

ACTIVITY REPORT

2025



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Welcome

We are proud to present TGEU's 2025 Activity Report — a testament to our members' and team's incredible achievements during what has been one of the most challenging years in our organisation's history.

As a movement, we faced unprecedented political hostilities and funding constraints. We have witnessed how the expansion and institutionalization of anti-gender movements across Europe and Central Asia have translated into increasingly punitive anti-trans legislation, and into the inaccessibility to basic care and needs as healthcare, education, food, housing. We began the year confronting severe funding cuts affecting especially trans, migrant and other human rights organisations worldwide, impacting both our membership and TGEU's programmes. We faced this crisis in full solidarity with member organisations and allies, building new coalitions and exploring new sources of funding to sustain the vital work.

In September, we experienced the devastating loss of our beloved Executive Director, Ymania Brown. Her passing leaves an immeasurable void in our movement, our team, and our hearts. As a leader and a powerful voice for trans communities everywhere,

Ymania's legacy lives on in every law changed, every life saved, and every trans person who finds strength and hope because of the ground she helped us claim.

Despite these formidable challenges, TGEU kept focused on its objectives, stayed true to its guiding values, and remained dedicated to trans solidarity and strategic allyship between movements. We invite you to read about these achievements in this comprehensive report.

TGEU is now 20 years old: in November 2005, trans activists gathered in Vienna to imagine a safer, freer world at the First European TransGender Council. Today, TGEU connects more than 200 organisations in over 50 countries, building power, sharing knowledge, and defending trans rights across Europe and Central Asia. For two decades, TGEU has been the link connecting trans communities, advocates, and allies from grassroots organising to international advocacy, from training new trans leaders to policy change.

In a political and social environment that is increasingly hostile to trans and nonbinary people and is focused on the erasure of all trans experiences from legal protections and public life, TGEU has endured as a formidable voice that demands equal rights for trans people in Europe and Central Asia and refuses to back down. This 20-year milestone belongs to all of us, our members and the broader trans community in the region and we celebrate it.

We are proud to be an organisation that is led by and accountable to its members. Following a democratic process in which members cast their votes, in September at the General Assembly, TGEU elected a new Board with Isa Nico Borrelli and David Cuka as Co-Chairs, alongside Board members representing our diverse communities and geographies: Erman Dolmacı; Tayri Fadil; Polo Keadze; Lilit Martirosyan; Aleksa Radonjić; Alex Shah; and Purity K Tumukwasibwe. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our outgoing Board members for their dedicated service and invaluable contributions to TGEU's work and mission. Their commitment and hard work provided stability and leadership through challenging times for trans and gender-diverse communities across Europe, Central Asia, and beyond.

At the same General Assembly, our members adopted the Strategic Plan for 2026-2029, establishing the interconnected goals covered in the 'Looking ahead' section of this report.

As we move forward and grow as an organisation, a community, and a network, we remain committed to our mission of advancing gender equality, human rights, and social justice for all trans and gender-diverse people. In these times, more than ever, we work with our members, partners, and allies toward this vision.

Isa Nico Borrelli and David Cuka, TGEU Co-Chairs



Photo: Meeting of the outgoing and newly elected Co-Chairs of TGEU in Berlin. Left to right: Sara R Phillips (she/her), Isa Nico Borrelli (they/them), Dinah Bons (she/her), David Cuka (he/him)

Impact over 20 years of TGEU's work

From Vienna 2005 to today, the TGEU's 20-year milestone belongs to our community. From Lisbon to Almaty, TGEU and our movement are trans-led and member-driven. Every policy win, every research project, every training, every crisis response happened because trans people organised, persisted, and connected across borders.

- **652 individual and group members in over 50 countries.**
- **9 Trans Councils** organised: gatherings of activists, allies, and strategic stakeholders in Vienna, Berlin, Malmö, Budapest, Dublin, Bologna, Antwerp, Malta.
- Our advocacy contributed to self-determination-based **legal gender recognition in 12 countries.**
- **22 ECtHR cases won; 4 watershed CJEU cases** for trans and non-binary recognition.
- **13 years of legal data mapping** in the region: Trans Rights Index and Map.
- **18 years of tracking trans murders globally:** Trans Murder Monitoring.
- **More than 50 publications:** reports, recommendations, and toolkits.
- **Over 300 trans leaders from underrepresented groups trained** for effective advocacy, strategic communications, movement building, fundraising, and collective care.



Photo: The First European TransGender Council in Vienna, 2005



Photo: The Ninth European and Central Asian Trans Council in Malta, 2024

Our Membership

TGEU continued to witness steady growth, with over **650 members** as of December 2025, including **286 organisational** and **366 individual members** from **50 countries**. This expansion reflects that trans groups and activists value TGEU as a space for connection, support, and shared knowledge. It also demonstrates the trust members place in our network and the importance of its role across the region. This increasing reach is an opportunity for TGEU to strengthen collaboration and peer learning. Ultimately, it enhances our role in supporting and leading trans organising and our collective impact across Europe and Central Asia.

Impact and activities: 2025 highlights

Community Building

2025 demanded resilience, adaptability, and intentional solidarity. Amid shrinking civic spaces, escalating funding insecurities, and rising pressures on trans-led organising, TGEU's members and network demonstrated collective resilience and courage. To support our members and strengthen solidarity with intersectional allies, we focused on strategic action across key areas of engagement, capacity building, emergency support, resourcing, and cross-movement collaboration.

- **Improved member engagement**
 - Strengthening relations and connections with members: We reviewed and updated TGEU's Member Engagement Strategy, grounding it in our overall organisational strategy and ensuring it remains adaptable and responsive to members' needs. As part of this, we conducted 24 tailored 1:1 consultations, providing personalised support on fundraising, advocacy, organisational development, and cross-movement collaboration.
 - Deepening local engagement through on-site support: TGEU staff visited member groups in Croatia, Italy, and Portugal, strengthening relationships, enhancing organisational capacity, and supporting local advocacy priorities. These visits created space for joint reflection,

strategic planning, and mutual support.

- Enhancing spaces for shared learning: We hosted three PeerNetz sessions, offering spaces for activists to connect, exchange knowledge, learn from each other, and share strategies for collective care and sustainable organising.
- **Enhanced intersectional programming**
 - In 2025, a total of over 20 participants completed the second and closing cycles of our two-year programmes, the Fundraising Empowerment Programme (FEP) and Trans Feminine Leadership Academy (TFLA). Combining online learning with three-day in-person gatherings, these programmes provided spaces for participants to develop leadership, fundraising, advocacy, and project management skills while connecting with peers and exchanging strategies for collective organising.
 - EECA-focused capacity building: To support members affected by funding cuts, TGEU held targeted webinars on UN advocacy and fundraising, reaching over 90 participants from across Eastern Europe and Central Asia, equipping them with practical tools and interactive learning for resilient.
- **Member emergency support**
 - The community building team designed an internal Member emergency support action plan to ensure our team is more responsive and proactive in supporting members across different crises and emergencies.
 - Through 1-1 consultations and virtual office drop in hours, we delivered targeted support for members.
- **Resourcing our movement**
 - Increased direct financial support: In 2025, TGEU expanded subgrants to four EU-based groups (Billitis Foundation, Transcore, TransInterQueer – TrIQ, Transvanilla), each receiving €22,500 to strengthen local organising, empowerment, and visibility. In EECA, six groups across Armenia, Azerbaijan, Serbia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan received adapted financial and administrative support to continue most planned activities despite funding cuts.
 - Expanded member resources and tools: Beyond financial support, we created practical resources to equip members with the information and

skills they need to sustain their organising. This includes a dedicated resource guide for trans refugees strengthening trans and gender-diverse refugee-led initiatives across Europe.

- **Strengthening intersectional solidarity**
 - Expanded cross-movement collaboration through strategic partnerships, providing members with opportunities for capacity strengthening, resourcing, peer exchange, and cross-movement collaboration.

Communications

- We have launched **TGEU Insider: a regular newsletter** for broad audiences, with a focus on advocacy and policy stakeholders. This new owned channel provides greater independence from social media algorithms.
- We have published **the guide to media engagement & digital wellbeing**: “Owning our voice. Resisting the noise”, a practical tool for trans activists and marginalised communities navigating today’s complex media environment.
- The strategic communications campaign focused on **Trans-Feminist solidarity** was developed with an emphasis on effective messaging, research, and cross-movement solidarity-building.
- Together with partner organisations, we’ve run a successful campaign **#RenewIESOGI** advocating for the renewal of the Mandate of the Independent Expert on sexual orientation and gender identity at the UN. TGEU’s contribution included direct voices of the trans community from Europe and Central Asia.
- **Yearly flagship campaigns**: Trans Day of Visibility campaign, Trans Rights Index and Map campaign, Trans Advocacy Week campaign, Trans Murder Monitoring launch, and Trans Day of Remembrance campaign were performed with direct engagement of our membership and got the biggest-ever reach.
- In addition to these awareness campaigns, the TGEU team has supported this year’s General Assembly, celebrated 20 years of TGEU with an experimental public fundraiser, and coordinated events in memory of our beloved Executive Director, Ymania Brown.

