

There is no room for hatred and misanthropy!

We strongly object to any attempts to misconstrue our efforts on behalf of the rights of all children to genital self-determination, or to misuse these efforts as a basis to profess or carry out hatred toward religious and cultural communities.

We urge all participants to clearly distance themselves from generalizations and animosity and to be absolutely clear that this is solely about the well-being, bodily integrity, and right to self-determination of the child.

Appealing for the WORLDWIDE DAY OF GENITAL AUTONOMY are:

- AKTION REGEN – Verein für Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (Austria)
- Attorneys for the rights of the child (USA)
- Australasian Institute for Genital Autonomy – AIGA Inc. (Australia)
- Bay Area Intactivists (USA)
- beschneidungsforum.de – das Forum zum Thema Beschneidung (Germany)
- Berufsverband der Kinder- und Jugendärzte BVKJ (Germany)
- Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Säkulare Grüne (Germany)
- Canadian Foreskin Awareness Project (Canada)
- Children's Health & Human Rights Partnership (Canada)
- Deutsches Kinderbulletin – jedem Kind eine Chance / Politische Kindermedizin (Germany)
- Doctors Opposing Circumcision (D.O.C.) – Physicians for Genital Integrity (Seattle, USA)
- Droit au corps (France)
- Facharbeitskreis Beschneidungsbetroffener im MOGiS e.V. – Eine Stimme für Betroffene (Germany)
- Forum Männer in Theorie und Praxis der Geschlechterverhältnisse (Germany)
- Genital Autonomy (UK)
- Genital Autonomy America (USA) (formerly NOCIRC)
- Giordano-Bruno-Stiftung (Germany)
- GSSG: Gemeinnützige Stiftung Sexualität und Gesundheit (Germany)
- (I)NFACT – Internationale Aktion gegen die Beschneidung von Mädchen und Frauen e.V. (Germany)
- IBKA – Internationaler Bund der Konfessionslosen und Atheisten (Germany)
- Ibn Rushd-Goethe Moschee (Germany)
- Initiative gegen Gewalt und sexuellen Missbrauch an Kindern und Jugendlichen e.V. (Germany)
- Intact Africa (Africa)
- Intact America (USA)
- Intact Denmark (Denmark)
- Intact Kenya (Kenya)
- Intact Switzerland (Switzerland)
- Intaction (USA)
- intaktiv e.V. – eine Stimme für genitale Selbstbestimmung (Germany)
- Jews Against Circumcision (USA)
- KAHAL (Israel)
- Lessan e.V. (Germany)
- Männer gegen MännerGewalt e. V. (Germany)
- Men Do Complain (UK)
- MOGiS e.V. – "Eine Stimme für Betroffene" (Germany)
- NORM-UK / 15 Square (UK)
- Partei der Humanisten (Germany)
- Piratenpartei Deutschland (Germany)
- pro familia Nordrhein-Westfalen (Germany)
- Pro Kinderrechte CH (Switzerland)
- Projekt 100 % MENSCH (Germany)
- Protect the Child (Israel)
- Säkulare Flüchtlingshilfe e.V. (Germany)
- Sexpo (Finland)
- TABU International e.V. – Gegen Genitalverstümmelung, für Frauen- und Kinderrechte (Germany)
- TERRE DES FEMMES – Menschenrechte für die Frau e.V. (Germany)
- The VMMC Experience Project (Kenya, Uganda)
- Verband medizinischer Fachberufe e.V. (Germany)
- WADI e.V. (Germany)
- Your Whole Baby (USA)
- Zentralrat der Ex-Muslime (Germany)

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May 7th: Cologne Ruling's 6th Birthday WORLDWIDE DAY OF GENITAL AUTONOMY

This will be the sixth anniversary of the "Cologne Ruling". In 2012, for the first time, a court explicitly granted boys the right to genital self-determination by evaluating a medically unnecessary foreskin removal ("circumcision") of a boy as an offense. This decision has since become a worldwide symbol for the self-determination of children regardless of gender, ancestry or religion.

