



ANNUAL REPORT

2023



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Founded in 2014, the Italian Coalition for Civil Liberties and Rights (CILD) is a network of 27 civil society organisations that protect and expand the rights and liberties of all, through a combination of advocacy, narrative change, public education and legal action.

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THE PRESIDENT AND THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

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A joint message from the President and the Executive Director



Arturo Salerni
Arturo Salerni
CILD PRESIDENT



Andrea Menapace
Andrea Menapace
CILD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Against the backdrop of a change in government in Italy and amid the ongoing threat to fundamental rights and freedoms, CILD faced new challenges in 2023. Despite these hurdles, we persisted in our mission to uphold our constitutional values by reinforcing core civil liberties and fundamental rights. We actively sought to anticipate and address any threats to these rights posed by the evolving political landscape.

The Russian aggression towards Ukraine continued to present additional challenges, prompting us to expand our efforts in supporting refugees and advocating for a peaceful resolution to the conflict. The support of new partners and donors was instrumental in this endeavour, and we are deeply grateful for their solidarity. Many civil society organisations, including CILD member organisations, kept playing a crucial role in welcoming and supporting refugees and migrants, despite persistent opposition from the current government.

Concerns persist regarding the challenging environment faced by NGOs, migrants, and refugees as well as judges, journalists and activists. We continue our advocacy for a more inclusive society and fairer asylum and migration policies. Amid attempts to divide regions, health equity remains a key focus, alongside our litigation for the implementation of a regularisation scheme for migrants, who are essential contributors to our society.

In collaboration with our partners and Roma Tre University, we intensified our efforts to nurture the next generation of human rights advocates. In 2023, our Media Academy played a pivotal role in diversifying voices on critical issues and promoting fairer and more diverse media representation. The enthusiasm and eagerness to learn displayed by the new wave of young practitioners is a source of pride and fills us with

optimism for the future. We are also proud to have supported the movement for a new citizenship law to become an organisation which will strengthen this important fight in the years ahead.

The issue of immigration detention remains a grave concern, with lives continuing to be lost due to an inhumane and ineffective system. We have been monitoring abuses and conducting research which continues to reveal the scandalous profiteering of private companies in this space.

A more recent cause for concern is the series of new security decrees and laws, which hamper the work of humanitarian organisations in the central Mediterranean region and new bilateral agreements which expand the Government's hostile approach towards immigrants abroad. We remain vigilant, liaising with relevant parties to formulate appropriate responses.

Our collaborative strategic litigation work, including in hosting the Rule 39 and CIPBRA initiatives, achieved new heights in collaboration with leading human rights lawyers and international law firms. Particularly the multi award-winning Rule 39 Pro Bono Initiative, led by Dr Daria Sartori and launched in 2021, has assisted over 600 vulnerable asylum seekers and migrants, with its actions in the European Court of Human Rights boasting a persistent success rate of over 90%.

Our CIPBRA and Family Reunification initiatives, led by Loredana Leo, also continue to achieve significant results in 2022, while entering their respective third and fifth years in 2024.

All these endeavours are made possible by the dedication of countless individuals who firmly believe in the possibility of a better society. We extend our gratitude to our team, members, supporters, and donors for making our work possible. Thank you.



About Us

The Italian Coalition for Civil Liberties and Rights (CILD) is a non-governmental organisation founded in 2014 and is currently composed of 27 associations and foundations working to defend and promote rights and liberties for all, combining advocacy, narrative change, public education and legal action.

CILD was born from an awareness that civil rights and liberties are intimately connected, interdependent and indivisible. In the face of emerging cultural, political and social circumstances which threatened the fabric of civil liberties and rights in Italy, several Italian civil society organisations decided to come together to create the Coalition, to enable greater impact through unity.

OUR MANIFESTO

At CILD we believe that respect of freedom and civil rights is fundamental to a rich and functioning society and that true freedom is accessible to no one, if not accessible to everyone.

We believe that promoting and protecting rights and liberties for all makes for a stronger, more prosperous and egalitarian society. We believe that even though we are all different, we all deserve to be free. And what does it mean to be free? Freedom is self-determination. Freedom is the ability to create and live your true identity. Freedom is knowledge and awareness. Freedom is integration and acceptance. Freedom is having your interests and wellbeing count for something to those with immense power. Freedom is equality, equity, and safety. In Italy, we went through a long period in which certain kinds of detrimental language, practices and policy choices prevailed, based on an undercurrent of misinformation, divisive political agendas and fear. It was difficult to watch these circumstances unfold but the events also allowed us to put the fragility and importance of civil freedoms and human rights into perspective.

This is why CILD exists. Our Coalition, made up of passionate and engaged Italian civil society organisations, is united with a vision to create an Italy which is more open, more transparent, fairer, and more inclusive. Our Coalition works across four pillars in order to activate change, as outlined below.

ADVOCACY

We support proposals for legislative and policy change which will ensure greater protection of, and access to, human and civil rights. We push for better and more diverse representation; including helping new voices enter relevant discourse in support of positive change. This includes, but is not limited to, voices, proposals and discourse surrounding the fight against discrimination, racism and xenophobia, pushing for fair and humane migration and refugee policy, combatting the shrinking of civic space, and collaborating for more equal and equitable access to health.

CAPACITY-BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

We uplift the next generation of voices and assist others to advocate for themselves and the important causes they represent. We seek to amplify the voices of those with lived experience and assist individuals, each other, and nonprofit organisations to achieve better and greater reach with their messages of positive change.

