

Position Statement, Goals and Objectives

Supporting genital integrity and sexual self-determination:

1. We stand for the right of all human beings and particularly of all children to genital integrity and sexual self-determination. This right is derived from the principles of
 - o human dignity,
 - o physical integrity,
 - o free development of personality,
 - o freedom of religion,
 - o the equality of all people and
 - o protection from violence and abuse,
 as set forth in the following legal works, to which we are committed as the foundations of human coexistence in Germany and worldwide:
 - o the German Constitution,
 - o the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations and
 - o the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Opposing procedures which are not medically necessary:

2. With regard to this universal right to genital integrity and sexual self-determination, we oppose all surgeries on the genitals and interventions in the sexual identity of children and adults which are not either performed out of medical necessity or following the free and informed wish of the person affected, in particular:
 - o all forms of male circumcision for religious, cultural, social, or prophylactic reasons, as well as ostensibly "therapeutic" male circumcisions for wrongfully pathologized phimosis
 - o all other forms of male genital mutilation such as skinning of the penis and slitting the urethra (subincision)
 - o all forms of female genital mutilation, according to the classification of the World Health Organization
 - o all cosmetic surgery on the female ("designer vagina") and male genitalia which are motivated by social pressure
 - o procedures to assign or enforce the gender of intersex people
 - o corrections of congenital malformations such as hypospadias, epispadias or clitoral hypertrophy that are purely cosmetic

Requirements for approvable surgery on the genitals:

3. Surgery on the genitals and interventions in the sexual identity of minors, who are not yet able to recognize the (sexual and other) consequences of such interventions and to consent for themselves, may only be performed if:
 - o they are medically necessary, i.e. if treatment is immediately necessary to restore health,
 - o treatment alternatives are demonstrably unavailable,
 - o the guardians have been fully informed about the risks and potential negative (sexual and other) consequences of the procedure before they consent and
 - o the child or youth has been informed about the operation and included in the decision to the extent appropriate to his / her age.

On adults, surgery may be performed without medical necessity if

- o the affected person consents to the surgery autonomously and without external pressure and
- o after he / she has been fully informed about the risks and possible negative (sexual and other) consequences of the procedure and possible treatment alternatives.

Rejection of the "Circumcision Bill":

4. We reject § 1631 d BGB (the so-called "Circumcision Bill") as adopted by the German Bundestag on 12th December 2012, because it
 - o violates the German Constitution, notably the principles of human dignity and equality,
 - o gives parents free rein to circumcise their male children for any reason,
 - o leaves boys without any protection and deprives them of the option to file a lawsuit when they have reached the age of majority,
 - o inappropriately provides for an exception to the basic requirements for surgery, such as the requirement that it be performed under sterile conditions and with adequate anesthesia, especially when operating on infants and
 - o doesn't provide for any supervision to guarantee that the minimal requirements set forth for the protection of the children are met.

We advocate and call for legislation that protects people from violations of their physical (especially genital) integrity and sexual self-determination regardless of their gender, age and origin. This includes a ban of medically unnecessary circumcisions of minors.

Achieving our objectives through education, support of affected persons, cooperation and political pressure:

5. To achieve our goals, we want to **educate society**, particularly parents, about the value of intact genitals and the risks and consequences of surgery on the genitals, including male circumcision. To this end, we want to campaign against minimization and misinformation and promote a critical awareness of true medical indications for surgery on the genitals.
6. We want to be a **contact point** for people who are affected by surgery on their genitals, including men who suffer from their circumcisions, and to encourage them to speak about it.
7. We support the wish of **intersex people** to be allowed to self-determine their gender identities and to be socially accepted with these identities.
8. We want to address organizations, seek out **alliance partners** and ask children's and human rights organizations to strictly oppose medically unnecessary surgery on the genitals of non-consenting persons (including the forced circumcision of boys), instead of denying those children their solidarity in the name of "tolerance". This applies to associations and organizations based in Germany as well as those abroad.
9. With the help of alliance partners and experts, such as doctors and lawyers, we want to exert **pressure on the government** to recognize the unconstitutionality of § 1631 BGB d (the "Circumcision Bill") and to repeal it.
10. We are not against religions or against religious people. Rather, we seek to **work with people from cultures and religions** which practice circumcision or other forms of genital mutilation and who are already questioning these practices. We want to encourage them and support them in bringing about change in their communities, to end the forced circumcision of children and ensure the free choice of adults.