Operations

- Despite a sharp reduction in funding, TGEU did not lay off any staff in 2025 and

endeavoured to fulfil all the commitments made to its employees that year.

- It was difficult to make operational decisions after the loss of our executive director, but together as a team and in cooperation with the Board, the organisation was addressing the situation and striving to ensure stability and flexibility.
- A new Grants Development Officer joined the Operations team in mid-August 2025, strengthening TGEU's fundraising capacity and supporting the organisation's growing development needs.
- A comprehensive fundraising database covering past, current, and potential future donors was established and is now regularly maintained, alongside a dedicated system for tracking TGEU's awarded and rejected funding applications.
- Reinforcing the spirit of staff and collective wellbeing, TGEU trialed a four-day working week for all staff. This enabled boosted productivity and focus during working hours, and enhanced wellbeing through more time to recharge. TGEU will conduct a formal evaluation of the four-day working week and consider its continuation into 2026.
- Pilot launch of Personio, a new HR programme for TGEU, which will enable better coordination of administrative and HR work. Based on the results of testing in 2025 and the identification of strengths and weaknesses, a full launch and operation in Personio is planned for 2026.
- In order to reduce operating costs, a decision was made to relocate the organisation's office to a more functional and less expensive location. As a result, the contract for the current office was not renewed, and we plan to move to the new location in 2026.

Policy

- TGEU actively contributed to the development of the EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2026-30 and the forthcoming Gender Equality Strategy 2026-30 as well as the EU Civil Society Strategy, European Democracy Shield, and the next Multi-annual Financial Framework.
- The third revision of the Best Practice Catalogue publication was finalised,

which now includes a dedicated chapter on non-discrimination. This edition presents a comprehensive collection of policies and good practices addressing non-discrimination frameworks across the Council of Europe region.

- TGEU, jointly with IGLYO, organised a convening for trans activists, parents of trans young people, legal professionals and medical professionals who are engaged on the rights of young trans people, to create and provide a space for peer-to-peer exchange and strategising.
- TGEU continued to convene essential networks such as the Trans Refugee Network, Trans Health Network, and Trans Legal Network, which creates possibilities for activists to come together and exchange on their experiences with advocacy and other legal strategies on various issues pertaining to the rights of trans people.
- TGEU continued to engage with UN human rights mechanisms through Trans Advocacy Week and input to consultations on various issues including forced displacement of LGBTI people and violence and discrimination faced by LBQ women.
- The CJEU delivered three landmark rulings in 2025 in Mirin, Mousse and Deldits. TGEU played an active role in all of these cases, supporting applicants and their legal teams, working closely with ILGA-Europe's legal experts, and engaging pro bono support from partner law firms and legal specialists. Through this collaborative legal advocacy, we ensured that the voices and experiences of trans people were represented at Europe's highest court. Further decisions in Shipov and Commission v. Hungary are expected in 2026.
- TGEU contributed to global HIV governance through my role as NGO Delegate for Europe and as a member of the Bureau of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, shaping agenda-setting, intersessional decision-making, performance monitoring, and budget oversight across the Joint Programme.
- TGEU played a central role in the UNAIDS response to the US Stop Work Order, with participation in the High-Level Panel and global civil society task force, drafting strategic briefings, risk assessments, and advocacy messages used in

Member State negotiations.

- TGEU supported the development of the Joint Programme's response to the UN Secretary-General concerning the proposed early closure of UNAIDS, ensuring that trans communities and other inadequately served populations were represented within governance discussions.
- TGEU provided extensive input to the development of the next Global AIDS Strategy, participating in multi-stakeholder consultations, bilateral engagements, and written submissions that highlighted the importance of integrated, community-led services, decriminalisation, mental health, and equitable access to HIV technologies.
- TGEU strengthened EU-level political engagement through a policy brief that I authored on trans access to integrated HIV services and sustainable community-led funding. The brief was adopted by TGEU, shared across our membership, and used by the UNITE Global Parliamentary Network for coordinated parliamentary advocacy.
- TGEU took part in EU Parliament meetings, MEP briefings, and cross-party exchanges on PrEP access, long-acting technologies, community-led services, and European leadership in the global HIV response.
- TGEU contributed to WHO Europe workstreams on doxyPEP, differentiated testing services, and mpox elimination, providing technical recommendations and ensuring trans-specific needs were integrated into regional public health guidance.
- TGEU participated in the HIV Patient Summit in Lisbon, contributing trans-specific insights on patient-centred care, long-acting HIV treatments, and integrated community-led services.
- TGEU strengthened cross-movement coordination by participating in regional and global civil society networks representing sex workers, PWUD, migrants, and PLHIV, harmonising advocacy positions across stakeholder groups.

Research

- The Trans Rights Index & Map (TRIM) 2025 reported that setbacks in human rights now clearly outweigh progress across Europe and Central Asia for the first time in the project's history. The TRIM website was also redesigned, updated and made more user-friendly.
- Trans Murder Monitoring (TMM) 2025 identified a concerning emerging trend where trans activists and movement leaders accounted for 14% of reported murders globally, while sex workers remain the most targeted group of all known occupations
- The TMM data also addressed the prevalence of feminicides and confirmed that over 90% of the reported homicides continue to be feminicides, with victims being trans women or transfeminine people.
- A key milestone was the launch of the new TMM website, which uses the Uwazi platform to provide an updated map and visualisations of over 5,300 trans murder cases reported since the project began in 2009.
- A major project was an intersectional analysis and description of data from over 30,000 trans respondents to the 2023 EU LGBTIQ Survey III by the Fundamental Rights Agency. The TGEU report, which will be published in early 2026, reveals that trans and non-binary people facing multiple and intersecting forms of marginalisation (e.g., disability, age, migrant background) experience disproportionately higher rates of violence and discrimination.
- Work on the Educational Needs Assessment on PrEP Knowledge among Trans and Non-Binary People generated one of the most comprehensive bodies of evidence on PrEP awareness and accessibility within trans communities in Europe and Central Asia. The study revealed persistent structural and informational gaps affecting PrEP uptake, and the findings were presented across four sessions at EACS 2025, including the IAS pre-conference on trans health and HIV.
- Contributions to the HIV Cure Knowledge Assessment under the global I-COUNT consortium helped document the profound exclusion of trans people from HIV cure research. Early analysis highlighted concerns around safety, trust, informed consent, and trial accessibility, informing global discussions on ethical inclusion in cure research pipelines.

- The research component of the UNAIDS NGO Report 2025 provided a strong evidence base for community-led integrated services. This included the design of research instruments, Key Informant Interviews across multiple regions, a global survey, and the development of case studies—such as the collaboration with Tangerine clinic—demonstrating the effectiveness of community-led health infrastructures. These findings directly informed the decision points presented to the UNAIDS Board.
- Support to the Anti-Trans Violence project in Eastern Europe and Central Asia contributed to a clearer picture of systemic violence in the region, with the research confirming entrenched patterns of institutional neglect and barriers to justice for trans survivors.
- Collaboration with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control contributed to an upcoming regional publication on PrEP access for trans people in Europe, bringing community-led evidence into formal public health analysis and policy development.
- A multi-country clinical training programme strengthened trans-competent HIV services in Asia and Central Asia. Workshops for healthcare providers in Kazakhstan and a multi-day training series in Bangkok supported the integration of stigma-free service delivery, and improved care pathways across clinics.
- A series of workshops with EuroNPUD expanded the capacity of PWUD-led organisations to support trans people who use drugs, focusing on SOGIESC inclusion, stigma, violence, and harm reduction approaches rooted in community expertise.
- Collaboration with sex worker-led organisations through ESWA strengthened advocacy, HIV prevention strategies, and research ethics within sex worker movements, reinforcing cross-community solidarity and capacity.
- Organizations of the EATG HIV Activist Workshop supported regional activist development, with training on community-led monitoring, integrated care, and PrEP advocacy strategies.

Treasurer's report

The year began with funding cuts and even the termination of grant agreements from the US government that had already been signed and were being implemented. This led to a reduction in the projected budget of more than €2 million to €1,6 million. The total amount of unreceived funds in 2025 is €390,000 which is 20% of the projected budget, and part of this shortage will also be carried over to the 2026 financial year. Despite the funding cuts, TGEU found the means to continue supporting its staff and did not lay off any employees in 2025 in order to ensure the smooth running of the organisation.

During the TGEU General Assembly held in September, our membership approved the projected budgets for 2025 and 2026: €1,621,519 and €2,071,013 (including TGEU Council 2026) respectively.

At the same time, the available reserves of €442,465 have not yet been used, as their use is only envisaged in extreme, critical situations of complete loss of funding and risks of sudden complete funding, considering that reserves cover only three months of the organisation's operating expenses. Therefore, an even greater emphasis and priority is given to seeking new funding and strengthening fundraising efforts.