NARRATIVE CHANGE AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

We disseminate knowledge of rights accessible by citizens, and train people in facilitating narrative change, in order to assist vulnerable individuals and groups in accessing their rights and advocating for themselves.

ASSISTANCE

We provide access to support and advice (including legal advice and support) to those confronting emergencies and human/civil rights abuses and we build networks and collaborative projects to ensure that many at imminent risk of having their rights violated can access high quality and reliable support.

We stand by the rights and liberties afforded to all by the Italian Constitution and international law. We are committed to fighting against overt and covert abuses and violations of these invaluable instruments.

We are collaborative. We may be a Coalition but, in saying that, none of our “parts” lose their own organisational identity. On the contrary; the many associations that make up CILD make this vision of a more open and respectful society richer.

We look forward to continuing to elevate the societal knowledge base regarding rights and emboldening the civil identity of citizens and Italy.

Our Board



ARTURO SALERNI | President

Arturo is a lawyer who works in the fields of criminal, administrative and international law for the protection of human rights. He works within rights-based organisation Progetto Diritti, where he works for the legal protection of society's most disadvantaged groups. He was also President of Europa Levante for the rights of Kurdish people, and President of the Azienda Farmasociosanitaria di Roma Capitale-Farmacap. He is currently President of the Truth and Justice Committee for the New Desaparecidos and was one of the founders of Antigone, an association which deals with criminal law and penitentiary matters.



LAURA LIBERTO | Vice President

Since 2012 Laura has been the National Coordinator of the Justice for Rights network Cittadinanzattiva. A criminal and immigration lawyer, she has been working for several years in the nonprofit world on the promotion of human rights and citizenship, protection of children's rights and societal inclusion of Roma communities.



FLAVIO ROMANI | Independent Member

Flavio has been, for some time, an activist for the rights of gay, lesbian and trans people within Arcigay, the largest and most widespread Italian LGBTI association, of which he was National President from 2012 to 2018. Currently he assists with the plight of many asylum-seeking migrants.



TAMAR PITCH | Independent member

Tamar is editor of the journal *Studi sulla Questione Criminale* and was a member of the National Bioethics Committee. She has been full professor of Legal Philosophy and Sociology of Law at the University of Perugia, and has taught courses in many universities around the world. Her main research fields are the sociology of deviance and crime, human rights and legal feminism.



SUSANNA MARIETTI | Member

Susanna is the Executive Director of Italian association Antigone, which works for the promotion of human rights in the criminal justice system. She is a member of the General Assembly of the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT).

Her publications include books and articles on penal and prison issues as well as on contemporary philosophical topics. She runs a blog on criminal justice hosted by Italian newspaper Il Fatto Quotidiano. Alongside Patrizio Gonnella, she authors and hosts weekly Italian radio program Jailhouse Rock which discusses topical prison-related matters. Susanna is President of Atletico Diritti, a sports club, which involves detained and migrant athletes in sporting competitions.



GABRIELE PIAZZONI | Member

Since 2018 Gabriele has held the position of General Secretary of Arcigay, of which he has been an activist since 2007, having also held the position of President of the Arcigay Territorial Committee of Cremona since 2010. Since the same year, he has been a member of the National Council of the Association. He was also a legislative consultant and parliamentary assistant during the 17th Letta and Renzi legislatures (from 2013 to 2015). Passionate about civil rights, he has worked with several organisations in this arena and since 2009 has been President of the cooperative Linfa srl, which provides event organisation, publishing, printing, graphics and advertising services.



LEONARDO FIORENTINI | Member

A webmaster by profession, he has been working on drug policies since the birth of the Fuoriluogo website, of which he became Director in 2014. He is one of the editors of the White Paper on drugs, which every year takes stock of the consequences of substance-related policies in Italy. He is National Secretary of Forum Droghe, which he represents at the UN, and a founding member of the Società della Ragione. From 2014 to 2019 he was a municipal councillor in Ferrara, where he had previously also held the role of councillor and District President. In 2018 he contributed some of his views to the book *La cannabis fa bene alla politica*. In 2021 he published, alongside Officina di Hank, the book *L'Onda Verde. La fine della Guerra alla Droga*. He is also the author of the podcast *l'Onda Verde* and editor of the Fuoriluogo podcast

Our Member Organisations

24 Marzo

A Buon Diritto

Acat Italia

Antigone

Arci

Arco

Arcigay

ASGI

Associazione 21 Luglio

Avvocati Per Niente

Bambini Senza Sbarre

Bin Italia

Certi Diritti

Cir

Cittadinanzattiva

Cittadini Del Mondo

Forum Droghe

Lunaria

Magen David Keshet Italia (Mdki)

Naga

Progetto Diritti

On The Road

Rete Lenford

Società Della Ragione

Strali

Unione Forense per la Tutela dei Diritti Umani

Zabbara



OUR WORK

Immigration and Asylum

Immigration detention and its alternatives

In 2023, we continued our work to support people within, and at risk of being detained within administrative detention, providing information and advocacy on what happens inside the Centres for Permanence and Repatriation (CPRs) and on non-coercive alternatives to the detention of migrant people. In February, in collaboration with the International Detention Coalition, a network we are part of, we organised a round table in Rome that various stakeholders participated in: civil society organisations, guarantors for the rights of people deprived of personal liberty, experts, and parliamentarians. This meeting facilitated the creation of some starting points for action and collaborations.

