



ANNUAL REPORT
2018

Transparent z.s.

IČ: 044 70 729

Spolek TRANS*PARENT organisation works towards
social justice, the promotion of
trans rights and positive social
changes for trans people.

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The main goals of TRANS*PARENT

1. Creating spaces for transgender and genderqueer people could meet, which could also serve for the purposes of other LGBTQI organisations and initiatives
2. Organising support groups and providing psychological, social and legal advice free of charge
3. Spreading awareness about trans issues through debates, workshops, happenings and online presence
4. Working with the media and the public to build a positive, authentic and undistorted image of trans people and their lives
5. Performing research activities in the transgender context
6. Opening dialogues on difficult trans issues, organising debates, events and meetings both within the trans community and with people outside of it
7. Building an active community of trans* people regardless of their gender self-identification
8. Working to provide job opportunities for transgender people who may have trouble finding a job due to their gender identity.



Our guiding principles:

We believe that gender diversity is an integral part of every society and as such it should be supported, protected and celebrated.

We believe in the right of self-determination, we stand against exoticisation, pathologisation and the classification of transgender identities as mental disorders.

We believe that trans people have the right to live without violence, stigmatisation, discrimination and unequal treatment in their personal, professional and social lives.





Trans*parent z.s. was established as a lawfully registered organisation on 19 November 2015. However, as an unofficial body, it was created in the spring of 2015 by a group of trans activists in reaction to the need for a change in policy to achieve the equality of transgender people. The organisation works towards social justice, the promotion of trans rights and positive social changes for trans women, trans men and other non-cisgender people in the Czech Republic. As such, Trans*parent tries to promote the understanding and acceptance of trans people through various efforts both on a social and a legal level.

In the third year of its existence, Trans*parent expanded on its support, advocacy and awareness-raising activities and organised several one-off and long-term projects, either by itself or in conjunction with other LGBTQI groups and foundations.



SUPPORT



SUPPORT GROUPS

Last year, in collaboration with volunteer facilitators, we continued our long-term project of regular self-support meetings for trans people, which provide a safe space for the sharing of emotions, experiences, hopes and fears. Trans people are provided with support regardless of their gender identity and self-identification. Surrounded by people who are going through similar experiences, we share our questions and worries and try to find answers. The support group is open to all trans people and those close to them, it's provided for free and typically happens twice a month on Tuesdays.

Throughout the year, we had six different people work as facilitators.

In 2018 we organised 28 group meetings, two of which were held at the weekend and two held as part of the Prague Pride week, with an overall turnout of 160 people (counting both repeated and one-time attendees). The average number of participants per session is 10.

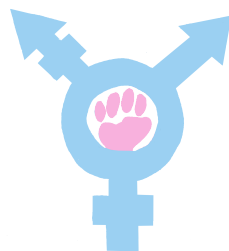
QUEER AND TRANS YOUTH WORKSHOPS

A series of creative and sessions intended for trans and queer youth who are questioning their identity or sexual orientation or who already identify as genderqueer/trans/bi/gay or lesbian. 12 such workshops took place last year on a monthly basis under the banner of Queer and Trans Youth and as part of a project initiated by Prague Pride. A total of 132 teenagers aged 15-20 (repeated participants) attended the workshops during the last year, forming a core group of 20 participants. Together, we created a short movie, a photo-documentary cycle as well as music recordings under the guidance of artists who provided tutoring.



TRANS KIDS AND THEIR FAMILIES

In 2018, we also continued to offer support to trans kids and their parents through regular support groups, launched in 2017 in collaboration with Dr Hana Fifková. They provide a unique opportunity for kids aged 6 to 12 to meet and play together while their parents exchange their stories and experiences. These two separate groups are led by a team of experienced facilitators. Altogether, seven bi-monthly meetings were organised during the year.



PROVIDING ADVICE

Throughout last year we have also continued to provide counsel and support to individuals via e-mail, Skype or personal consultations. An increasing number of people have been using this service compared with the previous years. They asked a variety of questions, such as those regarding their own identity, practical advice regarding legal name change or choosing the right sexologist, but there have also been some crisis situations. Last year, we had six people contact us this way.



