

## **Our team**

## **Board**

2023 - 2025

Isa Nico Borrelli

They/Them  $\cdot$  Italy  $\cdot$  Co-Chair





**Isa Nico Borrelli** (they/them) are an author, lecturer, and independent researcher focused on trans politics and language, part of PolitesSe, Centre of Research in Politics and Theories of Sexualities for the University of Verona.

Since 2015, they have worked nationally and internationally as a political communication strategist, studying and developing manifestos, policies, and comparative analyses, particularly concerning marginalised communities, including the LGB and trans communities. In 2023 they won the Rainbow Italian Awards for their work and activism. In 2024, their first essay "Gender is Over" was published by the Italian publisher Feltrinelli.



They are a militant trans/feminist activist who crosses grassroot	s movements and international
organisations such as Separate Trans Collective Dissidente and	d Genderlens.

David Cuka

He/Him · Austria · Co-Chair





**David Cuka** (he/him) is a documentary photographer, artist, activist, and transgender man from Albania, currently based in Vienna, Austria. He is the founder of *999 Portraits*, a long-term project dedicated to highlighting human diversity and amplifying marginalised voices.

Since 2016, he has been actively engaged in human rights and equality, bringing together his expertise in visual arts, advocacy, and international collaboration to build bridges between communities and institutions across Europe.



Erman Dolmac?

They/Them  $\cdot$  Cyprus  $\cdot$  Board Member





**Erman Dolmac?** (they/them) is a Cypriot activist and researcher working at the intersections of LGBTI+ rights, feminist/queer theory, and ecology.

They coordinate the LGBTI rights Programme at the Human Rights Platform in Cyprus and are pursuing a PhD in Gender Studies at the University of Cyprus.

They organised grassroots initiatives, including intercommunal United by Pride and have extensive advocacy experience at both local and international levels. Finally, their work is rooted in creating spaces of justice, solidarity, and care in divided, postconflict and postcolonial contexts.



Tayri Fadil

 $\textbf{She/Her} \cdot \textbf{Italy} \cdot \textbf{Board Member}$ 





Polo Kebadze

He/Him · Georgia · Board Member



## Toggle Accordion



**Polo Kebadze** (he/him) is a young transgender man from Georgia with three years of experience in activism and NGO work.

Currently, he works at 'Temida,' a trans-led organisation in Tbilisi, providing HIV prevention services to trans and queer individuals. He also manages the Transgender Men Initiative Club in Georgia.



With a background in psychology,	Polo is dedicated to	advancing mental	health support	within the
community and is pursuing a caree	er as a psychotherap	oist.		

Lilit Martirosyan

She/Her · Armenia · Board Member





**Lilit Martirosyan** (she/her) is a transgender woman activist and the founding President of the Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO, the first trans-led organisation in Armenia.

Her leadership has played a pivotal role in advancing the visibility and recognition of trans communities in the South Caucasus and Central Asia. With more than 12 years of experience in human rights, she has extensive expertise in advocacy, policy reform, and movement building.

She also possesses strong skills in conflict management, strategic communications, community organising, and international cooperation, and collaborates with numerous global organisations to strengthen trans



rights and equality at regional and international levels	rights	and e	equality	at	regional	and	international	levels.
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Aleksa Radonji?

 $\textit{He/Him} \cdot \textit{Slovenia/Montenegro} \cdot \textit{Board Member}$ 





**Aleksa Radonji?** (he/him) is a Montenegrin civil activist. He graduated at the Academy of Fine Arts, University of Ljubljana, with a BA degree in Art Conservation and Restoration.

With his educational and life experiences, he honours interdisciplinarity in all aspects of his work. At seventeen, he first joined Montenegro Pride Organisational Board, familiarising himself with the work of then recently founded Association Spectra, where 6 years later he would start working as a Communications Officer.

With current focus on LGR in Montenegro, he directs Spectra's campaigns to mobilise local and regional



communities, highlighting self-determination, being inherently anti-colonial, as a fundamental val	lue.
Alex Shah	
She/They · Azerbaijan · Board Member	
Toggle Accordion	





**Alex Shah** (she/they) is a multimedia journalist and young trans activist focused on reporting the voices of marginalised and underrepresented communities since the age of 16.

She publicly advocates for the legal and social protection of LGBTI communities, with a specific focus on trans sex workers, minors, youth in rural areas and students in her country and region.



Purity K Tumukwasibwe

She/Her  $\cdot$  Sweden  $\cdot$  Board Member





Purity K Tumukwasibwe (she/her) is a trans woman and trans activist from Uganda residing in Sweden.