In June, almost a year and a half after the publication of our immigration detention report “Buchi Neri – Detention without charge in Repatriation Centres for Migrants”, we published our second report from the press room of the Chamber of Deputies – a report named “[The CPR Affair](#)”. Specifically, this work analysed, in depth, the business of detaining migrant people and how the profits from engaging in this industry are attractive to various private entities who, both in Italy and

globally, have concentrated in this sector over the years to increase profits and their own earnings. At the end of the year we also produced four new videos containing expert and witness accounts on the immigration detention phenomenon in Italy, which we will publish on our “[Black holes](#): A journey into detention without charge in Italy” website in January 2024.

Throughout the year we also participated in meetings and debates on administrative detention and are hopeful that 2024 will be a time of progress for alternatives to detention.



Cover of “The CPR Affair” report



OPENMIGRATION

Founded in 2015, Open Migration is an open, horizontal information project which entirely discusses issues of migration. Using skills, data and knowledge, it aims to contribute to shaping opinions and views on migration, breaking down prejudices and stereotypes used by the media and some political forces when discussing this issue.

In 2023 we published more than 45 in-depth articles and editorials – most of which are also available in English – keeping our audience updated both on the main developments in migration policy and consequences of Italian and international political activity regarding people on the move. As far as Italian policies are concerned, we mainly focused on the developments regarding the government’s securitarian provisions on immigration – from the so-called “Cutro Decree” to the MoU with Albania which aims to detain rescued migrants in detention facilities and process their asylum requests in a non-EU country.

As for European policies and the EU’s approach towards migration, we mainly dealt with the condition of migrant workers in EU Member States, the link between climate change and migration, and the pushbacks carried out by the Tunisian government against sub-saharan African migrants under the EU’s supervision.

Our editorial efforts, which constantly sought to contrast the dominant rhetoric sold in the mass media, have continued to reap rewards: over 145 thousand users read our articles directly on the [Open Migration website](#) in 2023 and Open Migration has now surpassed more than 4 million readers since launch.

We published **49 in-depth articles** on topical migration issues



over
232,382
readers
in 2023



over
4 million
readers
since launch



Dignity for migrant workers in farm-to-fork labour markets

DignityFIRM is our second Horizon 2020 project – funded by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme – and it aims to improve conditions for migrant workers experiencing (multiple) irregularities in five selected European Union Member States and two Associated Countries. The project also aims to promote dignity for these workers through safe and healthy working conditions. Labour markets from FARM (agriculture and food processing) to FORK (hospitality and delivery services) offer the most evident example of how important migrant workers are for communities. Through comprehensive qualitative and quantitative research and a context-specific approach, we seek to better understand the challenges involved and the subsequent findings will inform the development of tools and strategies to bridge the gap between policy aspirations and realities of migrant workers experiencing irregularity. We will propose policy changes which will better uphold migrant workers’ access to rights and services, simultaneously addressing the wellbeing of communities receiving them. This large collaborative project started in April 2023, and CILD is coordinating the strategic communication aspect of the project, including managing the social presence of the project (the visual identity, [website](#), and [FB](#), [X](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#)), and dissemination of the results. CILD also hosted and led a DignityFIRM lab on Narrative Change opportunities within the project.



DignityFIRM meeting

Predicting future migration patterns

Via our work within the Horizon 2020 **HumMingBird** project – funded by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme – we aim to improve the mapping and understanding of changing migration flows. The research does this by analysing patterns, motivations and new geographies, and testing new methods to forecast emerging and future trends. Migration has become a matter of significant social, political and broader public concern. It has, therefore, gradually become a matter of high priority on the agendas of national and EU authorities. Well-informed, evidence-based migration policies should be based on reliable evidence, beginning with a thorough understanding of existing data as well as the demographic, economic, environmental and political drivers of migration. There is a need for tools to forecast migration flows to minimise shocks and tensions and therein lies the impetus for HumMingBird.

In 2023 CILD continued to work on the project and participated in project meetings to progress, advance and plan wide dissemination of findings from the project. Furthermore, through our Open migration website, we contributed to [publicising research work](#) carried out within the project.

Strengthening the citizenship movement

2022 brought the end of a government which had effectively interrupted any possible reform of the citizenship law and the victory of the centre-right coalition which, on several occasions, had opposed or indifferent towards any change to the law that would make it easier to recognise the people who were born or raised in Italy, who weren’t eligible to become citizens, as Italian nationals. In the face of this blockade imposed on any legislative solution, CILD’s activity was dedicated above all to strengthening the Italians



Website of the Italians Without Citizenship movement

Without Citizenship movement, as a bearer of interests with respect to this issue. In particular, we supported this movement’s effort to form a legal association and actively assisted in the overhauling of their visual identity and their website.

Furthermore, a series of initiatives were organised on the issue, the latest of which was a conference held in October in Rome, with the aim of presenting Italians Without Citizenship as a constituted entity and no longer only as a movement and to resume dialogue on the reform of the law. An important part of our work on citizenship also involved the creation of a campaign that will be promoted in 2024, aimed at city mayors, in order to ensure faster access to citizenship and to make this topic a moment of discussion starting from local contexts.



PILnet Global Partnership Award



LawWorks Best International Pro Bono Award

The Rule 39 Pro Bono Initiative

The two-time award-winning Rule 39 Pro Bono Initiative, hosted by CILD, led by Dr Daria Sartori and supported by 8 international law firms (Orrick, DLA Piper, Herbert Smith Freehills, Linklaters, Eversheds Sutherland, Osborne Clarke, Freshfields and Reed Smith), went from strength to strength in 2023, winning two international awards (the PILnet Global Partnership Award and the LawWorks Best International Pro Bono Award), and receiving a Highly Commended in the Innovative Lawyers in Supporting Refugees category at the Financial Times Innovative Lawyer awards.