ADVOCACY

In the third year of its existence, Trans*parent increased its efforts in the field of trans advocacy, with regard to the opportunity to promote a change of the current situation coming in the form of a proposed amendment to the Czech law on legal gender recognition. Under current legislation, Czech trans people who want to have their legal gender marker changed are required to undergo surgery that would make it impossible for them to reproduce – de facto to be surgically sterilised – and, if applicable, they are required to get divorced or have their civil partnership dissolved, among many other unnecessary complications. We believe that, given the recent ruling of the European Court for Human Rights as well as of the Committee of the Social Charter, which declared forced sterilisation to be against human rights, the Czech Republic will eventually join many other European countries in taking steps towards improving the rights of trans people, and we ourselves are working towards achieving these changes.

During this important law-amendment process, our team took part in negotiations with the relevant Ministries, the Czech Government's Committee for Sexual Minorities and its Human Rights Committee. Through cooperation with the Sexual Minorities Committee, we presented the Human Rights Committee headed by the Czech Prime Minister with a proposal related to the suggested legislation changes that was based on the concept of the so-called self-determination, i.e. offering the possibility to change one's gender marker in official documents without the requirement of a surgical treatment/sterilisation and also without the need to obtain a diagnosis. The diagnosis requirement would reinforce the gatekeeping role of Czech sexologists, who are largely incompetent to decide on the transition of their transgender clients.

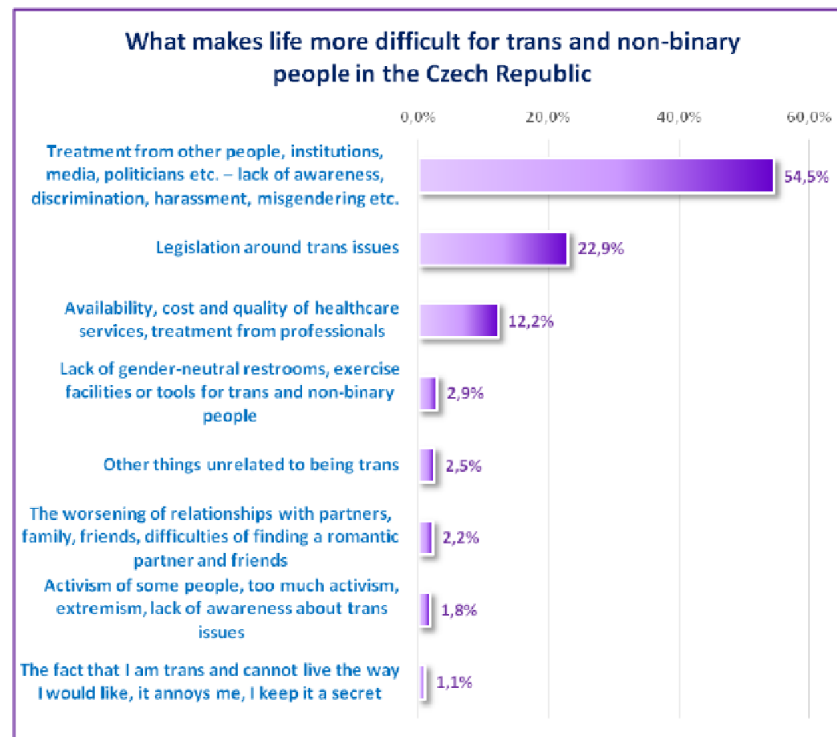


RESEARCH

WISHES AND CONCERNS OF TRANS PEOPLE

In 2018, we were able to conduct the historically largest research into the transgender community with the financial aid of ILGA Europe as part of their Creating Opportunities project, and thus gain an insight into the hopes and concerns of Czech trans people.

The data was collected between the 7th of June and the 11th of October 2018. We received 396 responses to the 27-question survey – a number which exceeded our expectations. The areas covered included acceptance by the family, colleagues and the public, satisfaction with the provided healthcare services, opinions on the current legislation and proposed changes, etc. The project draws attention to the problems of the trans community that are rarely voiced, and it illustrates the situation of non-binary persons in our country. A printed publication of the research findings is planned to be released in the first half of 2019. The publication will be used for the purposes of workshops, communication with sexologists and for general awareness-raising on the situation of trans persons in the Czech Republic.