She's a social scientist, and the Executive Director of Queerstion media (a BPOC trans refugees organisation based in Sweden) an anti-racism consultant at IGLYO, a co-founder and Board Member of Rainbow Refugees Sweden, co-founder of Refugee Trans Initiative Kenya, actress with National Black Theatre of Sweden, a musician who uses music as a tool to activism against transphobia, racism and refugee-phobia and a mother to baby Asante.

## Staff

Miles Tanhira

He/Him · Programmes Manager





Founder of Queerstion Media, Miles (he/him) is a journalist and brings over 10 years of experience within media & communication, LGBTQ and migration activism.

Miles holds a Masters in International Migration and Ethnic Relations, BSc in Political Science and a BA in Communication Science.

He has worked previously for RFSL as coordinator for a Global LGBT Leadership training Rainbow Leaders as well as Editor for Soginews global LGBT news site.

Miles wants to amplify the voices of further marginalised trans communities particularly trans migrants in



Europe through an intersectional perspective.

Languages: English, Shona, and Swedish.

Vanya Solovey

He/Him · EECA Advocacy & Programme Officer





Vanya (he/him) has previously worked with TGEU as a translator and interpreter, and will now join as EECA Officer. He comes from Russia and has experience in grassroots leftist, feminist, queer, and trans activism.

With a background in linguistics and gender studies, Vanya has written his doctoral thesis on the feminist movement in Russia.

Languages: English, Russian, German, French, and some Czech.



Daniyar Orsekov

He/Him · Senior EECA Programme Officer





Daniyar (he/him) started his activist journey in 2004 in Kyrgyzstan, Central Asia. In 2009, Daniyar became the founder of national LGBT organisation Kyrgyz Indigo and worked for 10 years as its Executive Director.

Since 2020 Daniyar has been working at international organisation ECOM as an advocacy coordinator and contributed to capacity building and expert agency of transgender people of Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Languages: English, Russian, Kyrgyz.



Richard Köhler

He/Him · TGEU Expert Advisor & Senior Policy Officer





Richard Köhler (he/him) built up TGEUs policy and advocacy work at the European level and has been a trans activist for two decades.

Richard leads on TGEUs work for self-determined legal gender recognition procedures and successful strategic litigation to help advance and protect trans people's rights in the courts.

Richard holds a degree in International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (LL.M). He also has a background in International Business Administration with specialisation on NGOs in Russian-speaking countries.

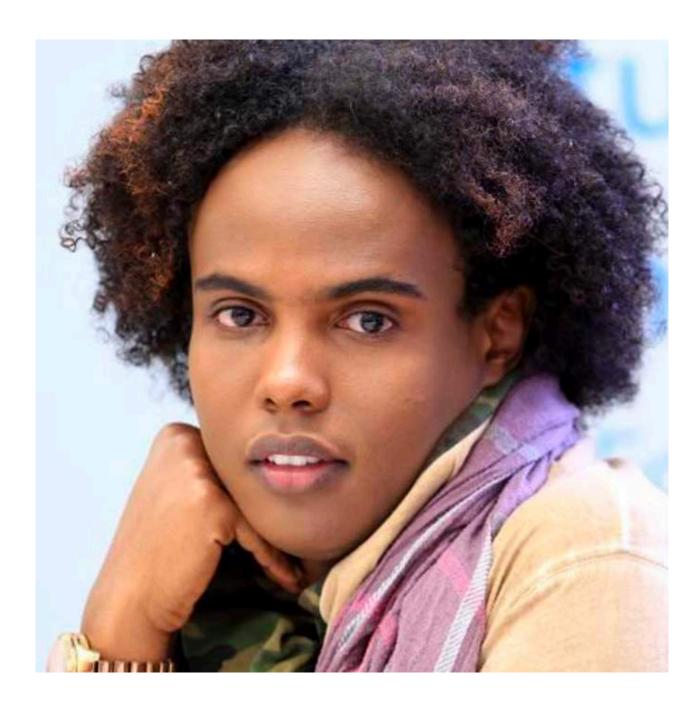


Languages: (	German,	English,	Russian,	some	French.

Farah Abdi

She/Her · Policy Officer, Asylum





Farah (she/her) came to Europe in the end of 2012, fleeing fear of persecution because of her gender identity. Her work as an activist began as a way to combat the rise in xenophobia, racism, islamophobia, and other forms of discrimination.

Farah has worked relentlessly over the last 8 years to tell the unheard stories of refugees. She wrote and published her first autobiography, "Never Arrive," in 2015. She has also written columns on immigration for publications like Malta Today and the New Internationalist.