During 2023 the volunteer lawyers, led by Dr Sartori, continued their work drafting both Rule 39 requests (designed to allow asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants to seek urgent help in the European Court of Human Rights for rights violations committed against them by government administrations) and Article 34 individual applications for compensation for human rights abuses. These measures seek to enable vulnerable persons to seek a remedy where domestic remedies in the respective countries are providing little to no real relief.

The Initiative recently commenced its third year of providing critical support for the urgent protection of the human rights of asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants across Europe, and has worked on applications concerning:

- › **Pushbacks of asylum-seekers and migrants;**
- › **Expulsions or extraditions of individuals to countries where their right to life or physical integrity are at risk (e.g. because of persecution or lack of access to life-saving medical treatment);**

- › **Movement of vulnerable individuals out of refugee camps/detention facilities for migrants that are ill-equipped to cater to vulnerable groups;**
- › **Inadequate shelter and living conditions where vulnerable migrants have been left without adequate support by the State;**
- › **Provision of first aid and medical assistance to refugees and asylum seekers stuck at, or between borders.**

The Initiative is also now open to working more in the area of third-party interventions (amicus curiae) in pending cases at the ECtHR and some work on this has already been done in an individual application targeting the unlawful detention of asylum seekers in unsuitable conditions.

Since the commencement of the Initiative, the Rule 39 Pro Bono Initiative has assisted over 600 people, including 78 children, through preparation of 74 Rule 39 requests then filed against 7 Council of Europe Member States. Over 90% of requests drafted were successful. The project will run until at least late 2023 with the possibility for extension into 2024.

THE RULE39 PRO BONO INITIATIVE 24 MONTHS OF IMPACT

Provided over

**4,943 HOURS OF
PRO BONO ASSISTANCE**

to vulnerable adults and children in urgent need of protection, including over 2,300 hours just in the last year

Helped more

**620 PEOPLE
FROM 10 COUNTRIES**

through lodging 74 life-altering Rule 39 requests and 7 individual applications in the European Court of Human Rights against SEVEN Council of Europe Member States including 6 individual applications.

Facilitated the

**RELOCATION TO SAFETY OF
ALL MIGRANTS, REFUGEES
AND ASYLUM SEEKERS**

being held in a detention centre dangerously close to the frontlines in Ukraine. This was achieved through securing two first-of-their-kind interim measure decisions from the ECtHR, addressing the rights of foreigners stuck in Ukraine during active conflict.

Safeguarded the human rights of

**MORE THAN
78 CHILDREN**

and 9 unaccompanied minors.

Confronted Belgium's reception crisis by submitting

**38 RULE 39 APPLICATIONS
ACROSS 3 MONTHS, ASSISTING
167 HOMELESS ASYLUM-SEEKERS**

who had been left on the streets to fend for themselves.

Assisted a number of individuals to secure interim measures in cases concerning the use of violence at the border and pushbacks from Lithuania to Belarus. The individual application following the interim measures requested in one such case has been identified by the European Court of Human Rights as the leading case on the subject matter. The judgment is pending

Family Reunification

In 2023, alongside Orrick and Herbert Smith Freehills, we continued our Family Reunification project, which provides pro bono legal assistance to non-EU citizens who wish to apply for residence permits for family reunification purposes. This year we took on 18 cases, most of which are still pending as the processes which are part-and-parcel of this area of law are notoriously lengthy. Over the 5 years the project has been running, the project has taken on a total of 62 cases.



Class Action Victory

A class action brought by several associations, including CILD, on behalf of over 100 foreigners and employers succeeded in December 2023. The Court asserted in their judgment that the rights of those who asked to work legally were violated.

The Regional Administrative Court of Lombardy, in ruling on case number 2949 on 5 December 2023, concluded that the failure to conclude visa application proceedings within the required 180-day time limit was unjustified and that the rights and interests of the applicants had been violated.

The case was initiated as a public class action brought by CILD, the Association for Legal Studies on Immigration (Italian acronym: ASGI), Oxfam Italia Onlus, Spazi Circolari and the Naga Association, a Voluntary Organisation for Social and Health Assistance and for the Rights of Foreign Citizens (in addition to 9 singular person plaintiffs and the intervention of approximately 100 other parties, including both natural persons and employers).

The class action had been brought to address administrations which were failing to respect maximum timeframes for regularisation procedures.

The Regional Administrative Court ordered the relevant administrations to conclude the examination of regularisation requests within 90 days, in an effort to remedy non-compliance



with the 180-day time limit (a time limit set by the Council of State, judgment no. 3578/2022) in concluding the proceedings.

The Regional Administrative Court considered serious the objective and ascertained delay by the Prefecture of Milan not only in relation to the long time elapsed from the date of submission of the application for emersion (in August 2020), but also the serious delay relative to the 180-day time limit for closure of files.

These long delays represent a serious and generalised breach of duty by the Public Administration, forcing thousands of foreigners to live in effective limbo, as those without a receipt of the application for regularisation or the issuance of the first residence permit cannot enter into a subsequent work contract, cannot open a bank account, cannot register with the registry office, and cannot leave Italy to visit their families.