TGEU applied for the new Framework at the EU (European Commission) for the grant cycle for 2026-2028 and successfully extended the operating grant.

In order to reduce administrative costs, several decisions were made, including not renewing the contract for the current office and replacing it with a smaller, more functional one.

Strategic Goal 1: Stabilise / Support TGEU

To strengthen internal structures, TGEU staff elected a works council (Betriebsrat). According to German labour law, a works council represents the employees in an organisation vis-a-vis the employer, ensuring fairness and equality. They have co-determination rights in employment matters, including restructuring, terminations,

working hours, and wage structuring. Because TGEU has less than 20 staff members, our works council is not a collective body but a single person, with an alternate stepping in as needed. By providing informed guidance on employment terms and fostering transparent communication channels, the works council played an important role in strengthening TGEU's internal governance practices.

Reinforcing the spirit of staff and collective wellbeing, TGEU trialed a four-day working week for all staff. This enabled boosted productivity and focus during working hours, and enhanced wellbeing through more time to recharge. TGEU will carry out a formal evaluation of the four-day working week. This does not mean it will be discontinued, but will help assess how it can operate within the new budget and guide operational planning for 2026.

Objective 1 – Organisational Development

In 2025, TGEU continued strengthening its internal structures and improving organisational stability during a period marked by both progress and profound loss. The Executive Director appointed in 2024 sadly passed away in September 2025 following a planned heart surgery, leaving a significant leadership void. During this difficult moment, the team held together with remarkable resilience, with the management team guiding the organisation forward and all staff contributing to continuity and stability.



Photo: TGEU's beloved late Executive Director, Tuisina Ymania Brown

The newly elected Board initiated a recruitment process for an Interim Executive Director through an open call to ensure leadership continuity and organisational stability. Building on the organisational improvements initiated in 2024, including strengthened internal systems, improved HR processes, and enhanced operational tools, TGEU continued to prioritise staff support and organisational coherence. Work on developing and consolidating internal policies and operational procedures continued, forming the foundation for long-term organisational growth and sustainability.

Objective 2 - Fundraising

In 2025, TGEU intensified its focus on financial resilience and diversification in an increasingly challenging funding landscape. In order to address these challenges (e.g. defunding of international funds, shrinking civic spaces, etc), fundraising efforts were strengthened with the hiring of a Grants Development Officer in mid-August 2025. This new team member established an organisational database for all past, current and upcoming funding applications—tracking deadlines, grant amounts, statuses, and key details—as well as a comprehensive donor database categorised by donor type, funding availability, and engagement status. Both systems were developed and are regularly updated on the project management Monday.com platform, accessible to all staff.

In 2025, TGEU secured several important grants, including OG-2026, funding from the Foreign Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO), support from the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, and a grant from the Digital Freedom Fund to advance 3–4 key strategic litigation cases at the EU Court of Justice.

At the same time, TGEU applied for 3 additional multi-year and regional funds (for a total amount of € 1.658.977), whose results will be published later in 2026.

Other funding opportunities have been identified and new applications will be drafted between the end of 2025 and the first quarter of 2026.

Supported by FCDO funding, TGEU commenced the development of a comprehensive fundraising strategy, to be finalised by March 2026. Funding diversification remains the top priority of the Fundraising Task Force as TGEU continues adapting to a shifting and increasingly restricted funding landscape.

Objective 3 - Board Development

2025 marked an important moment of renewal for TGEU's governance, with the election of a new Board during the General Assembly on 6 September. The new leadership includes two Co-chairs—Isa Nico Borrelli and David Cuka—along with seven new Board members and two Auditors. This new Board brings a strong mix of

expertise, regional knowledge and lived experience, strengthening TGEU's leadership at a critical time.

The election took place just one week before the passing of TGEU's Executive Director, making strong governance and stability even more urgent. The Board quickly established weekly meetings, scheduled and held an in-person co-chairs handover session and an in-person onboarding session in late-November. Under the EU FPA 2026-2029, a comprehensive governance strengthening package will be launched, including external training on governance and financial management, a review of internal policies, and improved communication structures between Board and staff.

Both through FCDO's and the EU OG-2026 support, the Board will receive a tailored governance programme, including an induction covering statutes, financial oversight, safeguarding, and leadership, followed by two thematic training on financial accountability and inclusive leadership. To support a smooth leadership transition, the incoming Interim Executive Director will be accompanied closely by the Board, management team, and outgoing Co-chairs, ensuring continuity and stability during this key organisational shift.

Co-chairs:

Isa Nico Borrelli (they/them)

David Cuka (he/him)

Board members:

Erman Dolmacı (they/them)

Tayri Fadil (she/her)

Polo Keadze (he/him)

Lilit Martirosyan (she/her)

Aleksa Radonjić (he/him)

Alex Shah (she/they)

Purity K Tumukwasibwe (she/her)

Auditors:

Justus Eisfeld (he/they)

Arja Voipio (any pronouns)



Photo: TGEU Board 2025-2027 Meeting in Berlin. Left to right: Erman Dolmacı (they/them); Aleksa Radonjić (he/him); Isa Nico Borrelli, Co-chair (they/them); Tayri Fadil (she/her); Polo Kebabze (he/him); Alex Shah (she/they); David Cuka, Co-chair (he/him). Not on the picture: Lilit Martirosyan (she/her); Purity K Tumukwasibwe (she/her)

Objective 4 - Culture

TGEU continued its commitment to fostering a supportive, inclusive, and sustainable organisational culture. Reinforcing the spirit of staff and collective wellbeing, TGEU trialled a four-day working week for all staff starting in July 2025. This change enabled boosted productivity and focus during working hours, as well as enhanced wellbeing through more time to recharge. The policy was positively received, with staff coming together to share insights, challenges, and ideas to refine the model for the year ahead. A formal evaluation of the four-day working week will be conducted in the first half of

2026 to assess its impact and to explore how it could operate within the new budget.

TGEU remains dedicated to nurturing a culture rooted in care, collaboration, transparency and accountability. Staff wellbeing, open communication, and a supportive team environment continue to be prioritised as essential components of delivering TGEU's mission across Europe and Central Asia.

Strategic Goal 2: Protect Our Rights

Objective 5 – Healthcare, Legal Gender Recognition (LGR), Non-Discrimination, Intersectionality, Asylum, HIV, and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)

2025 was a significant year for the rights of trans people and the trans movement. As TGEU's Trans Rights Map 2025 (TRIM) demonstrated, progress on trans people's rights has stalled or is being rolled back steadily. For the first time since TRIM was initiated, no major legal or policy progress was recorded. The situation was exacerbated by the global funding cuts and the closure of major programs to advance LGBTI equality supported by USAID and the US Department of State. At the same time, in the EU, although there was renewed commitment to LGBTI rights through the new LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2026-30, no significant commitments were made on advancing the rights of trans people. TGEU's policy and advocacy actions were situated in this rapidly evolving, challenging political and social context in Europe and Central Asia.



Photo: TGEU's late Executive Director Ymania Brown presenting the Trans Rights Index & Map 2025 at the IDAHOBIT Forum in Valetta, Malta

Healthcare

Access to trans-specific healthcare continued to face serious threats in the region as more and more countries targeted healthcare, particularly for young people through bans and other forms of restrictions such as increased assessment requirements. TGEU supported members in Italy and Latvia with advocacy around bills which were introduced to restrict access to care for young people. At the same time, in 2025 a new set of important consensus-based clinical guidelines were published for the German speaking countries, which sets the gold standard for care provision for young trans people. TGEU supported the dissemination of these guidelines through a webinar jointly organised with the drafters of the guidelines on the EU's Health Policy Platform. TGEU continued to convene the Trans Health Network, where trans activists focusing on healthcare and related advocacy for peer-to-peer exchange. In 2025, the THN met online two times and the majority of the discussions centered around access to medications, the development of new guidelines, and addressing the growing efforts to ban trans-specific healthcare. In 2025, TGEU also convened a group of activists, medical professionals, parents, and legal professionals to strategise on protecting access to trans-specific healthcare for young trans people over a two-day convening,

which also covered access to legal gender recognition and comprehensive sexual education. This convening was organised jointly with IGLYO, and was designed to create a knowledge sharing and strategising space for activists and allies who are engaged in advocating for and securing the rights of young trans people. TGEU will continue to cooperate closely with the participants of the convening and together with IGLYO, has identified key areas for follow up on access to trans-specific healthcare and legal gender recognition.

In 2025, TGEU continued its regional level advocacy on healthcare with the EU Commission. In addition to making concrete demands on health for the new LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2026-30, TGEU intensified its efforts to ensure hormonal medications used by trans people are recognised as critical medicines and advocated for better data collection on the health status and needs of trans people, including through regular meetings with the EU Commission's DG-SANTE. TGEU also worked closely with the European Cancer Organisation in its first ever survey on the experiences of LGBTI people in accessing cancer care, and joined the Advisory Group. TGEU will continue to focus on these issues in 2026, particularly around improving access to medications and data collection.