Farah looks forward to contributing to TGEU and bringing a new perspective.



Languages:	English.	Kiswahili.	and	some	German.

Deekshitha Ganesan

She/Her · Manager – Policy and Advocacy





Deekshitha (she/her) is originally from India and is a lawyer by training. Prior to joining TGEU, she worked as a research and litigation associate at the Centre for Law and Policy Research in India, focusing on transgender rights, disability rights, and equality and non-discrimination.

At TGEU, Deekshitha works primarily on the portfolios of health and responding to the anti-gender movement.

Languages: English, Tamil, Hindi.



Nadya Yurinova

Any pronouns · Senior Communications Officer







Nadya (any pronouns) is communications strategist with over 15 years of experience in brand and community building, marketing leadership, and storytelling for impact initiatives, global consumer brands, and tech companies.

Proud intersex community member and advocate, Nadya draws on her media and creative background to explore new territories of culture, language, and technology and develop sustainable, human-centered narratives.

Her projects have been featured in major publications such as the New York Times, Vogue, Forbes, and others.

Languages: English, Russian, German.

Nisha Damji

They/Them · Communications Officer





Nisha (they/them) is responsible for the TGEU's websites, social media channels, and newsletters. Nisha focuses on community-driven, engaging editorial content and accessible communication.

Originally from the UK, Nisha has a background in Sociology. After university, Nisha trained as a journalist and holds a professional qualification in strategic communications.

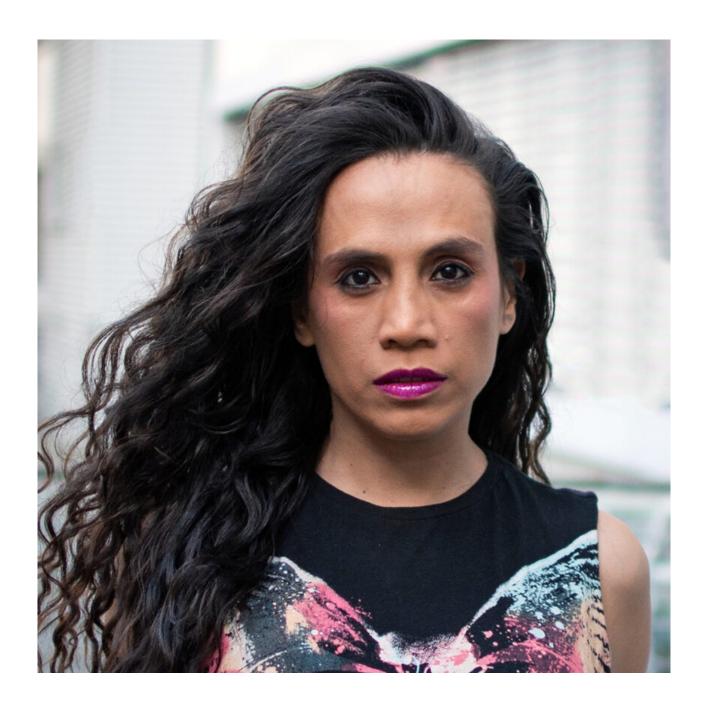
Languages: English, Gujarati, and German.



Amanita Calderon-Cifuentes

She/Her · HIV Research and Advocacy Officer





Amanita Calderón-Cifuéntes (she/her) is a Colombian scientist and trans-activist with over a decade of research in microbiology and cellular stress response. Her work focuses on sexual and reproductive health and rights, particularly infectious diseases like HIV and MonkeyPox. As a Microbiologist living with HIV, she combines expertise and personal experience in her advocacy. Amanita worked at Gilead Sciences on HIV education and serophobia projects.

At TGEU, she collaborates with UNAIDS, WHO, and ECDC to advocate for policy changes supports at-risk trans communities and addressing violence and discrimination.



Languages:	Spanish.	English.	and	French.

Freya Watkins

She/Her · Senior Research Officer





Originally from the UK, Freya (she/her) is a researcher and activist with experience in disability, queerfeminist, union, and housing struggles.

With an academic background in linguistics and psychology, Freya collaborated closely with deaf and hearing sign language-using communities during her doctoral research.

She previously worked as German-English translator and was on a Steering Committee researching queerphobic conversion practices within psychology.

At TGEU, Freya will use her data and research skills for trans rights, leading the Trans Rights Map and



Trans Murder Monitoring projects, as well as contributing to other research.

Languages: English, German, British Sign Language, some French, Spanish, ASL, IS, DGS.