COMMUNITY BUILDING

In 2018, we ventured on a nationwide community-building project, visiting 11 cities and towns across the country (in addition to our regular events in Prague). In most of these places trans people could meet together for the first time in history and share their experience and visions for the future of the Czech trans community outside of Prague. In these places we started local groups, four of which have continued to meet up on a regular basis, providing a long-term opportunity for dozens of trans people to meet together in their hometowns. More and more members are also joining the Facebook groups that were created for each of the individual groups.

Over the course of 2018 we visited the following cities: Brno, Ostrava, Olomouc, Zlín, České Budějovice, Hradec Králové, Karlovy Vary, Ústí nad Labem, Plzeň, Liberec and Jihlava.



AWARENESS-RAISING

Workshops

In 2018, we continued to offer workshops to raise general awareness of transgender issues tailored for schools, organisations working with transgender clients or dealing with trans issues, and employers. Three of the most notable sensitivity training took place in the form of interactive workshops for the organisations In-lustitia (in exchange for training provided by them), Prague Pride and the SAP company. Starting with a basic explanation of trans-specific terminology and the situation in terms of transitioning and trans rights in the Czech Republic and in the world, followed by an interactive portion of the workshop and a discussion, we move on to recommendations on how to address and support trans people in the relevant context.

Families in transition

In February of 2018, Transparent in conjunction with PROUD organised a moderated discussion aimed at mapping out the situation that is very timely for many adults and children. Our attention was focused on family issues, parenting and reproduction rights from the perspective of trans persons and their experience that brought to light many problems related to transitioning, parental rights and the right to family life.

Gender, Queer & Language: presentation by Vít Kolek

Another notable event held in the previous year was a presentation by Vít Kolek who specialises in the linguistic approach to gender, gender-neutral means of expression and possibilities of referring to non-heteronormative persons. The presentation was followed by a lively discussion about the new possibilities of using gender neutral language.

Trans*parent at Prague Pride

Again in 2018, Prague Pride was an interesting opportunity to talk to the wider LGBT community. Trans*parent promoted trans awareness at an information booth at Střelecký ostrov during the Pride Week and on Letná, the final destination of the Pride parade.



In addition to a workshop on making trans-themed placards and decorations for the parade, the most interesting part of our programme was a series of activities run by the Queer and Trans Youth, specifically a presentation of the artworks created by the participants over the course of the previous year, accompanied by another part of the series of creative and movement workshops.

Our programme held as part of Prague Pride also included a meeting for relatives of trans people and a board-game playing session. We also organised a FB event and joined the parade together with our followers and friends.



Transgender Day of Remembrance

Last November, we once again met and joined people across the world in remembering and honouring the victims of transphobia during a vigil at the Parukářka squat. Over forty people came to the vigil itself, lit a candle and read through the long list of names of those who fell victim to transphobia, while many more showed their support online.

Other events

Much like the previous years, 2018 was also brimming with events bringing together the trans community. Trans people had 13 opportunities to spend time together in Prague, including our popular board-game sessions, day trips, picnics, clothes swaps as well as a special event provided to us by a gender-neutral hairdressing salon in Prague, a fitness workshop, geocaching outing and an evening with a bonfire.



ORGANISATION STRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP

Our group is 100% trans-led as our main task is direct support, mobilisation and empowerment of the Czech trans community. Our priority is to have the non-cis spectrum represented and included in the decision-making process so we newly expanded our Board to consist of five members.

The original three-member Board stepped down in December due to the inability of two of its members to continue to fulfill their responsibilities. At an Annual Meeting, a new Board was elected, composed of Helena Zikmundová, Ema Lorca, Dorian Klimáček, Jáchym Erben and Viktor Heumann.

By the end of the year, the organisation had 42 registered members, about 15 of which are active as volunteers and involved in the organisation's operation.

Due to lack of structural funding, Trans*parent has no paid staff.