TGEU also supported national-level advocacy actions in countries where laws seeking to restrict or ban access to trans-specific healthcare were introduced. In 2025, we supported members in Italy and Latvia where draft laws tightening access and criminal sanctions for the provision of trans-specific healthcare for young people were introduced.

We also continued our close engagement and cooperation with the European Professional Association for Transgender Health (EPATH). At its 2025 conference, TGEU presented the Trans Health Map 2024 and organised a panel discussion on barriers to access to medications.

HIV research and advocacy

Building on this engagement with EPATH, the organisation deepened its work on HIV, community-led health systems, and integrated service delivery throughout 2025. This period was marked by significant instability in global HIV governance, including the impacts of the US Stop Work Order and growing political pressure on rights-based

public health responses. Against this backdrop, TGEU prioritised generating robust evidence, strengthening the capacities of trans communities and frontline providers, and ensuring that trans-led expertise shaped regional and global HIV policy.

A central body of work focused on expanding the evidence base on trans health and HIV prevention. Throughout the year, TGEU advanced the Educational Needs Assessment on PrEP Knowledge among Trans and Non-Binary People in Europe, a project that combined a region-wide survey with community-led focus groups to document barriers to PrEP literacy, access, and uptake. The project's methodological design, data collection tools, statistical analyses, and focus group implementation were completed during the reporting period, positioning the study as one of the most extensive assessments of PrEP knowledge gaps among trans communities. Its findings were presented at the European AIDS Clinical Society Conference (EACS 2025) through multiple scientific contributions, including chaired and moderated sessions and participation in the IAS pre-conference on Key population's health and HIV.

Alongside PrEP research, TGEU contributed substantively to the global HIV Cure Knowledge Assessment under the I-COUNT initiative, ensuring that trans experiences and ethical considerations were meaningfully integrated into HIV cure research discussions. The organisation supported instrument development, facilitator training, qualitative analysis, and early manuscript planning, helping shape an emerging evidence base on trans inclusion in biomedical innovation.

TGEU also led the research component of the UNAIDS NGO Report on community-led integrated HIV services, covering the full cycle from instrument design to Key Informant Interviews, survey development, quantitative and qualitative analysis, case study drafting—including collaboration with the Tangerine clinic—and the preparation of decision points for the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board. This work provided a rigorous evidence base for global advocacy on sustainable financing for community-led HIV services.

Further research support was provided to the Anti-Trans Violence project in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, where TGEU contributed to methodological refinement, ethical review, narrative framing, and analytical development ahead of the forthcoming 2025 publication. Collaboration also continued with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control on a regional report addressing PrEP access

among trans people. Together, these initiatives strengthened the visibility of trans communities in public health datasets and helped correct longstanding gaps in EU-level surveillance.

These research efforts were complemented by extensive capacity building designed to strengthen community expertise and provider competencies. TGEU coordinated a multi-country clinical training programme through workshops in Bangkok, supporting healthcare providers from Almaty, Kazakhstan to integrate trans-competent approaches to HIV prevention, long-acting treatments, mental health, and stigma-free care. Additional capacity-building programmes included EuroNPUD's SOGIESC, violence, and harm reduction trainings; joint workshops with ESWA on HIV prevention, research ethics, and community monitoring; and facilitation at the EATG HIV Activist Workshop, which supported regional alignment on integrated care and community-led monitoring.



Photo: TGEU's HIV Research and Advocacy Officer Amanita Calderon-Cifuentes at the Transgender-Competent Health Training for Healthcare Providers from Kazakhstan

Policy and advocacy constituted a substantial part of the year's work, particularly in the context of global uncertainty around UNAIDS' future. As part of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board and its Bureau, TGEU contributed to agenda-setting, intersessional governance, co-sponsor accountability, and Secretariat oversight. Engagement in the US Stop Work Order Task Force and High-Level Panel included leading the civil society analytical response, coordinating inputs from global networks, preparing advocacy messages for Member States, and contributing to the development of risk assessments and mitigation strategies. TGEU also supported the NGO Delegation's formal response to the UN Secretary-General regarding the potential early closure of UNAIDS and ensured that trans, migrant, PWUD, MSM and sex worker concerns were structurally reflected.

Work continued around the development of the next Global AIDS Strategy, including multi-stakeholder consultations, technical submissions, and sustained advocacy to embed integrated service delivery, mental health, decriminalisation, and equitable access to HIV technologies within the strategy architecture.

At EU level, TGEU produced a comprehensive policy brief articulating the European Union's responsibility and strategic opportunity to uphold global HIV progress and safeguard trans-led healthcare initiatives. The document analysed the collapse of HIV funding streams resulting from the US executive order, outlined the disproportionate harm experienced by trans sex workers, trans migrants and refugees, trans people in prison settings, and trans people who use drugs, and detailed the cascading effects on access to ART, PrEP, PEP, harm reduction, mental health services, and trans-specific healthcare. Drawing on evidence from Médecins Sans Frontières, ECOM/EHRA, the Williams Institute, GATE, and UNAIDS, the brief argued that the EU must assume a leadership role in preventing a global HIV regression by sustaining and expanding support for trans-led HIV services. It presented a series of legislative, diplomatic, and financial recommendations for EU institutions, emphasising the need for emergency bridge funding, compulsory licensing for essential medications, human-rights-based trade conditionalities, and strengthened involvement of EU agencies such as ECDC and FRA in monitoring the impact of the freeze. The brief was subsequently adopted by TGEU's membership and used by the UNITE Global Parliamentary Network to inform coordinated parliamentary advocacy across Europe.

The organisation additionally contributed to several WHO-Europe processes, including workstreams on doxyPEP, differentiated testing services, mpox elimination, and the European Programme of Work, ensuring that community-led perspectives were integrated into technical guidance. TGEU's advocacy presence was reinforced through participation in regional convenings such as the HIV Patient Summit in Lisbon, where discussions centred on long-acting HIV treatment, integrated care pathways, and structural barriers faced by trans populations. The reporting period closed with TGEU's participation in the European Harm Reduction Conference and the Second Subregional Consultation on PrEP in Almaty, strengthening collaboration with harm reduction, clinical, and community networks across Europe and Central Asia.

Together, these activities reflect a year of sustained institutional commitment to strengthening evidence, building community capacity, and shaping regional and global health governance to ensure that trans communities remain central to HIV responses in an increasingly challenging political environment.

Legal gender recognition

Just short of the deadline set by the Constitutional Court in 2024, new guidelines on legal gender recognition were published by the Czech Ministry of Interior and the Health Ministry that do not require proof of sterility. TGEU supported Czech NGO Transparent throughout negotiations for these guidelines, providing strategic advice and legal expertise. Additionally, TGEU's intervention in the ECtHR case *T.H. v Czechia*—providing data and legal analysis—significantly influenced the Court's decision, which largely followed our analysis, creating additional pressure. Whilst implementation of the new guidelines shows signs of improvement, gatekeeping by involved sexologists remains. Further, the new guidelines have not been adopted as laws and thus enjoy less protection against possibly hostile amendments.

In July, the new Swedish LGR rules came into force, which also enables young trans people to change their documents in a slightly lighter procedure. TGEU had advocated for a full self-determination model, but the Swedish reforms unfortunately stopped short of this goal, making Sweden the only country without self-determination amongst the Scandinavian countries. In Germany, TGEU continued to provide legal analysis and contextualisation of the German self-determination law, including at a specialised conference of the federal Magnus Hirschfeld Foundation in October 2025.

We have been coordinating with civil society organisations and institutional actors ahead of an upcoming evaluation, and together with our German members BVT* and TIN Legal Aid, submitted a request to the Ministry of Interior for rules allowing issuance of alternative passports for non-binary people. The first statistics from the new self-determination law show a generally positive picture, with more than 20,000 people having used the possibility to change their name and gender marker, though one abusive case of a right-wing neo-Nazi unfortunately drew significant media attention and fuelled public calls to dismantle the newly established law.

Efforts to reform the Montenegrin law into a self-determination model unfortunately remain stuck at government level. TGEU has actively monitored the situation, maintained correspondence with Western embassies in the country, and provided ongoing support to local civil society organisations and TGEU member Spektra with strategic advice and legal analysis—including on recent CJEU case law—in support of the self-determination reform bill. In neighbouring Albania, within a very short period at the end of October, TGEU rapidly mobilised members to write to their national and European Parliament representatives, engaged with Rainbow Rose (S&D's LGBTI party group), and sent letters to the Albanian Prime Minister, the EU delegation, and OHCHR representatives in the country. These swift efforts succeeded in stopping at the last minute a law that would have encoded the gender binary into legislation and made the thorny LGR judicial procedure probably even more cumbersome.