Of the ruling, the organisations which brought the action said: “The ruling of the Lombardy Regional Administrative Court is of fundamental importance and formally acknowledges the complaint of the organisations and individuals who brought the public class action – namely that people and their employers cannot be left in an effective legal limbo for such a long time. We now hope that the Prefecture of Milan will comply with the Administrative Court’s ruling and remedy the situation they

created, and that the many other defaulting Prefectures will do the same.’

A regularisation drive for irregular foreigners had been ordered and promoted in May 2020 by the Conte II government in response to sharp needs to retain labour in the agriculture and domestic sectors during the pandemic. Many requests, more than three years after that law (Article 103 of Law Decree No. 34/2020) came into force have still not received a response. This was the impetus for the public class action being brought against the Prefecture of Milan, as well as another against the Prefecture of Rome with other organisations. A hearing for the action against the Prefecture of Rome has been set for 7 March 2024.

That action, including against the Questura (police headquarters) of Rome, has been brought by Arci Roma, ASGI, Baobab Experience, CILD, Cgil Lazio, Inca-Cgil Lazio, Nonna Roma, Oxfam, Progetto Diritti and Spazi Circolari, in collaboration with the Ero Straniero Campaign. In that case these organisations have similarly filed a class action for the delay in issuing residence permits. A similar action is about to be filed against the Questura di Napoli.

The very serious delays of the Ministry of the Interior (prefectures and police headquarters) in issuing documents essential for the daily lives of foreigners, can cause very serious damage, such as the loss of work and income, poverty, lack of access to health services, and an inability to exercise social rights only accessible to those with a permit. Due to this, foreigners experience delays that do not afflict Italian citizens, which means foreigners become socially marginalised, which then becomes political propaganda ‘material’.

Italian Pro Bono Collaboration for Afghan Refugees (CIPBRA)

In 2023 work continued in the Italian Pro Bono Collaboration for Afghan Refugees (CIPBRA project); an initiative hosted by CILD with the support of Orrick, Dentons, Hogan Lovells and Linklaters, and led by lawyer Loredana Leo with the support of Vittoria Garosci.

This collaborative initiative focuses on the security and protection of vulnerable Afghan refugees seeking sanctuary in Italy, after the continued fallout that the effects of the withdrawal of international forces from Afghanistan in August 2021 and the resumption of power by the Taliban has caused. The Taliban's return to power has continued to have a dramatic impact on the civilian population, with thousands of civilians killed and thousands more wounded, most of whom are women and children. IOM Afghanistan has numbered the people affected by the crisis at over 3.6 million and ACLED – the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) – has recorded over 1,000 incidents of violence targeting civilians by the Taliban between the fall of Kabul on 15 August 2021 and 30 June 2023.

CILD continues to receive requests from Afghan nationals who need legal assistance to be granted sanctuary in Italy, the majority of which are from people who

would be considered particularly at risk (women and human rights activists).

These asylum-seekers, where eligible, are assisted by our CIPBRA initiative. Some will be looking to reunify with family members but all will be hoping for the humanitarian assistance and care they should be afforded.

Throughout 2023 we've been encouraged to see more great outcomes being secured for Afghan asylum-seekers seeking sanctuary in Italy. One such example occurred in mid-2023, when the initiative facilitated a significant win for humanitarian visa hopefuls in Italy through securing a significant decision in the Court of Rome. In a ruling of critical significance for asylum-seekers applying for Italy's humanitarian visa while still in dangerous circumstances – the Court ruled in favour of an Afghan family seeking safety in Italy, including ruling that the power of attorney for one family member, which was taken online, was valid.

Typically Italian regulations require these powers of attorney to be formalised in the physical presence of the appointed attorney. In her ruling, the judge allowed for the exception to the regular rules, acknowledging the impracticability and danger inherent in expecting the mother of the family to seek out an embassy in circumstances of peril in Afghanistan.

This ruling confirms the ability for powers of attorney to be taken “at a distance” in situations where there is no real possibility for the power of attorney to be given in the “ordinary” way due to severe

safety concerns and general insecurity in a country.

The Court ordered Italian authorities to issue the family with humanitarian visas.

The project – which in September 2023 received a Highly Commended in the Innovative Lawyers in Supporting Refugees category at the Financial Times Innovative Lawyer awards – will be ongoing until at least early 2025.

In the 22 months since CIPBRA commenced, the initiative has provided over 1200 hours of pro bono legal assistance, to vulnerable adults in urgent need of protection, family reunification and resettlement and thus far, over 247 Afghan refugees and asylum-seekers in perilous conditions have been assisted, including 72 children.

CIPBRA

22 MONTHS OF IMPACT



Provided over
1200 HOURS OF PRO BONO ASSISTANCE

to vulnerable adults in urgent need of protection, family reunification and resettlement.



CLOSED 19 CASES, RESULTING IN THE ISSUANCE OF 55 VISAS

for the safe resettlement of refugees and asylum-seekers in Italy.



Helped more
247 AFGHAN REFUGEES

and asylum-seekers in perilous conditions, largely through help with processes for family reunification and humanitarian visas. On average, about 45% of the people helped were children.



RESPONDED TO 252 LEGAL ASSISTANCE REQUESTS

including making referrals and assisting 3 other organisations with their queries around humanitarian visas or family reunification.

Support for Ukrainian Nationals in Italy

Over 150,000 Ukrainian refugees arrived in Italy after Ukraine was invaded by Russia in early 2022. Shortly after this Russia's escalation in aggression, the EU decided to implement Directive number 55 of 2001 providing temporary protection to Ukrainian refugees fleeing war. Subsequently, Italy introduced a Prime Ministerial Decree which provided Ukrainian citizens access to protection and shelter.