Organisation scheme

Board: Helena Zikmundová, Ema Lorca, Dorian Klimáček, Jáchym Erben and Viktor Heumann

Director: Viktor Heumann

PR Manager: Helena Zikmundová

Support Coordinator: Adam Šimek

Advocacy Coordinator: Jáchym Erben

Research Coordinator: Karel Pavlica



WHAT MAKES US HAPPY



We're happy about the positive response from the public, the media and our outside supporters. Individuals as well as organisations are coming to us with proposals for collaboration and our Facebook page is at 3000 followers after less than three years.

Our proposal pushing for self-determination was approved by the Sexual Minorities Committee to be presented to the Human Rights Committee of the Czech Government.

We travelled the country and met with local trans and non-binary people in 11 cities outside Prague. We initiated four functional groups providing mutual support at the local level.

We managed to collect data from 396 persons as part of the historically first research of the Czech transgender community.

Similarly, we are very pleased with the success of our regular support groups and the increasing interest in them from the local trans community.

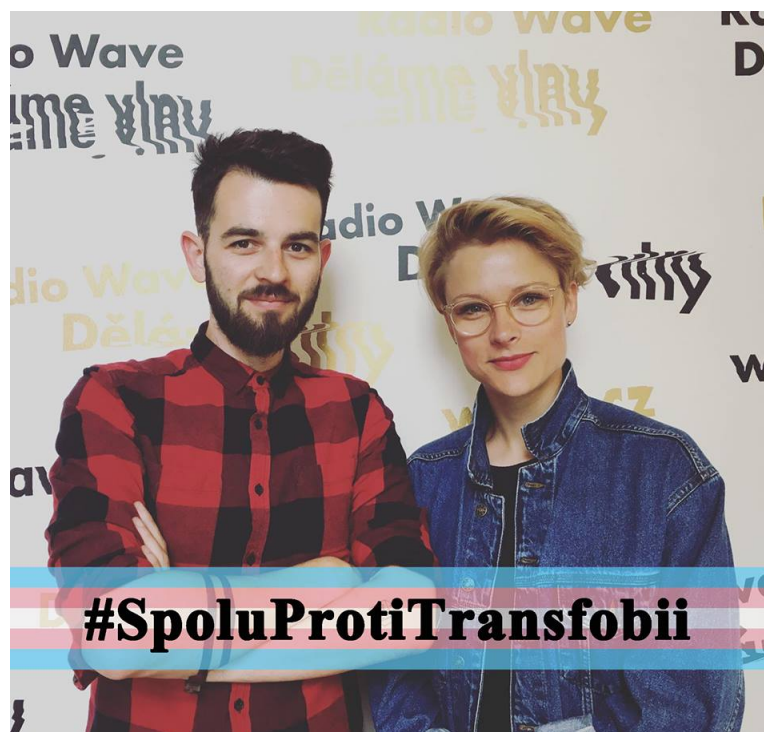


OUTPUTS

In terms of advocacy, we were involved in the process of settlement of comments to the LGR law amendment proposed by the Ministry of Justice and we produced a proposal based on self-determination that was approved by the Sexual Minorities Committee to be presented to the Human Rights Committee of the Czech Government.

Six reports from a research survey entitled “The Concerns and Wishes of the Czech Trans Community” were published on our website, summarising the situation of transgender persons in the Czech Republic.

Those who did not have the chance to take part in our debate on Families in Transition can watch a video recording of the whole event on Facebook.



MEDIA OUTPUT

In the past, media outlets who wanted to publish content related to trans issues used to rely heavily on sexologists and sensationalise the topic while reducing trans people to a mere curiosity. Thankfully, the situation has been slowly but surely improving and in 2018 we were able to contribute to and even produce articles, interviews, TV and radio content which better promoted the advancement of trans rights in our country. Our members were interviewed by outlets such as the HateFree online platform, Radio Wave (part of Czech Radio) and Czech Television. Altogether we were part of nine major outputs in national media.