A ban, however, has unfortunately been successful in Slovakia. TGEU joined 56 NGOs in writing to President von der Leyen regarding Slovakia's binary Constitution, urging her to enforce EU law and values and act on the ban. We continue supporting our members in the country, particularly with legal analysis and support for strategic litigation to fight this unfair and harmful law. Attempts to ban legal gender recognition and legal codification of the gender binary are clearly out of the toolbox of the anti-gender movement. We expect—and prepare—to see more of these.

Combating violence and gender-based inequalities and discrimination

The EU has taken important steps toward advancing gender equality and protecting people from discrimination. In May 2023, the EU adopted the Pay Transparency Directive, a vital initiative designed to combat pay discrimination and close the gender

pay gap across Member States. Building on this progress, in May 2024, two new Directives on equality bodies were adopted to set minimum standards ensuring that these institutions can effectively support victims of discrimination – including those facing discrimination on the basis of gender, gender identity, and gender expression. In December 2025, TGEU organised a webinar to unpack what these vital legal frameworks meant for trans communities and how they could be translated into concrete action at the national level, ahead of the national transposition deadline of June, 2026. For this webinar, we invited speakers to explain the key provisions of the two EU Directives, to discuss their significance for gender equality and for the rights of trans people, and to share practical insights and strategies for effective implementation by Member States, civil society organisations, and equality bodies.

Equality bodies remained a key focus of our work. With their proven experience and wide range of powers, they play a crucial role in safeguarding the fundamental rights of trans people, including the right to non-discrimination. To this end, TGEU presented the specific forms of discrimination that trans people face and explored how equality bodies can address them during a webinar organized by Equinet, titled Advancing LGBTIQ+ Equality in Europe: The Role of Equality Bodies. Our partnership with Equinet also continued through initiatives such as sharing our legal analysis of the Pay Transparency Directive and its implications for trans people.

Additionally, TGEU finalised the third revision of the Best Practice Catalogue publication, which now includes a dedicated chapter on non-discrimination. This edition presents a comprehensive collection of policies and good practices addressing non-discrimination frameworks across the Council of Europe region. It provides detailed examples of effective policy and legal measures, as well as community initiatives, with a particular focus on tackling current regional challenges and ensuring equal access to employment, education, housing, and goods and services. The Best Practice Catalogue continues to serve as a gold-standard resource for policymakers across the Union and beyond.

In the area of gender equality, TGEU provided input to the European Commission Consultation with Civil Society Organisations on the Post-2025 Gender Equality Strategy. In it, we identified the key challenges and gaps that should be addressed in the forthcoming strategy. Following the consultation, we held meetings with MEPs and

sent voting alerts leading up to the FEMM Committee's own initiative report on the Gender Equality Strategy vote, which resulted in effective and robust references to trans people in it. We will continue to respond to and advocate for a robust EU Gender Equality Strategy in 2026. On the UN level, TGEU developed input to the UN Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. This allowed us to ensure that trans people's experiences were brought to the centre of the conversation of how queer women experience discrimination and violence intersectionally. Our contribution informed the thematic report which will be presented at the 62nd session of the UN Human Rights Council in 2026.



Photo: TGEU at the European Commission with Policy and Advocacy Manager Deekshitha Ganesan and late Executive Director Ymania Brown

Asylum

The past year has brought significant shifts in the European Union's approach to asylum and migration, particularly following the adoption of the reformed Common European Asylum System in 2024. As implementation begins across Member States, its repercussions for vulnerable applicants, especially trans people, are becoming

starkly apparent. The increasing normalisation of detention facilities, the introduction of screening processes that prioritise speed over a person's individual circumstances, and the expansion of fast-track border procedures are together creating conditions in which trans applicants are at serious risk of being returned to their countries of origin or to third countries that cannot guarantee their safety. These changes signal a worrying retreat from established protections and are already contributing to an environment marked by heightened precarity and reduced access to justice.

In this rapidly changing context, TGEU has remained fully engaged in efforts to safeguard the rights of those most affected. Through its role in the Migration Discussion Group, which brings together organisations working in the fields of asylum and migration for joint strategising, information sharing, and collective action, TGEU contributes to a coordinated civil society response to the challenges emerging from CEAS implementation. Alongside this, TGEU continues to work with EU institutions and member states to highlight the specific risks faced by trans asylum seekers and to advocate for safeguards that prevent further harm. As the new system takes shape, TGEU will further down the line prepare an assessment report that will examine the effects of CEAS on trans applicants and set out recommendations to address gaps in protection.

TGEU's engagement with the European Union Agency for Asylum also remains central to the work on asylum and migration. As a member of the EUAA Consultative Forum, TGEU provides expertise as the agency develops guidance for national authorities, designs training for practitioners, and carries out its enhanced role under CEAS, which includes observing how member states implement the new rules. Participation in the EUAA's Vulnerability Expert Network allows TGEU to ensure that the particular experiences and needs of trans asylum seekers are recognised and integrated into the agency's work. In parallel, through the Trans Refugee Network, TGEU is developing a practical resource guide for trans asylum seekers and those supporting them, offering clear information and tools to help navigate an increasingly complex and restrictive system.

EECAC and Global Advocacy on thematic issues

In 2025, TGEU responded to the UN Independent Expert on SOGI's call for inputs by submitting a comprehensive Analysis on forced displacement and SOGI, developed together with TG House (Belarus), Qun Jelesi (Kyrgyzstan), and Temida (Georgia). Our submission, which was reflected in the Independent Expert's official report to the Human Rights Council, brings forward the lived realities of trans people from Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the Caucasus and is now a valuable tool for international and national advocacy. The input documents the escalating displacement of trans people resulting from anti-LGBTI laws, political repression, hate speech, and neo-colonial influence across the region, with trans women, trans migrants, sex workers, and trans drug users facing the highest risks. Through case studies from Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia, TGEU outlines how discrimination, violence, and lack of access to justice drive trans people to flee, only to encounter hostile asylum systems and limited access to trans-specific healthcare in countries of arrival. TGEU also highlighted the worrying decline in frontline trans activists, whose forced migration weakens community organisations, shrinks service provision, and reduces the capacity to monitor violations and advocate for rights. By ensuring these realities are presented to the UN, TGEU helps amplify the voices of those most affected and strengthens global efforts to protect trans people in displacement.

In June 2025, TGEU and our global partners once again brought trans and gender-diverse activists to Geneva for UN Trans Advocacy Week, held during the 59th session of the UN Human Rights Council. In its ninth year, this initiative continues to bridge grassroots movements and global decision-making spaces by equipping activists, including those from Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the Caucasus, where rights are rapidly deteriorating, with the tools to advocate effectively within UN mechanisms. Delegates presented the realities of trans communities in Bulgaria, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, engaged UN Special Rapporteurs, delivered joint statements, and met with agencies such as WHO, UNAIDS, UNHCR, and OHCHR. This year's focus on protecting democratic spaces in the face of anti-gender movements and severe funding cuts underscored the growing threats to trans rights across our regions, as documented in TGEU's 2025 Trans Rights Map. Through capacity-building sessions, strategic dialogues, and cultural interventions, UN Trans Advocacy Week

reaffirmed the vital role of international advocacy in defending trans communities and safeguarding the broader human rights system. TGEU is proud to continue championing this work, ensuring that trans activists, especially from the most underrepresented regions, are heard where global agendas are shaped.

TGEU actively supported the renewal process of the UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (IE SOGI). The mandate of the IE SOGI is one of the most important global mechanisms protecting the rights of LGBT people. Since its creation in 2016, governments, human rights organisations, and grassroots activists worldwide have repeatedly united to defend and renew the mandate despite coordinated opposition from anti-gender actors. Each renewal vote has demonstrated growing global support, affirming the mandate's crucial role in documenting human rights violations, providing expert guidance to states, and giving visibility to communities often excluded from national systems. During the countries' statements in defence of the mandate of the independent expert in Geneva, TGEU was pleased to hear the message 'Trans women are women,' as well as other messages about equality and equal rights without exception. Our renewal campaigns, coordinated and by different groups, were successful and sent a clear message: the international community recognises the IE SOGI as essential for advancing equality, accountability, and protection for all.

Three country-specific analyses were provided to the European External Action Service (EEAS) ahead of the EU–Central Asia Human Rights Dialogues, ensuring that the realities of trans and LGBT communities in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan were reflected in EU diplomacy. Each input offered an overview of key human rights concerns and concrete recommendations: in Uzbekistan, we highlighted the continued persecution of gay, bisexual men and trans women under Article 120 despite the country benefiting from GSP+ trade preferences; in Kazakhstan, we documented the rapid spread of anti-gender narratives inspired by both Russian and U.S. conservative actors, alongside increasing violence and legal restrictions; and in Tajikistan, we detailed the severe deterioration of conditions for trans people, marked by police abuse, forced closures of civil society organisations, and an opaque, humiliating legal gender recognition process. These analyses help keep governments accountable, guide

EU engagement, and strengthen regional efforts to uphold human rights, rule of law, and democratic principles for trans and broader LGBTI communities.