To assist with the many needs of incoming Ukrainian refugees, including unaccompanied minors and other particularly vulnerable groups, CILD commenced the SUNI and UCRI projects, alongside Progetto Diritti, the Association of Ukrainian Women in Italy (ADULI), and other partners, designed to provide assistance (including legal assistance) and accessible information to Ukrainian nationals. This assistance spanned guardianship, family unity and reunification, education, benefits, and immigration and is delivered primarily in Rome, Naples, and Sicily.



Between September 2022 and November 2023
the SUNI/UCRI initiatives served a total of

826 PEOPLE including
490 CHILDREN

On 28 September 2023, the EU Justice and Home Affairs Council extended the temporary protection for people who fled Ukraine after the Russian invasion, to 4 March 2025. The Council's statement said: "In order to provide certainty to more than 4 million Ukrainian refugees currently living in the EU, the Council agreed to extend from 4 March 2024 to 4 March 2025 the temporary protection granted to persons fleeing Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine."

OUR WORK

Rule of Law and Civic Space

Safeguarding Freedom of Expression Project

We were thrilled in 2023 to commence a new cooperation with the European Implementation Network (EIN) and STRALI in a new initiative focused on safeguarding freedom of expression in Council of Europe member States.

As part of this project, we are dedicated to promoting this fundamental right and the effective implementation of the relevant judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, as well as to advocating for reforms aimed at effectively protecting free speech in Italy.

Violations of the right to free speech have become central to the crisis of democratic backsliding in European States. We witness the healthy functioning of democracies being undermined, and sometimes curtailed, by a combination of factors, depending on the jurisdiction, such as draconian defamation laws silencing journalists through court proceedings, the undermining of free debate through excessive ownership of media outlets by the State or its affiliates, and even widespread violence against reporters. To address these pressing issues, the ECtHR has already issued about 300 leading judgments that

identify violations of the right to free speech. However, alarmingly, 50% of the leading free speech judgments handed down by the ECtHR in the last 10 years are still pending implementation.

Currently, there are more than 100 leading ECtHR judgements on free speech awaiting implementation. Together with EIN, CILD coalition member organisation StraLi and other partners, we are committed to championing freedom of expression and upholding democratic values throughout Europe. By actively engaging with the implementation process of ECtHR judgments, we aim to create lasting reforms that protect and promote free speech across the continent. Stay tuned for updates as we work towards a more inclusive and democratic society.

NEW PROJECT:

Protecting Freedom of Expression by Supporting the Implementation of ECtHR Judgments



Our Narrative Lab

In 2023 some free and accessible training meetings were organised as part of the Narrative Lab and more than 150 people participated. Furthermore, our experts were able to participate in meetings and bring their experience on the topic of narrative change.

Connected to the work of the Narrative Lab, is CILD's work within the above mentioned DignityFIRM project, as a part is dedicated to the change of narratives in talking about migrant workers in Europe. The second edition of the Media Academy and other #PassTheMic initiatives – which are also part of our narrative change efforts – were held in 2023.

Media Academy

Within public discourse, we need a proper variety of voices and up-and-coming advocates to be represented to reflect the diversity of Italian society and to ensure that all communities are heard and particularly people from communities most talked about. Those who know how to best represent the issues spoken about are those experiencing those issues. This is part of how we will strengthen the Italian civic space. In order to progress towards achieving this, one of the things we are growing within our Narrative Lab is our Media Academy. CILD delivered the second edition of the Media Academy in 2023, thanks to the support of Civitates with plans for a third in 2024.

Within the second edition, CILD organised a series of sessions in which communication experts trained emerging leaders, offering tools and skills to enhance their presence

and improve delivery of their messaging on all channels, including social networks, newspapers, television, radio and podcast.

Guest lecturers within this second edition included Sandro Zinani, Greta Pelucco, Dino Amenduni, Elisa Coco, Gabriele Cruciata, Sara Manisera, Alessio Genovese, Arianna Pagani, Bruno Mastroianni, Felice Moramarco.

The topics covered included online and offline communication effectiveness, storytelling and the importance of personal stories, media relations and the use of digital tools within political communication. There were 13 participants within the 2023 cohort, coming from different experiences of activism and with different focuses on issues concerning civil liberties and human rights. For two months, they attended face-to-face classes in Rome, which included lectures, training and practical exercises. We have been working on the third edition of the Media Academy, to be held in Spring 2024.



Media Academy participants during one of the face-to-face sessions

#PasstheMic

Within public debate we need a wide array of voices to be heard and ensure that new faces, who know how to best advocate about the issues that involve them, are involved in discourse. Aside from our Narrative Lab and Media Academy, CILD is also working on this through our #PasstheMic project, which consists of “passing the microphone” to activists, writers, experts, and marginalised communities – inviting them to speak about topics which concern their communities live on our platforms.

So far, during these sessions we have discussed topics including systemic racism, combating afrophobia, the need for diversity in the media to overcome discriminatory stereotypes, gender perspectives in sport, workers’ rights (especially as regards those who work in the food delivery sector), climate change and the right to food.



Visual Campaign of Blackn[è]ss Fest

Blackn[è]ss Fest

[Blackn\[è\]ss Fest](#) is a three-day festival created by Blackcoffee podcast in collaboration with PleazerMob and Kirykou, and supported by CILD, Voice Over Foundation, Archive Books and Rainbow Cafe, with the aim of sharing moments of anti-racist reflection through music, art and thematic tables in Milan, Italy.

