70% of cases, exhaustive answers** from government agencies **regarding international agreements** (and related implementation actions), **rescue operations in the Mediterranean sea**, **use of funds for border control**, **detention centers for migrants** and **monitoring of institutions** (UNHCR, IOM etc).

In November 2015 we organised '*The 19 million Project*' with more than 142 **journalists and experts gathering for two weeks to talk about the refugee crisis** and collaboratively **produce multimedia content to change the narrative on the issue**.

Research...

Research, Public Education & Information



openmigration.org

In December 2015 we launched **‘Open Migration’ (OM)** a bilingual media & advocacy project that fosters a more data-driven policy debate on migrants and refugees issues.

Since its launch OM **has registered more than 30,000 monthly unique views and has now almost 8000 followers on Twitter.**

We have published **5 ‘Know Your Rights’ guides** on topics varying from use of cannabis to the Salvini decrees, to how to react to police force.

In April 2020 we published a guide to **assist chronically ill patients** regarding how to ensure continuity of their treatment **in times of COVID-19** and hospital closures.

Research...

Research, Public Education & Information

In 2019 we updated the legal guidelines about safe and rescue operations, and published a report to advocate against a part of the security decree that prevented asylum seekers from registering in the municipality of residency in order to access public services. **The report helped lawyers raise constitutional concerns during legal proceedings**, which led to the Constitutional Court ruling the provision “unconstitutional” in July 2020.

In 2020 we launched a new report about the illegitimacy of another provision of the Salvini decree which prevented the issuance of ID cards for minors stating “parent 1” and “parent 2” in order not to discriminate against children of same sex couples.

In July 2020 we also published our **‘Migrant detention in Covid-19 times’ report**. Based on data collected between February and June 2020, it analysed immigration detention during COVID-19 in Italy.



Our COVID-19 Response and Recovery efforts

When Italy became one of the countries worst-hit by COVID-19 worldwide, it became immediately clear to us that the most vulnerable in our society would be at higher risk of adverse implications of the pandemic. It was incumbent upon us to respond to assist the nation in facing the impact of the pandemic, and we did – swiftly.

Rapid reaction. We mobilised donors, member organisations and key stakeholders to enable us to provide essential information and protective equipment to frontline workers as soon as possible.

Collaborative efforts. Our team worked relentlessly to purchase proper PPE from trusted providers. We bought thousands of masks to send to less-protected sections of the population and essential workers for whom it was more difficult to stay at home. We then relied on a diverse range of partners to deliver it at the earliest opportunity.

On the frontline. We provided PPE to 26 organizations a reaching almost 30,000 vulnerable people working (unprotected) on the frontline: from refugees to essential migrant workers in the fields, to Roma and Sinti communities and homeless persons.



60

Food parcels
From April to May



25.000

Protective masks
Sending from April
to May



26

Our partners
Organizations involved in our
activity

Building on our success into the future >

A message from our Executive Director

Reflecting on CILD's achievements over the past 5 (plus) years and seeing how much impact has been achieved in such a short time has been an immensely proud and humbling experience. The last 5 years have been a complex and challenging time for firms tasked with protecting human rights and civil liberties, as the sector grapples with the effects of the criminalisation of NGOs and civil society organisations within Italy, the spread of false information about marginalised groups in the media (the same groups we exist to empower) and political changes which impact heavily on the important issues we care about.

If anything, these challenges continue to remind us how critical the work done by CILD, our member organisations, and organisations like us, is. How important strength in the "third sector" is, in shining a light on injustice and holding those in power to account.

The successes noted throughout this document would not have been possible without the support of many, who have provided CILD with tireless effort, time, resources and commitment. It has been a continued source of encouragement to myself and the CILD team to see the fervent commitment of our supporters to our causes and therefore we would like to thank:



Our donors, including Open Society Foundations, Oak Foundation, Civitates, Social Change Initiative, European Programme for Integration and Migration, who have funded our critically-needed work;



Our volunteers, who have given their time and expertise to enrich our organisation;



Our partner law firms who have worked with us to respond to requests from our clearinghouse;



Other organisations, professionals and experts in the sector who have provided in-kind support and have stood alongside us, working with us to deliver great outcomes;



Our Board who continues to guide us;



Our amazing staff, who take on every case and every project with tenacity, diligence and unparalleled passion;



Our members, who have always been a driving force in promoting themes and campaigns that our organisation has tried to promote and support.

> **Building on our success into the future**

A message from our Executive Director

Moving into 2021 we will continue, alongside our member organisations, to be a ringing voice for liberties and freedoms (which should be enjoyed equally by all) and continue to stand with the most marginalised groups of our society. We will continue to speak out against affronts to civil and human rights in Italy while searching for opportunities to amplify positive developments, for example the abolition of the security decrees, the abolition of the agreements with Libya for the detention of migrants in a country torn apart by civil war and the regularisation of the hundreds of irregular migrants who have been living and working in our country for years. It is our commitment that we will continue to expand these rays of hope and put them at the centre of our agenda, for the rights of all.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Andrea Menapace'.

Andrea Menapace

CILD Executive Director