TGEU coordinated a joint submission with Insight (Ukraine), the National Trans Coalition (Armenia), and Association Spectra (Montenegro) to support the Council of Europe's review of Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5, which is the first international instrument addressing discrimination against LGBTI people. The report provided one of the few trans-focused assessments from Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, a region marked by war, militarisation, anti-gender rollbacks, and shrinking civic space. Drawing on detailed country inputs from its members, TGEU highlighted severe gaps in legal gender recognition, healthcare access, and protection from hate crimes across Armenia, Montenegro, and Ukraine, and demonstrated how the lack of state action exacerbates violence, discrimination, and social exclusion for trans people. By consolidating and contextualising evidence from three national organisations, the report strengthened the visibility of trans communities in Council of Europe monitoring processes and provided clear advocacy hooks to push governments toward compliance with European human rights standards. After publishing the report, it was distributed widely to national and international stakeholders, creating opportunities for engagement with policymakers, and increasing accountability for the protection of trans rights in the region.

TGEU supported trans communities facing two urgent crises in Central Asia, where trans women's rights have been violated, and they were under attack and in immediate danger. In one case, TGEU mobilised emergency funds, working closely with local activists and an international human rights organisation, to provide legal and humanitarian assistance. In another, TGEU worked with local activists and international stakeholders to document violations and submit an urgent appeal to UN Special Procedures, resulting in communications from three Special Rapporteurs to state authorities. These actions contributed to holding state institutions accountable while ensuring that trans communities received rapid support and international protection.

TGEU has initiated support for two groundbreaking strategic litigation initiatives in the EECA region, aiming to advance legal gender recognition and counteract the rising tide of anti-trans policies. In one country, a trans organisation is challenging the

discriminatory and arbitrary denial of changes to official documents, with four trans people bringing landmark cases supported by dedicated community advocates and affirming legal experts. In another context, a trans-led group is working to establish a clear and transparent procedure for legal gender recognition where no functioning framework currently exists. By backing these first-of-their-kind efforts in their countries, TGEU is helping build legal precedent, strengthen community-led advocacy, and advance trans people's access to non-discriminatory, understandable and accessible LGR procedures.

During the reporting period, TGEU submitted a report to the Universal Periodic Review of Georgia (4th Cycle, 2026), based on extensive documentation from the Georgian transgender community. Covering 2021–2025, it highlighted the banning of gender-affirming healthcare, repeal of legal gender recognition, and removal of “gender” from legislation, leaving trans people without protection. The report also addressed the chilling effects of “foreign agent” laws and rising anti-LGBT legislation, which restricted access to justice, healthcare, and employment. It called for urgent repeal of repressive laws and reinstatement of fundamental rights.

Objective 6 – Strategic Litigation, Communication, and Resources to Tackle Opposition

In 2025, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) delivered a series of landmark rulings that significantly strengthened legal protections for trans people across Europe. These decisions advanced mutual recognition of legal gender recognition (LGR) across Member States (Mirin case), recognised non-binary people for the first time, expanded discrimination protections to cover changes in gender identity (Mousse case), and required swift updates to identity documents for both refugees and citizens without sterilisation requirements (Deldits case).

TGEU played an active role in all of these cases, supporting applicants and their legal teams, working closely with ILGA-Europe's legal experts, and engaging pro bono support from partner law firms and legal specialists. Through this collaborative legal advocacy, we ensured that the voices and experiences of trans people were represented at Europe's highest court.

Looking ahead, we are cautiously optimistic that the Court will further affirm the right to identity documents matching one's gender identity. In the pending Shipov case, Advocate General Richard de la Torre recognised this as essential for exercising freedom of movement within the EU—an important step towards an EU-wide right to legal gender recognition. In spring, TGEU not only provided assistance to the legal representatives of the applicant but also supported their pleadings in the oral hearing at the CJEU in Luxembourg. In the face of increasingly regressive national laws enforcing a rigid gender binary, these developments are critical to safeguarding fundamental rights.

Confirming TGEU's analysis of the last 15 years, Advocate General Tamara Capeta argued in *Commission v. Hungary* that the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of "sex" in Article 21 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights also encompasses a person's gender identity. Should the CJEU confirm this interpretation, it would finally enshrine at EU level the understanding—long advocated by TGEU—that trans people are protected under EU non-discrimination law.

Responding to a core TGEU demand, the European Commission committed in its renewed EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy to monitor how Member States and accession countries implement CJEU case law. Activists and lawyers continue to report significant gaps between the CJEU's interpretation of EU law and national implementation—a gap TGEU works tirelessly to close. In 2025, we met several times with the EU Commission, highlighting implementation gaps and risks an à-la-carte approach by member States to CJEU case law implementation contains for European cohesion and the Rule of Law.

In 2025, **TGEU supported 15 national-level cases** aimed at clarifying and strengthening trans rights protections. We will continue to collaborate with community partners across Europe to bring further strategic cases to the CJEU—particularly to secure legal gender recognition for non-binary people, minors, married trans people, and trans parents.

Meanwhile, the **European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR)** communicated six trans-related cases this year, addressing issues such as unlawful asylum detention, mandatory psychiatric testing for LGR, de facto LGR bans, and insufficient hate crime protections. The Court reaffirmed in *T.H. v Czechia* that sterilisation requirements for

LGR violate the European Convention on Human Rights. TGEU intervened or supported applicants and legal teams in all these cases, including those challenging the UK Supreme Court's exclusion of trans persons in the For Women Scotland (Ltd) case and a collective action against Hungary's LGR ban.

Recognising that a judgment's delivery marks the beginning—not the end—of change, TGEU intensified its work on judgment implementation. We supported members in keeping the Council of Europe informed of states' (non-)compliance with ECtHR rulings and exposed continuing resistance and outright defiance by several governments. This vital work is carried out in close cooperation with the European Implementation Network and our broader human rights litigation partners.

Our annual Trans Legal Network meeting (17–18 November, Brussels) centred on the implications of new CJEU jurisprudence. Lawyers from across the EU and accession countries exchanged updates on ongoing cases and discussed implementation challenges directly with representatives from the European Commission and European Parliament.



Photo: Members of TGEU Trans Legal Network discussing with Members of the European Parliament recent wins at the Court of Justice and status of implementation

To broaden access to recent legal developments, TGEU organised its first public legal webinar in October. The event gathered lawyers, paralegals, and activists to explore

key advances in trans rights case law and hear academic experts discuss the Advocate General's opinion in Shipov.

Looking beyond Europe, TGEU shared its decade-long experience of connecting and empowering trans-focused lawyers with colleagues from Central Asia. This exchange aims to strengthen regional legal networks and enhance access to justice globally.

In the coming years, TGEU will prioritise dissemination and capacity building, ensuring that activists, judges, policymakers, and legal practitioners are equipped to apply and promote these legal advancements. We are developing a practical, accessible publication on the CJEU's recent trans rights case law, accompanied by a recorded webinar which will be available to members via the Trans Leadership Academy. This builds on our 2025 publication on 50 Key Cases on Trans Rights in Europe, which consolidated national and European jurisprudence.

Our expertise on trans CJEU case law is increasingly sought after—evidenced by invitations to contribute to strategic litigation proposals and deliver specialised training sessions. We thus supported the case of a trans parent in Germany for proper recognition in their child's birth certificate, introducing a data protection law argument. We also advised in a non-binary case from Germany involving Ryanair that led to an out-of-court settlement, which effectively led to the company adapting its ticket-booking system to provide for an alternative to binary gender options. We provided an expert letter to a challenge before the Spanish Constitutional Court for an "X" marker. Similarly, we provided an expert letter to an strategic judicial LGR case in Albania. We worked intensively with different actors on judicial ways challenging the UK Supreme Court decision.

We joined a coalition of NGOs making an intervention before the Belgian Constitutional Court in support of the Belgian sex work decriminalisation law and thus pushing back against the abolitionist claimants. We supported our member organisations in Lithuania in view of a decision by the Constitutional Court that dealt with the questions whether existing laws and the absence of a possibility to change the name and gender marker of a trans person are constitutional. We also shared strategic advice, based on recent CJEU case law, with our members in Latvia to support their efforts for LGR procedures that are accessible for minors and for educational documents that are adapted to a student's chosen name and gender. We support a

group of French NGOs that legally challenges a list, enabling the Police to see previously held names and gender markers of a person. In April, we met with some member organisations from Italy, amongst others discussing legal pathways to ensure that minors can adapt daily documents, such as bus tickets or library cards to reflect their lived realities.

Finally, recognising the global dimension of anti-trans backlash, TGEU strengthened its international alliances. At an INCLO-organised seminar in Budapest, trans and allied litigators from across the world shared strategies to counter coordinated anti-trans attacks. The cooperation continues beyond the event, fostering mutual support and joint legal strategies for global trans rights protection.

