

3 out, proud and visible lesbians defying anti-LGBTI climates

[Blog](#), [Inclusion and Equality](#), [Lesbian](#)

This Lesbian Visibility Day, we meet three activists in Europe and Central Asia who are out, proud and fighting the good fight, despite rising anti-LGBTI sentiment. Their stories, and the objects that symbolise their activism, show how lesbian visibility becomes a radical act of love, courage, and resistance.

Today, in many places, being an out and proud lesbian is an act of resistance. It's also a political stance for a future where every LGBTI person is free to be who they are. For this special Lesbian Visibility Day blog, we asked three lesbian activists from across Europe and Central Asia to reflect on what visibility means to them at this time in the world, and to share a photo with an object that represents it.

“Visibility is presence, but also action.”

Xheni Karaj – Tirana, Albania

Object: A megaphone

“Being a visible lesbian in this moment means refusing to be silenced and erased,” says Xheni Karaj, Executive Director of Aleanca LGBT. “It means standing up with all the love, rage, tenderness, and resistance that visibility carries. Our existence, our love, and our families are not up for debate. They are a force of love, truth, and freedom.”



Xheni's photo shows her with the megaphone she's used for over a decade at Tirana Pride and feminist protests. "It represents the power of visibility not just as presence, but as action; loud, unapologetic, and collective," she says.

"Lesbian visibility challenges stereotypes and shapes the future."

Angelica Polmonari – Modena, Italy

Object: A t-shirt that reads: 'LESBICHEZZA MEZZA BELLEZZA'

Activist and institutional advocate, Angelica Polmonari wears her politics proudly – literally. “In Italian, this irreverent, eye-catching slogan means being lesbian is half the beauty,” she explains. “By showing up in public spaces with this t-shirt, I affirm the person I am and the day-to-day work I do.”



From grassroots to global, Angelica builds spaces where lesbians, including lesbian, bisexual, trans*, intersex, queer, ace/aro women*, and non-binary people can be seen, heard and valued. “Lesbian visibility is still unforeseen in many spaces,” she says. “That’s why it’s so powerful. It rewrites what is possible.”

“A motorcycle for a lesbian nomad.”

Zhanar Sekerbayeva – Almaty, Kazakhstan

Object: a 1986 Suzuki Savage LS650

“Being visible is to be myself,” says Zhanar Sekerbayeva of Feminita Kazakhstan. “I am open to this world which is not only hostile to me, but kind and joyful.”



Zhanar’s photo features her younger self next to her old motorcycle, a symbol of freedom and independence for her. “It’s my horse, my metal friend. I don’t want to exploit animals, so I’ll use a bike. A horse for a lesbian nomad!”

Visibility in Kazakhstan might seem unlikely, but Zhanar says that people often approach her with gratitude. “They take selfies with me, they say thank you. Visibility is love, it’s connection, it’s courage.”

Not everyone can be visible

We understand that not every lesbian is able or feels safe to be open, but for those who can, their presence shines as a light for others who must remain hidden. This is why their visibility deserves to be celebrated. Lesbian visibility is not about being perfect or proving strength or superiority. It is about the simple yet powerful impact of being seen and the positive influence that has on the world. It's the megaphone and the motorcycle; it's the T-shirt with a cheeky slogan, the shared smile in a café, the quiet bravery or representation in places where being visible can come with danger.

And most of all, it's the insistence that lesbians belong. That all lesbians deserve joy, safety, and space to thrive. Happy Lesbian Visibility Day, today and every day.