We also managed to successfully reach out to the trans community and the general public through our social media, especially our Facebook campaigns for the Transgender Day of Visibility and the International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia. On both occasions, we prompted our followers to send in their selfies with hashtags related to the respective important dates and to add a personal quotation or message. Within a few days, we had received 53 photos from Czech trans people and 166 photos from allies across the country. This proved to us not only that there is a number of trans people in Czech Republic who long to be seen in their authenticity and embrace the fact of being transgender with pride, but also that there are cis allies who consider trans rights to be an important cause, even though it is rarely discussed on any national platform.



PARTNERSHIPS AND COOPERATION



Another important output for us is our continuing as well as newly-established cooperation with local and international partners. On the local level, we work with the Czech government, while on the international level it's mainly our work with the pan-European organisation TGEU. Two representatives from Trans*parent, Viktor and Dorian, attended the seventh annual TGEU Council held in Antwerp, where more than 200 people from various support and activist organisations all across Europe got together to share their experiences and future plans and to attend workshops and lectures on various topics related to trans activism, such as legal gender recognition, non-binary identities, intersectionality and intersex rights. Our cooperation with ILGA-Europe has intensified – we contributed to their webinar on self-determination and again took part in their annual conference held in Brussels. We also put together projects with other Czech LGBTQ organisations and initiatives including Prague Pride. Tran*sparent's Director Viktor Heumann had the opportunity to join the Advocacy Summit organised by the most successful US LGBT+ initiative the Human Rights Campaign in Washington, presenting our advocacy efforts. Over the course of the year, we organised two workshops in collaboration with In-Iustitia, focused on hate crime and hate speech especially in relation to transgender identities, and we also teamed up to monitor acts motivated by transphobia. We established contact with the Forum for Human Rights which provides help and counselling in cases of discrimination of trans persons and also works towards the advancement of trans rights on a nationwide scale. We plan to continue working with them in the future. The East-West Rainbow Bridges allowed us to travel to Czech and Moravian cities and meet trans people locally.



TRANS*PARENT'S FINANCES IN 2018

In 2018, Trans*parent z.s. obtained funds for projects planned in a one or two-year horizon. Together with smaller individual donations, these funds enabled the basic operation of the organisation. The total amount of funding obtained was 618,000 CZK and the overall expenditures were 299,000 CZK. For the first time, our support section was provided with funding for their regular support groups for adults and teenagers, including a regular supervision for the facilitators, amounting to 100,000 CZK. Queer and Trans Youth was supported by 106,000 CZK from the FRIDA initiative. A grant amounting to 37,500 CZK was provided as a part of the East-West Rainbow Bridges project, allowed us to travel the country and meet trans people locally and found regional groups. For the purposes of the planned campaign against sterilisations, ILGA-Europe provided support amounting to 143,000 CZK. The Open Society Foundations allowed us to boost our advocacy activities in 2018, while in 2019, a publication of research outcomes is to be printed and a conference organised to focus on trans rights in the Czech Republic, all of this is within the framework of CZK 399,000, 60,000 of which was already used in 2018. Our generous donors donated a total of CZK 59,000 that covered our basic administration costs, PR, printed materials and other elementary operating items. In 2018, we also managed to obtain in-kind support from Prague Pride in the form of the possibility to use their office space for Trans*parent's meeting and counselling purposes.



CLOSING STATEMENT

In 2019, Trans*parent will continue its work of positively affecting the issues of concern via awareness-raising, public events, presentations and workshops, working with the media, spreading a positive image of trans people and launching a campaign against sterilisations. We will also meet with journalists and offer them training using our media manual. We want to work with the parents of trans children and teenagers and provide support for both them and their children, possibly helping establish a support network for parents and trans teenagers. We would like to continue our regional community building efforts, if the funding permits. Outside of these new activities, Trans*parent will continue to organise and facilitate support groups in Prague and contribute to major events such as Prague Pride. We will continue working on leisure-time activities to strengthen the cohesion and mutual support within the trans community. We will also continue proactively working in the field of media.



Friends and partners:

TGEU Transgender Europe

ILGA-Europe

Forum for Human Rights

Human Rights Campaign

East-West Rainbow Bridges

Prague Pride

PROUD

In-lustitia

Mezipatra





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~~BINARISM~~