Strategic communications

The Transfeminist (Cross-Movement) Solidarity Campaign was delivered in 2025 as the key strategic communications initiative. The work was implemented in collaboration with an external consultant, with review and supervisory support from the Policy and Communications team leads. Following a transparent consultant selection process, the project included comprehensive desk messaging research, two focus groups to test and refine messaging, and structured engagement with partner organisations and the membership. These activities culminated in two core campaign outputs:

- A collaborative Manifesto defining what transfeminist solidarity means in practice, developed on the basis of the messaging research and subsequently reviewed and endorsed by key partner organisations (AWID, ENAR, IPPF, Heinrich Böll Foundation, Deutscher Frauenrat, and EL*C);
- A messaging Toolkit, published to translate the research findings into clear, structured recommendations for organisations seeking to advance transfeminist solidarity.

Together, these outputs positioned the Manifesto as the campaign's principal public-facing document, articulating why trans rights are a feminist issue, how transfeminist solidarity can be practiced, and why cross-movement solidarity is essential in the current political context. The campaign primarily targeted feminists

who are already trans allies—equipping them with arguments to engage more hesitant audiences—and feminist organisations across Europe. The public-facing announcement of the campaign's outcomes is planned for the beginning of 2026.

Objective 7 – Implementation of the EU's LGBTIQ+ Strategy and Other Regional Processes

The first EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025 marked a historic turning point for the European Union, signalling explicit commitment to advance and protect the rights of LGBTI people across the region. For the first time, the Commission set out a comprehensive framework that sought not only to reinforce fundamental rights, but also to enshrine legal protections against discrimination in a coordinated and strategic manner. This ambitious step could not have been more timely. In recent years, the rise of right-wing movements has fuelled unprecedented hostility towards LGBTI communities, with trans people in particular targeted by anti-gender rhetoric that wrongly portrays their very existence as a threat to women's rights and gender equality. Governments in several Member States, including Slovakia, Hungary, and Bulgaria, have introduced policies that actively restrict trans people's rights, from bans on legal gender recognition to attacks on inclusive education systems.

Against this backdrop, TGEU engaged deeply and consistently with the European Commission throughout the consultation process for the renewed Equality Strategy that opened earlier this year. Working in close collaboration with our members, we developed a detailed position paper outlining the most pressing needs of trans people across the Union and providing concrete proposals for action. We also participated in the EU LGBTIQ Equality Subgroup meeting in April 2025, shortly after the consultation launched, where we highlighted the urgent gaps that persist in areas such as legal protection, healthcare, data collection, and asylum. Our intervention aimed to ensure that the renewed strategy would meet the scale of the challenges faced by trans communities, especially in Member States where governments are actively rolling back rights.

When the renewed Equality Strategy was released in October, TGEU welcomed the Commission's continued commitment to strengthening the rights of LGBTI people. The

strategy rightly acknowledges the growing hostility in the region and the need for coordinated EU-level responses. At the same time, we expressed our disappointment that the commitments relating specifically to trans people do not go far enough to meet this pivotal moment. Structural challenges such as discriminatory legal frameworks, lack of access to trans-specific healthcare, and increased barriers to legal gender recognition require stronger and more explicit action. During the Subgroup meeting in November 2025, we explored these gaps further with the Commission, outlining priority areas that must be reinforced to ensure meaningful implementation, particularly in Member States where political resistance to trans equality remains entrenched.

This work will define TGEU's advocacy in the years ahead. We will continue to offer expert legal analysis, strategic guidance, and coordinated action with our members to support the implementation of the renewed Strategy. Our focus will be on ensuring that commitments translate into real improvements in the daily lives of trans people, particularly those most affected by intersecting forms of discrimination. By maintaining close engagement with EU institutions and partners, and by responding swiftly to emerging threats, TGEU will work to ensure that the renewed Strategy fulfils its promise and upholds the EU's fundamental values of equality, dignity, and justice for all.

While the EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2026-30 was the core priority for TGEU, we also actively contributed to other important and relevant consultations for other upcoming EU strategies. The purpose behind this is to ensure that there is a whole-of-Commission approach to ensuring LGBTI and specifically trans equality, and that other key EU strategies also take into consideration the needs and priorities of the trans community. With this in mind, TGEU made submissions to the consultations on the new EU Civil Society Strategy, the European Democracy Shield, the Anti-Racism Strategy, and the Multi-annual Financial Framework (MFF). In particular on funding for the trans movement, TGEU has been working closely with a network of civil society organisations working on issues of gender and sexuality to advocate for substantial funding for civil society in the next MFF. This work will continue into 2026 and 2027, as negotiations on the next budget speed up.

The Council of Europe remained a key advocacy target for TGEU in 2025. We

continued to actively participate in the expert group of the Steering Committee on Anti-discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion as civil society observers. In this role, TGEU contributed to the development of the newly adopted Recommendation on the rights of intersex persons and will contribute to the drafting process of a new report on protecting the right to non-discrimination based on gender expression. With the support of the Council of Europe, TGEU also conducted a study on the experiences of transphobic hate speech online and will publish the results shortly.

Strategic Goal 3: Protect Our People

Specific objectives under this goal are merged in this chapter.

In 2025, TGEU concentrated on strengthening trans-led groups and activists facing increasing funding challenges. Early in the year, recognising that many members were experiencing financial constraints, we prioritised providing practical and timely support. This included organising webinars and consultations focused on fundraising strategies, which consistently emerged as a critical need during our ongoing one-to-one sessions with members. To make support more accessible, we introduced bi-weekly virtual office hours in English and Russian, offering informal opportunities for members to connect with TGEU staff, ask questions, share feedback, and receive tailored guidance.

This year, TGEU produced a report on violence against trans people in EECA entitled *Systemic harm, human cost: Documenting anti-trans violence in Eastern Europe and Central Asia*. A result of a collaborative documentation project carried out with partners across EECA, the report provides a quantitative and qualitative analysis based on 88 cases of anti-trans violence in 12 countries. Key findings show the intersectional character and political nature of violence against trans people in EECA. Key recommendations include repelling discriminatory laws, strengthening community-based responses to violence, and enabling structural change to efficiently address systemic discrimination.

In February, we carried out a membership survey to assess how funding cuts are affecting trans-led organisations and to gain a clearer understanding of the emerging

needs within our communities. Many reported reductions in essential services such as psychological support, legal aid, and safe community spaces, with some scaling down operations or transitioning to volunteer-led models. Despite these challenges, members showcased resilience, developing innovative fundraising approaches, mutual aid networks, and strategic partnerships to sustain advocacy and community work. These findings prompted TGEU to refine our support strategy, ensuring that the groups most affected by funding pressures received targeted assistance.

To respond effectively, we developed a dedicated resource page on our website, serving as a collective knowledge hub for fundraising strategies, ideas, and tools. Among the resources made available this year is *“Owning our voice, resisting the noise: media engagement and digital wellbeing essentials for trans communities”*, which offers guidance on safe and effective media engagement and digital self-care. Our newsletter was also relaunched, and we started to share up-to-date funding opportunities through our mailing list.

Strategic Goal 4: Support Our members

Specific objectives under this goal are merged in this chapter.

Direct financial support remained a cornerstone of TGEU's approach. Within the EU, the Financial Support to Third Parties initiative was expanded to subgrant four groups instead of three, despite the same budget as the previous year. This decision recognised the transformative potential of even modest funding in empowering trans-led organisations to implement projects, gain experience, and reinforce their roles in national and regional movements. The selected organisations—Billitis Foundation in Bulgaria, Transcore in Romania, TransInterQueer – TrIQ in Germany, and Transvanilla in Hungary—each received €22,500 to carry out initiatives centred on empowerment, visibility, and community protection.



Photo: TGEU subgrant partner - Bilitis from Bulgaria - hosting a workshop for their community



Photo: "Growing Stronger" zine produced by TrIQ - TGEU subgrant partner from Germany

In Eastern Europe and Central Asia, six groups had initially been selected as subgrantee partners in late 2024, spanning Armenia, Azerbaijan, Serbia, Kazakhstan,

Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. However, due to the new U.S. administration's policies and funding cuts, the EECA-focused project was terminated in April 2025. TGEU mitigated the disruption by providing administrative support, counselling, and transferring most of the planned subgrant funds, allowing groups to continue planned activities with adjustments. Even in this constrained context, we maintained capacity-building and fundraising support, including webinars and consultations, to strengthen members' resilience and strategic planning.

Throughout the year, TGEU conducted 24 one-to-one consultations, including 15 virtual sessions tailored to individual members and prospective participants. These discussions spanned fundraising, advocacy planning, organisational development, and collaboration strategies, allowing TGEU to understand local contexts and offer targeted guidance. **On-site visits** complemented virtual support, reinforcing connections and offering hands-on assistance. In Portugal, we engaged with Grupo de Reflexão e Intervenção Trans (GRIT), exchanging ideas on organisational development, leadership, and community engagement. In Italy, attendance at a national Italia Trans Agenda gathering allowed TGEU to contribute advocacy guidance on a proposed law restricting trans-specific healthcare for young people, while connecting with both prospective and existing members. In Croatia, our EECA Advocacy and Programme Officer participated in a national symposium on trans-specific healthcare hosted by kolekTIRV, providing presentations, advocacy support, and individual consultations with local activists to explore collaboration and organisational development opportunities.

