

WEEKLY UPDATE

18 - 22 April 2016

Week 17

General

The [One World Human Rights Film Festival in Brussels](#) continues. As for OSEPI...

Updates (18-22 April)

• External Policy

18-22 April: Bram participated in a field visit to Kinshasa (DRC) together with the European Network for Central Africa. They are looking into the institutional, political and constitutional challenges of organising elections in the DRC. Analysis will feed into OSEPI-commissioned research and advocacy on the anticipated but stalled electoral process.

21 April: Srdjan and Jonathan Horowitz from OSJI participated in the expert meeting "Towards a European Position of Armed Drones: A Human Rights Approach" organised by TMC Asser Institute, International Centre for Counter-Terrorism-the Hague, International Humanitarian and Criminal Law Platform and Open Society Foundations.

• Internal Policy

19 April: Kersty and Villy, together with MEP Péter Niedermüller launched the OSJI report "[Strategic Litigation Impacts: Roma School Desegregation](#)" at the European Parliament. The event was attended by European Commission (EC) officials (DGs JUST, EAC, REGIO), MEPs assistants, Civil Society Organisations and experts.

19 April: Villy organised a briefing of the infringement¹ unit of the EC on the infringement process against the Czech Republic. OSF colleagues from OSJI, RIO, OSF Prague and a Roma parent from Ostrava attended. The infringement unit will include the recommendations in its assessment of the Czech government.

19-20 April: Anca attended the OECD Integrity Forum in Paris to exchange views on the integrity and ethics of financial systems. She also met with FGP colleagues and discussed ways to advance advocacy efforts regarding the Anti-Money Laundering Directive.

21 April: Our work on Equality and Anti-Discrimination was presented during a presidential portfolio review led by Costanza and Villy. Neil moderated, Emma was the rapporteur, Anca assisted, Marta oversaw the whole process. Participants included Clara, Filip, Julia, Mari, Daphne, Kinga. Despite some technical difficulties the discussion went well. Congratulations to Costanza and Villy.

22 April: Villy attended the DH coordination meeting in Prague organised by RIO to develop a shared goal for the work of OSF on Roma in the Czech Republic between OSEPI, ESP, ECP, RIO, OSJI and HRI.

¹ This week's **EU ARGON ALERT**: what the hell is an 'infringement'? The EU's infringements procedure is laid out [here](#): in short, if a possible infringement of EU law is identified by the Commission or reported in a complaint, the Commission attempts to quickly resolve the underlying problem with the Member State concerned by means of a structured dialogue (EU Pilot). Member States can provide further factual or legal information on a potential case of violation of Union law – the goal being to find a quick solution in compliance with EU law and thus to avoid the need for a formal infringement procedure. If the Member State does not agree with the Commission or fails to implement a solution to rectify the suspected violation of EU law, the Commission can launch a formal infringement procedure. These contain a number of steps foreseen by the Treaties, each of which is laid down in a formal decision.

- **Organisational activities**

18-22 April: Neil was in New York for both OSEPI's and OSIFE's strategy review with the global board committee, Marta joined remotely. Chris was positive about the 'stimulating and persuasive' discussion and thanked us all for all the preparation and attention we have given to the strategy.

Neil attended a discussion on "Hungary and Declining Democratic Values", delivered by Jordi and the Hungarian Helsinki Committee in DC; joined Jonas in a meeting with the Lithuanian Ambassador to the US; and saw George Soros speak at the Asia Society in New York on the Chinese economy. Neil will stay in the US for the SMC retreat, an unexpected meeting with George Soros and the EUSR for the South Caucasus Salber, a debate on trade at the New School and continue meetings with colleagues (including FGP, OSJI, HRI, MENASWA, Burma, and others...)

20 April: Ellen visited the London office to attend a Comms session for administrators of OSF branded accounts and to pick Antonia's brain for the last time.

Hub

A warm welcome to OSF's fellow [Elisabeth Caesens](#) who will be working from our office when not travelling. Elisabeth is looking at hydropower investments deals and revenues in the DRC and is also an expert on mining sector governance.

Upcoming OSEPI Events (25-29 April)

25-29 April: Iskra and Pamela are hosting Larisa Minasyan, Director of the Open Society Foundation Armenia for advocacy meetings on the negotiations of a new EU-Armenia agreement and reforms in the electoral system, anti-discrimination legislation and freedom of assembly.

Upcoming Events of Interest (25-29 April)

25 April: Democracy Reporting International and the European Endowment for Democracy event "[Ukraine in 2016: How to restart reforms.](#)" Pamela and Iskra are participating.

26 April: SWP closed-door discussion "After the Parliamentary Elections in Serbia: One step forward, two steps backwards in the Western Balkans." Srdjan is participating.

27 April: The "89ers: Writing the Next Chapter" organised by a pan-European movement based at the European Institute of LSE aiming to mobilise our generation and to contribute to the public debate on Europe, leading to define and build our common future. Anca is participating.

Feel free to reach out to colleagues attending these events for additional information.

Media Update

Newly learned skills for more Twitter engagement! Anyone up for taking forward the discussion?

