

Pride as a force of collective power

[Blog](#), [Civil Rights and Freedom](#), [France](#), [Intersectionality](#), [Pride](#)

Born from the fight against police violence and rooted in the struggles of marginalised communities, Pride des Banlieues is reclaiming Pride as a space of radical resistance, collective care, and strength in solidarity.

“More than ever, Prides are important. With all the anti-trans, anti-LGBTI, anti-women attacks we’re facing, Prides are spaces of revolutionary anger. They are not just celebrations; they’re spaces where we bring forward the struggles that are furthest from centres of power.” (Gilliane, Pride des Banlieues)

With this blog series, we’re sharing insights from the work of LGBTI organisations tackling injustice, racism, and the unique challenges faced by racialised LGBTI communities in Europe. We hope their stories and practices will inspire and resonate. We believe that solutions and approaches that include a few will pave the way and point to the solutions for many. You can read the previous blog in the series [here](#).

Pride des Banlieues began in 2017, rooted in the aftermath of police violence against Théo Luhaka, a young Black man in Aulnay-sous-Bois.

“At the start, it was just a few young people from the University of Saint-Denis who said, ‘We can’t just stand by and do nothing,’” Gilliane, coordinator of Pride des Banlieues, recalls. “They mobilised around what the community needed at that moment – clothing distribution, solidarity actions – and it evolved from there.”

Two years later, the group organised their first Pride march in the suburbs^[1], responding to the glaring absence of suburban representation in traditional Pride events.

“The first march was really special,” says Gilliane. “People came because it was the first Pride happening in the banlieues. It was about making visible the people and the struggles that are often erased.”

From a small collective to a powerful movement

Since then, Pride des Banlieues has grown from a small collective into a powerful movement, with 90 volunteers, three salaried staff, and a year-round programme of activities.

“We started with just one annual event. Today, we have between eight and ten different working groups, around 90 volunteers, and a growing structure. We’re building something sustainable.”

This expansion has been strategic. Instead of scattering resources across many small events, Pride des Banlieues focus their energy on major projects and strengthening internal community support. Their structures reflect a deep commitment to collective care, political action, and community empowerment.

According to Gilliane, “Our main goal now is twofold: to fight for rights for our communities, and to be a supportive space internally for our members. We’ve even created wellbeing teams focused on preventing activist burnout.”

Prides are spaces of revolutionary anger

Pride des Banlieues' political work is rooted in the belief that Pride must remain a site of radical resistance.

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Intersectionality is not just a buzzword for Pride des Banlieues – it's lived practice. Coming from a context where police violence, racism, and queerphobia are deeply intertwined, their movement consistently centres those most marginalised.

“For us, intersectionality means stepping back and recognising that there are realities we might not fully understand, but we must centre the people who are most affected. If the most discriminated among us are not free, none of us are truly free.”

Finding ways to resist and persist

In the face of rising far-right politics and shrinking civic space in France, the Pride des Banlieues are committed to resilience.

“Our priority is to endure. Even if we have to shrink, we must survive. We know funding is going to get harder because we're seen as 'too radical', but we will find ways to resist and persist.”

Looking ahead, Pride des Banlieues aspires to deepen their political advocacy and build stronger alliances with other marginalised groups, including those beyond the LGBTI movement.

“We are opening more and more to working with collectives that are not necessarily queer, but who share the same fights. Intersectionality is about recognising common struggles and building solidarity across movements.”

Gilliane concludes with a simple yet powerful message: “Join us on 7 June for our next Pride! And if you can, [support us](#) – every contribution helps us keep building this movement.”

Pride des Banlieues reminds us that Pride is not just an event. It is a call to action, a demand for justice, and a living testament to the strength and beauty of communities fighting back against oppression.

Read our latest addition to our free LGBTI learning resource centre, [The Hub](#), on how to organise your Pride as a protest.

[1] A “banlieue” in French is a suburb of a large city, hence, the title of the group and the Pride they organise