Peer-to-peer learning remained central to TGEU's approach. Through PeerNetz, members from MGRM in Malta showcased a locally produced documentary highlighting intersections between trans rights, migration, racial justice, and access to safety. The screening and discussion encouraged reflection on systemic inequalities, sharing of local experiences, and direct engagement with creators, reinforcing solidarity and cross-regional knowledge exchange.

Capacity-building programming further strengthened members' advocacy, leadership, and fundraising skills. The second cycle of the **Fundraising Empowerment Programme** provided participants with in-depth training on grant writing, theory of change, and practical fundraising tools, with guidance from a guest facilitator from the Guerrilla

Foundation. Participants developed project ideas and budgets, translating abstract concepts into fundable initiatives while enhancing their confidence and strategic thinking. A joint online session with alumni from the first cycle, organised in partnership with Mama Cash, created space for exchange and collective learning, and several participants have since successfully secured grants for their initiatives, demonstrating tangible impact.



Photo: W'qaas Ali Khan from Guerilla Foundation leads an interactive session on the foundations of grant writing during an Advanced Fundraising training held at the TGEU office in Berlin

The **Trans Feminine Leaders Academy** also reached the closing stage of its second cycle, culminating in a retreat in Lisbon, Portugal, where participants engaged in movement building, advocacy, and fundraising, including engagement with the EU Gender Equality Strategy. Participants refined and presented their own projects, exchanging feedback and providing mutual support.



Photo: Second in-person training of the Trans Feminine Leaders Academy in Lisbon with the 2024/25 cohort and TGEU

Following the termination of the EECA-focused project, TGEU restructured its capacity-building support to address members' most urgent needs. **Webinars on UN advocacy in Russian and English reached 73 participants**, covering human rights mechanisms and practical examples of engagement. Two fundraising webinars in Russian engaged 24 participants, equipping them with practical tools and interactive guidance on navigating regional challenges.

TGEU also actively engaged members in **advocacy campaigns**, ensuring that their voices and experiences inform visibility and movement-building efforts. Key communication campaigns of TGEU (TDoR, TRIM, TMM/TDoR), and publication involved direct engagement with our membership through calls for contributions and individual work with members.

Strategic Goal 5: Strengthen Our Networks

Specific objectives under this goal are merged in this chapter.

Throughout the year, our work centered on weaving strategic, intersectional collaborations to strengthen cross-movement solidarity, support our diverse members, and amplify collective organising across Europe and Central Asia. In a landscape marked by rising anti-trans sentiment, shrinking protections, and widening inequalities, TGEU's dual focus on supporting members and partnering with strategic allies ensured that shared knowledge, trust, and care guided collective action and reinforced organisational resilience. In line with Goal 5 aimed at strengthening our networks, our efforts focused on engaging and broadening our membership while also enhancing partnerships with strategic allies.

Key activities included:

Collaborations

- To exchange information and share strategies for support, in April 2025, TGEU co-hosted a webinar on CEAS and trans asylum seekers with ORAM, attended by over 75 participants, exploring real-life implications, persistent barriers, and strategies for rights-based advocacy. In addition TGEU participated in ORAM's Stakeholder Consortium II, convening over 50 participants from 41 organisations across Europe and beyond. The event created space to reflect on collaboration, refugee-led participation, inclusive research practices, and locally rooted partnerships. TGEU's Policy and Asylum Officer, Farah Abdi, led a keynote session examining Common European Asylum System (CEAS) reforms and their impact on trans and gender-diverse asylum seekers.
- **Disability working group:** To enhance accessibility within TGEU and support members, we initiated discussions with the newly formed Disability Working Group. Together, we explored collaborative opportunities and mapped areas for improvement to ensure inclusive communications, events, and tools, strengthening organisational capacity to serve all members effectively.
- **Spring Leadership Kitchen coaching:** Through our partnership with Spring we created capacity strengthening opportunities. For example 11 members were selected to participate in the Leadership Kitchen online coaching series (June 2025- February 2026).

- **Ulex Project training and webinars:** Our members were given an opportunity to join Ulex Project's training on the Ecology of Social Movements, gaining practical frameworks for building resilient, strategic movements. Additionally, a webinar on intersectional organising brought together 11 participants from across the region, focusing on skills for collective organising, individual healing, and shared organisational culture. In addition Ulex also extended an open invitation to TGEU members to partner in proposal writing for activities aimed at skill enhancement and organisational strengthening.

Strategic engagement

- **Donor and partner briefing:** Following the announcement of the US funding cuts in February, TGEU convened a webinar with partners who also fund in the region. The goal was to strategise and share member needs identified in our survey, and explore areas for collaboration to ensure our members had broadened support. Additionally, in partnership with Mama Cash, we delivered *Resourcing Movements for Resilience*, a webpage providing members with tools, guidance, and resources to sustain and strengthen collective organising.

Co-creating resources

- **Trans Refugee Network (TRN) guide:** Building on lessons from TRN's work, we co-created a resource guide dubbed *Organising on the Margins and Beyond*. This guide is aimed at trans refugee activists and supportive allies. The resource consolidates practical tools, strategies, and relational practices for intersectional movement building, highlighting the agency, resilience, and leadership of trans refugees while equipping allies and organisations to step into supportive, accountable roles.
- **The Media Engagement guide** published this year is structured in two complementary parts: *Owning our voice*, which focuses on engaging with journalists, preparing for interviews, and pitching stories, and *Resisting the noise*, which addresses mental health protection, media manipulation, and staying grounded amid digital media storms and

brings together practical lessons from years of media work by the TGEU communications team alongside insights and tips contributed by members through an open call. Designed as a hands-on resource for trans activists and community representatives navigating today's complex media environment, it does not aim to provide a theoretical overview of media or communications, but offers grounded, real-world guidance on how to show up in media spaces safely and effectively, with clarity, confidence, and mutual support.

Our publications in 2025

1. Trans rights in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus: Armenia, Montenegro, Ukraine
2. Owning our voice. Resisting the noise: Media engagement and digital wellbeing essentials for trans communities.
3. Organising on the margins and beyond. Strategies for sustaining trans refugees intersectional movement building and rights advocacy.
4. Human Rights and Gender Identity: Best Practice Catalogue (Safety, Security and Non-discrimination).
5. The Trans rights revolution. An activists' guide to groundbreaking CJEU cases 2024-2025.
6. Explainer: What the European Health Data Space means for trans people.
7. The EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025 and its key action items for trans people: TGEU Progress Report 2024
8. The EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025 and its key action items for trans people: TGEU Progress Report 2025
9. Key Cases: Legal Gender Recognition in European and National Courts (2017–2024)
10. In this together: Transfeminist solidarity messages that bring us closer.
11. Organising On The Margins And Beyond: Strategies for sustaining trans refugees' intersectional movement building & rights advocacy

Looking ahead

TGEU envisions a world free from discrimination, where gender diversity is celebrated, trans people are valued, and trans movements are intersectional, evolving, and grounded in the diverse realities of our communities.

Trans people across Europe and Central Asia face escalating anti-trans aggression, reduced funding and decreasing political support. Whilst trans visibility might still be historically high, an overall rollback on rights, values, and democracy threatens trans people's access to rights, healthcare, and wellbeing, resulting in poor mental health outcomes and a threat to lives. In many regions, trans rights remain absent or precarious. Internally, TGEU grapples with funding constraints, capacity limitations, and the need for proactive membership engagement.

To address these challenges, TGEU focuses on the following interconnected goals, as articulated in the Strategic Plan 2026-29 adopted by our Members in September 2025:

1. Organisational Sustainability: TGEU will strengthen its governance, sustainability, and inclusivity, becoming a fully accountable, transparent, resilient and intersectional membership organisation.

2. Community Empowerment and movement building: TGEU will invest in strengthening the capacity, skills, resilience and wellbeing of trans communities at the local level.

3. Policy Advocacy: TGEU will protect, advance and uphold the rights of trans people, across Europe and Central Asia, fostering resilience and hope against anti-equality forces to ensure trans people can thrive.

4. Research: TGEU will produce data-driven insights and knowledge on the diverse lived realities of trans people in the region, and globally, to inform and guide our work.

Our strategic priorities will continue to be guided and shaped by our core values.

Community Involvement: We work in, for and with trans communities, amplifying their voices and driving collective action.

Intersectional Approach: We address overlapping forms of marginalisation and centre the experiences of the most impacted.

Decolonial Approach: We challenge Eurocentric power dynamics, unlearn colonial practices, and amplify trans histories and realities.

Wellbeing Focus: We are committed to fostering wellbeing and sustainability within our organisation and the communities we serve by prioritising individual wellbeing and collective care, and accountability.

tgeu.

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AND CENTRAL ASIA



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