This year's main focus is:

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION IN ASIA

Millions of girls are victims of genital mutilation in Asia. Most of these cases are religiously motivated and are carried out by medical personnel. The people responsible are distancing themselves explicitly from African practices with regard to the form of the intervention. The 7th of May takes a closer look: because he stands for "zero tolerance" for violation of children's rights!

The "World Day of Genital Autonomy" calls for:

- **Increased measures also against so-called "less invasive" and medicalized forms of female genital mutilation, protection of the vulnerable and support for those affected worldwide.**
- **Adherence to and implementation of the UN-Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 2 (protection against discrimination); Article 3 (preference of children's well-being); and Article 24 Paragraph 3 (abolishment of traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children).**
- **Legislative initiatives worldwide that provide for the protection of all children, regardless of gender, from non-therapeutic genital operations.**
- **Protection of children with atypical sex characteristics from genital surgery and intervention without absolute medical indication.**
- **An immediate stop to group or mass circumcision of minor males (boys) for alleged HIV prevention in African countries.**
- **Public research and education on the consequences of non-therapeutic genital surgery on children in its different forms and social contexts.**

Seyran Ateş,

Ibn Rushd-Goethe Mosque,
Berlin (Germany):

"I am committed against any circumcision of children because I consider their right to bodily integrity worth protecting. This applies to girls as well as to boys. Every person can make a free and self-determined personal decision to have surgical procedures performed on themselves when they are adults. Especially male circumcision is still trivialized. Although female genital mutilation is generally proscribed in society, still a lot more awareness-raising work is needed, especially in Muslim communities. Circumcision of children is a criminal assault and it is about time for religious leaders to take determined action against it."

Mikael Aktor,
Vice Chairman
Intact Denmark:

"2018 will be an exciting year in Scandinavia. Intact Denmark has proposed a law that introduces a gender-neutral 18 years minimum age for medically unnecessary circumcisions. The proposal is supported by the midwives' and health visitors' professional organizations as well as by the Danish Family Planning Association and will be treated by the Parliament when 50.000 persons support it. In Iceland parliament members have advanced a proposal to extend the prohibition of genital mutilation of girls to all children. For me as a circumcised Jew, the mere fact that two European national parliaments will now have to deal with such laws is a huge step forward."

Topic 2017: Together against female genital mutilation – Protecting girls in Asia from FGM

Far too little is known about female genital mutilation (FGM) in Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, India, Pakistan, Iraq, Iran, Oman, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Because of known cases in the Muslim sect Dawoodi Bohra which originates from India and Pakistan a doctor in the USA is currently impeached in a lawsuit. As in Africa, the practice is a taboo topic in Asia, is treated extremely discreetly and similarly "justified": the girls should be "pure" or their sexuality controlled. This practice is often considered a religious duty in Asia and is performed in clinics by doctors. Type I and Type IV are the most common. Here, either the clitoris (or the clitoris foreskin) is removed or other practices such as pricking of the clitoris, the "smoking" of the vagina or a swabbing with a cotton ball instead. Media reports deny that this is a case of mutilation – which clearly contradicts WHO statements.

Female genital mutilation is classified by the World Health Organization (WHO) into four categories, from light to extreme. According to the WHO, female genital mutilation refers to all practices in which the outer genitalia are partly or completely removed, as well as to all other injuries to the female genitalia that are not medically indicated. Depending on the motives and category of cutting, the intervention leads to health, psychological, social and economic consequences for the affected parties. Female genital mutilation is internationally considered a human rights violation; gender specific violence; child abuse; and bodily assault, and is explicitly illegal in most countries. Female genital mutilation is a prevalent procedure: it is practised in 30 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa as well as in South-, South-East- and Central Asia Worldwide, approximately 200 million women and girls are affected. More of 500.000 of them live in Europe; 58.000 in Germany alone, 3 million women and girls in Africa, 180.000 in Europe and 13.000 in Germany remain at risk every year. The procedure is commonly done between the ages of 4 and 12 years.