Blackn[è]ss Fest was conceived as a contribution to a process of decolonisation and deconstruction of language in a society that outlines its structure on a racist and capitalist system. Through dialogue between the participants, individual experiences are placed at the centre, in a dimension where listening allows us to trace common elements and differences at the same time, identifying the systemic structure that influences our lives. The theme of the third edition was “introspection”, and it took place the 6-7-8th of October, with 150-200 people participating on each day.

The Liberties Rule of Law Report

In the interest of providing useful information to the European Commission – but also in the interest of producing an independent source of analysis for journalists, researchers and others interested in the state of democracy in the EU – CILD in 2023 participated in the drafting of a [report](#) on the Rule of Law alongside Liberties.

Our work, which focused on the [Italian context](#), combined with commentary also from 45 other organisations from 18 EU states, resulted in the most detailed analysis on the Rule of Law carried out by a network of NGOs in Europe to date.

For 2024 we have set ourselves an even more ambitious goal, namely to cover as many areas in Italy as possible and to do it involving CILD member organisations, who deal with these issues systematically throughout the year.

OUR WORK

Equality and anti-discrimination



Screenshot from the website of "RemAgainstDisc" project

Memory project

In 2023 CILD renewed its commitment to the theme of remembering past atrocities in the hopes of ensuring they are never repeated. In particular, as part of Italy's 'Week of Remembrance', CILD organised two meetings in Rome, to talk about the Shoah and Porrajmos atrocities. The first meeting, organised in collaboration with the University of Roma Tre and taking place on 27 January, was entitled "The sole fault of being born" and saw the involvement of former judge Gherardo Colombo, who had written the book of the

same name with senator Liliana Segre (who is also a concentration camp survivor). Over 5,000 students participated in the event from schools across Italy.

The second meeting, held on 24 January, was entitled "From anti-gypsyism to genocide: the extermination of the Sinti and Roma peoples" and fell within the scope of the European project which will be explored below.

Remembering, to stop discrimination

The project “RemAgainstDisc – Reinforcing historical memory of the Porrajmos to combat discrimination”, financed by the European commission, ended in 2023. CILD led this project, while Associazione 21 Luglio, Sugar Drom and the University of Florence worked alongside us to deliver it.

The aim of this project was to preserve the historical memory of tragic events, such as the persecution and extermination of Roma and Sinti during Nazi-fascism, as a fundamental part of the promotion of policies aimed at strengthening integration.

This year the project saw numerous activities take place, starting with the presentation of the renewed (both in visual and content terms) website representing the very first virtual museum of Porrajmos.

Three toolkits were then produced, aimed at facilitating greater involvement with the topic of three groups. These groups – which can have a great impact on the lives of Roma and Sinti people and promote a path of inclusion – were teachers, social workers and political decision makers. There were also many meetings with people from these sections of society, to disseminate the materials and begin to build paths towards greater social understanding of these events in the following months.

Furthermore, 5 “memory walks” were organised, whereby groups toured many significant sites related to the persecution of Roma and Sinti people.

In total, the project reached over 600 people in person and thousands more through websites and social channels.

The “Non-Governmental Organisations and the Protection of Human Rights”

a postgraduate course held by Roma Tre University in collaboration with CILD

In 2023, as part of our initiatives to strengthen the civic space by supporting emerging civil society leaders, the second edition of the postgraduate course on “Non-Governmental Organisations and the Protection of Human Rights” was held, born out of a collaboration between CILD and Roma Tre University. This course was included in the suite of postgraduate training offered by their Department of Law, under the direction of Patrizio Gonnella. The second edition of the course took place in January, February, and March 2023 and was attended by a cohort of 14 students, who were offered a multidisciplinary (philosophical, sociological, juridical, historical) view of human rights. In fact, in addition to delving into the general theory of human rights and protection mechanisms at international and national level, the role, functions and operational methods of non-governmental organisations was analysed, including through reference to practical field experience. The course featured lecturers and experts from all the major Italian and foreign non-governmental organisations.

The course looks at the training needs of those who intend to work, or are already actively engaged in various capacities within NGOs, associations, institutions, national and international organisations (whether governmental or non-governmental) or those who are engaged in the field of human rights and civil liberties. More and more young people, both Italian and foreign, intend to specialise in a field that combines skills and civil passion. It is therefore a question of training a ruling class of experts committed to the field of human rights and civil liberties. On this front, a closer and more strategic collaboration between the academic world and organised civil society is the element that can make the difference in contributing to the growth within this sector of a ruling class capable of making a greater impact in society, in the media and towards institutions. On the course website www.corsodirittiumani.it interested persons can download the [course e-book](#) which contains some of the contributions of the lecturers who took part.



The 2023 course cohort with their certificates of completion

Our Team

ANDREA MENAPACE | Executive Director

Andrea is the executive director of CILD. He previously worked for the Transparency & Accountability Initiative in London and was a researcher on Italy at the Open Government Partnership. Consistently active in the field of human rights, he began his career as a humanitarian worker before becoming a consultant and researcher for governments as well as non-governmental and international organisations. He is a member of the Council of Europe's expert committee on NGO law.

