

Solidarity in action: How racialised LGBTI activists are leading the way

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Across Europe, racialised LGBTI activists are redefining solidarity, not as a token gesture, but as a lifeline, a political act, and a practice of care. From fighting deportations to challenging power structures, their work offers a vision for a more just and transformative LGBTI movement.

“Solidarity is a technology of tenderness. It’s love. It’s protection. It’s grace. First to ourselves. Because we, as human beings, we always share what we are filled with.” (Faris Cuchi Gezahegn, Afro Rainbow Austria and House of Guramayle)

“To be radical, [solidarity as politics of affinity] has to be structural. That means dismantling colonisation, racism, LGBTI-phobia. It’s about redistributing discourse, resources, power.” (Pancho Godoy Vega, Colectivo Migrantes Transgresorxs)

With this new 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](#).

For this blog, we’re shifting our focus to solidarity. What does it mean to racialised LGBTI communities? How is it understood, lived, and practised? And what would it mean for the broader LGBTI movement to engage in solidarity in a truly radical and transformative way?

To explore this, we spoke with three queer racialised groups: Queerstion Media (Sweden), Afro Rainbow Austria, and Migrantes Transgresorxs (Spain). Their stories are both deeply personal yet undeniably political.

Solidarity as a Lifeline

“I am a product of solidarity,” says Purity K Tumukwasibwe, Executive Director of [Queerstion Media](#). “I became an activist by default. I was advocating for myself because otherwise my rights were just completely taken away from me.” From surviving police violence in Uganda and Kenya to being supported by a network of queer activists and allies in Europe, Purity’s journey is an example of how solidarity can be a lifeline, a practice that literally saves lives.

She shared a recent story of advocating for a fellow trans refugee in Sweden who was facing deportation to Uganda. “Everybody said that if the migration services decided on that, then it was over. But we said, ‘Let’s try’. I was so impressed by how everybody came on board.” Through a petition, media outreach, and institutional pressure, united in solidarity, they changed the outcome. The woman was granted residence in Sweden and permitted to stay. “When I see these members we support, who we come together for, I feel like I have contributed

to a better world,” says Purity.

A Technology of Tenderness

For Faris Cuchi Gezahegn, member of [Afro Rainbow Austria](#) and co-founder of House of Guramayle, solidarity is both a political act and a spiritual practice. “To exist in this world as the person that I am, I am the manifestation of solidarity,” they say. Faris speaks of the collective effort that ensured their survival as a queer Ethiopian activist forced to flee, and how those acts of support were never transactional, but rooted in mutual care.

For Faris, solidarity isn’t about identity politics or rigid definitions. “It’s a technology of tenderness,” they explain. “It’s love. It’s protection. It’s grace. First to ourselves. Because we, as human beings. We always share what we are filled with.”

Yet, Faris also sees an urgent need for transformation within the LGBTI movement itself. “We harm one another. We are often encircled by the violence projected onto us, and we replicate it – in our accountability practices, in our scarcity mindsets, in how we treat one another.” Their call is for radical healing: to resist punitive impulses and lead with softness, honesty, and vulnerability.

Beyond Solidarity Towards Structural Change

The collective [Migrantes Transgresorxs](#) challenge the word ‘solidarity’. “We prefer to talk about the politics of affinity,” says Alex Aguirre Sánchez. “Solidarity carries a violent historical weight. It comes from religious charity, and religion has been violent for us.”

Instead, they emphasise ancestral bonds and community-to-community alliances. “We stay together, and together we are stronger,” says Kimy/Leticia Rojas. “It’s about sharing food, music, lived experience, and ancestral knowledge.”

Pancho Godoy Vega adds: “To be radical, it has to be structural. That means dismantling colonisation, racism, LGBTI-phobia. It’s about redistributing discourse, resources, power.” The group, formed in Madrid in 2009, has always intertwined the personal and political – fighting for trans migrants, critiquing whiteness in LGBTI spaces, building alliances from the bottom up.

All the activists featured in today’s blog share this in common: they call for a solidarity that is not superficial or symbolic, but material, embodied and rooted in justice. It means funding grassroots work. Sharing platforms. Redistributing power. Above all, it means healing.

As Purity puts it: “There is always going to be two sides of that coin, those with resources, and those at the margins shouting that we are struggling. Bridging that gap means planning together. It means putting grassroots like ours on the agenda.”