Education leads to protection of boys

This trivializing term stands for the amputation of the foreskin of the penis, which involves the loss of approximately 50 % of the entire penile skin – including the parts most sensitive for sexual stimulation – and irreversibly alters the natural physiology of the penis and its appearance- Also possible psychological late effects are increasingly documented.

Currently, about 600 million to 1.2 billion males worldwide are affected, based on tradition, religion or, most recently, highly negligent HIV prevention programs in Africa. Foreskin amputation has become a mass phenomenon only in cultures and societies where it is performed on children, meaning without the mature and informed consent of the person who solely has to endure the execution and live with the consequences forever. This is particularly the case in the US and parts of Africa and Asia. Little known in the Western world is that around 65,000 boys in Africa are likely to be seriously injured every year and that several hundred boys do not survive this ritual.

Diseases of the foreskin make a foreskin removal medically unavoidable only in rare cases. A snug foreskin does not constitute a medical condition in children and adolescents, if a boy has no painful obstruction, which is a rare condition. Normally the opening becomes wider during puberty. In instances of an actual medical condition, most cases can be treated non-invasively.

Suffering and trauma of intersex-children due to genital surgery without their own consent

One or two out of every 1000 children are born with "atypical" sexual characteristics. Time and again this leads to early genital operations to "assign" a gender, and to hormonal treatments before capacity to consent. The affected persons often report feeling altered and resentful that their input was never sought about their own sex.

All German paediatric associations currently recommend delaying those measures to an age where the person affected is able to give informed consent. On the international level, also, the technical discussion is moving in this direction. However, physical integrity and self-determination must still be integrated into practice in many places.

For 20 years, people affected have been publicly protesting these surgeries, which they describe in terms of fundamental human rights violations, as being traumatising and as destructive to sexual sensation. These are allegations that are also backed by human rights committees like the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC).

The Cologne Ruling

On May 7th, 2012, the Regional Court of Cologne ruled that a non-therapeutic "circumcision" of a boy who is unable to give consent qualifies as an assault. This was logically consistent because, in Germany, children had rights to an unharmed body and a non-violent upbringing – why should these rights exclude genitalia, and exclusively male ones at that?

The German Bundestag decided on 12.12.2012, in a rushed proceeding in response to the Cologne ruling, that parents can assent for any reason to a "circumcision" of their boys. This is a complete contradiction to the full legal protection of children and is discordant with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in multiple ways.

Our info-page contains onward links to specific literature from Germany, Turkey, Africa, the USA and other countries; case histories of affected people; films; educational books and brochures; and videos from speeches by international scientists.

For more information, movies, articles,
books please visit:
<https://genitale-selbstbestimmung.de/info/>



Dr. Sigrid Peter,
Vice President BVKJ – German
Pediatric Association:

"The physical and mental integrity of the child is paramount (UN-KR). This applies equally to boys and girls. There is no medical reason to remove the intact foreskin of boys who are minors and therefore unable to consent to the procedure. Genital mutilation of girls is not based on any medical justification and leads to a lifelong painful impairment of the sexual life as well as serious complications for pregnancy and childbirth. All pediatric associations therefore oppose the non-medical circumcision of underage boys and any genital mutilation of girls. "Improving the protection of children, consistently combating violence of any kind," the German CDU/CSU and SPD coalition paper states. We now expect action and not just declarations of intent."

Charlotte Weil,
TERRE DES FEMMES – Human
Rights for Women, Department
Female Genital Mutilation
(Germany):

"Female genital mutilation is widely perceived as an African practice. However, it is hardly known that FGM/C is also practiced in many Asian countries. The medicalized form of the practice and the associated trivialization is particularly common there. All the more important it is to draw attention to this topic! Every genital mutilation is a grave violation of children's and human rights. TERRE DES FEMMES has been working for decades to safeguard the right to bodily integrity and self-determination of every child."