ANDREA OLEANDRI | Chief Operating Officer (Communications and Advocacy)

Andrea has worked for CILD since 2014, and as a journalist has previous experience in the media industry, working with several mastheads. He is also the Co-Director of CILD's Narrative Lab. He was previously also on the staff of the Mayor of the Municipality of Pomezia. Since 2014, he has also held the role of Press Officer and Social Media Manager for Antigone. In 2023 he began collaborating with the newspaper Lavalibera.

FABI FUGAZZA | Chief Operating Officer (Strategy and Development) and Legal Expert

Fabi is a lawyer and organisational management expert with extensive experience in human and civil rights. She is currently Chief Operating Officer & Legal Expert at the Italian Coalition for Civil Liberties and Rights (CILD), teaches law, public policy and human rights at Western Sydney University and is the Lead Scientific Advisor for the NYU European Public Interest Clinic (Paris). Fabi is a member of the Global Strategic Litigation Council and has worked within non-profit organisations for over 15 years, including within the National Justice Project and New York Lawyers for the Public Interest. Fabi holds undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications across law, marketing and management. At CILD Fabi leads strategy and development, works on CILD EU projects and leads all collaborative pro bono legal projects on behalf of CILD (including the Rule 39 Initiative, CIPBRA and SUNI/UCRI projects and the Family Reunification project).

PATRIZIO GONNELLA | Legal Director

Patrizio is a Professor of Sociology and Philosophy of Law at Roma Tre University. He is also the President of Antigone and has written numerous essays and books on criminal justice, human rights and rights and conditions in prisons. From 2014 to 2019 he was President of CILD and is one of the most ardent supporters of CILD's upcoming Centre for Constitutional Rights.

TOMMASO FUSCO | Media Officer

Tommaso was with CILD from 2017 to mid-2023 and is an international relations graduate from Sapienza University of Rome. Before working at CILD he worked in the Lobbying and Advocacy office of Caritas Internationalis and, as an intern, with the Asociación para las Naciones Unidas en España focusing on the Sustainable Development Goals. As CILD's Media Officer, Tommaso supported the communication office in managing content for CILD, Amarsi un po' and Open Migration.

VALENTINA MUGLIA | Program Officer

Valentina is currently CILD's Program Officer, she has served as Project and Operations Assistant for CILD since 2020. She graduated with honours in law from the University of Roma Tre, before working in human rights she did activism within student organisations and political networks in the city of Rome.

ANDREA COLOMBO | Visual Designer

Since 2019 Andrea has worked with CILD, having more than a decade of experience in communications and design with other NGOs. Over the last few years, Andrea has developed CILD's Brand Identity, Editorial Design and multiple digital communication projects for CILD including "Amarsi un po'" (where he edited, among other things, the project videos) and "Buchi Neri (black holes) – A journey into detention without charge in Italy".

FEDERICA BORLIZZI | Researcher and Legal Collaborator

Federica is a Doctoral student in the "Sociology of Law" at the Department of Law of "Rome Tre" University and her focus is the risks arising from the administrative aspects of criminal law, with particular reference to the field of "urban security" and "prevention measures". At CILD, she is Editor of the Buchi Neri (Black Holes) report and is a contributor for the "Buchi Neri" (Black Holes) newsletter.

OIZA QUEENS DAY OBASUYI | Junior Researcher and Program Assistant

Oiza graduated in International Relations from the University of Macerata. She is the author of the book Corpi Estranei – "Stranger Bodies" (People, 2020), which focuses on the deconstruction of systemic racism in Italy. She has written many articles in which she mainly dealt with human rights, migration and systemic racism. She works as a content creator for CILD's projects Open Migration and Buchi Neri (Black Holes) and carries out research and support activities for projects in the areas of immigration, asylum, citizenship, anti-discrimination, administrative detention and inclusion.

IRENE PALLA | Project coordinator & Researcher

Anthropologist, at CILD she deals with the formulation and coordination of projects. She is an adjunct professor at the University of Bologna, an associate researcher at IDEHPUCP and a member of various national and international research groups. She is involved in research, training and advocacy on issues of migrations, political violence, human rights and inclusion in Italy, Peru, Spain, Morocco and Ghana, where she worked for NGOs, think tanks, foundations, ministries, places of memory and several institutions of the Third Sector.

Riepilogo finanziario 2023

Support & Revenue	
Revenues, rent and income from activities of general interest	
Contributions from private entities	641.212 €
Other income, revenue and earnings	440 €
General support income	
Other general support income	5 €
Total Support & Revenue	641.657 €
Expenses	
Costs and Charges from General Interest Activities	
Staff and consultants	186.279 €
Program Costs Services	507.838 €
Costs and Charges from Financial and Capital Assets	
Related to banking relations	1.311 €
General Support Costs and Charges	
Services	19.173 €
Sundry operating expenses	1.814 €
Total Expenses	716.415 €
Net Assets Comment end	
Chiusura	- 80.067 €

Acknowledgements

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We look forward to continuing to make an impact with your support.

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Our Board who continues to guide us.



Our amazing team, who take on every case and every project with tenacity, diligence and unparalleled passion.



Our members, who have consistently been a driving force in promoting the themes and campaigns that our organisation has supported.



Together we stand

**FOR THE
RIGHTS
OF ALL**

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 **CILD** | Italian Coalition
for Civil Liberties and Rights

Phone || **+39 064506850**

Email || **info@cild.eu**

Mail || **Via Monti di Pietralata 16, 00157, Rome**



ANNUAL REPORT

2023

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CILD - ITALIAN COALITION FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES AND RIGHTS
via Monti di Pietralata, 16 – 00157 ROME – cild.eu – info@cild.eu