Alina Kolosova

She/Her · Grant/Operations Manager







Alina (she/her) is trans rights activist, the co-founder of initiative in Tajikistan with more than seven years in human rights advocacy and over two decades working in finance, corporate governance, and grant management.

She worked for intergovernmental humanitarian, international post-war reconstruction and development organisations, private bank, public-private partnerships, and multilateral projects, for USAID among many.

Alina is an Economics, Tax Law, Audit, and Evaluation expert, particularly in institutional policy design, operational capacity-building, risk assessment, and development of a blueprint for organisation's financial sustainability.

Languages: Russian, English, Farsi, basic Uzbek.

Kalondu Mutinda

She/Her · Operations Officer





With over eight years of experience in the financial services sector, Kalondu (she/her) uses her knowledge to contribute to sound and sustainable financial practices at TGEU.

Kalondu is a committed LGBT activist and serving board member of Rainbow Women of Kenya. She believes that our freedom is interconnected: no one is free until everyone is free.

Kalondu holds a Master's in Business Administration and a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Nairobi. She is currently studying for a Master's in International and Development Economics at the University of Applied Science (HTW), Berlin.



Vanja Cipurkovic

He/Him · Community Building Officer





Trans community organiser with ten years of experience, Vanja (he/him) is responsible for engaging with TGEU's wide network of members to support their movement-building efforts.

Part of Trans Network Balkan since its inception, Vanja served as the Network's Visibility Coordinator in 2018, and later moved to the role of Capacity Building Coordinator.

As a member of his local LGBTQI group in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Vanja took the lead on a portfolio of arts and culture-focused events.

Languages: English, BCMS, basic German



Darius Gervinskas

She/Her · Policy and Advocacy Officer





At TGEU, Darius (she/her) works primarily on the portfolios of gender-based violence, hate speech and hate crime, and socioeconomic rights.

She has a master's degree in Human Rights from University College London and is passionate about intersectional human rights advocacy.

Prior to joining TGEU, Darius worked as the London and Southeast Education Manager for Diversity Role Models.

She was also Member of the Advisory Panel at IGLYO – The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,



Transgender, Queer & Intersex Youth and Student Organisation, and GIESC Consultant at ILGA World
Languages: Lithuanian, English, German, some Russian
Béla Hackenberg
She/Her · Communications Coordinator
Toggle Accordion





Béla (she/her) supports the Communications team with content production as well as contributing to major awareness campaigns.

Outside of work, she produces and hosts a queer-feminist interview podcast that focuses on amplifying the voices of multiply marginalised queer and trans people.

Béla is also a freelance political educator, journalist, author, moderator, community organiser & artist for various projects in Berlin and beyond.



She has a bachelor's degree in European Science with a specialisation in Gender & Diversity Studies from Maastricht University and is currently pursuing her masters in Gender, Intersectionality & Politics at Freie Universität Berlin.

Languages: English, German, some French & Spanish

Gloria Lentini

She/Her - Grants Development Officer





With a background in cultural diplomacy, project management, and grant coordination, Gloria (she/her) has extensive experience in securing and managing grants from European and international donors.

Before joining TGEU, she worked at a research organisation in official relations with UNESCO, where she focused on identifying funding opportunities, preparing successful project proposals, and liaising with



European and international partners.

She also volunteered with a grassroots association in Italy supporting marginalised groups, including migrants and unhoused people, where she contributed to initiatives fostering social inclusion, cultural participation, and awareness on gender identity and discrimination.

Languages: English, Spanish, Italian, German (intermediate) and French (basic)

## **Consultants**

Arpi Avetisyan

She/Her · Strategic Litigation Consultant







An international human rights lawyer with over 20 years of experience, Arpi (she/her) supports TGEU's strategic litigation work. Her career to date includes strategic litigation before the European Court of Human Rights, the European Court of Justice and UN human rights treaty bodies as well as research, advocacy, and capacity development.

Previously she led the strategic litigation work at ILGA-Europe. As the Litigation Adviser at INTERIGHTS, she provided litigation advice to NGOs in the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe.

Arpi holds a BA in Sociology and MA in Conflictology from Yerevan State University, Armenia; and LLM in International Human Rights Law from the University of Essex, UK.

Languages: English, Armenian, Russian, intermediate French.

Linn Julian Koletnik

They/Them · Research Consultant





Linn Julian Koletnik (they) works on our flagship research reports such as Trans Rights Index and Map, Trans Health Map and Trans Murder Monitoring.

Linn is a non-binary queer transfeminist activist and the Founder and former Executive Director of



TransAkcija Institute.

Linn holds an MA in Gender Studies from Central European University. They have been involved in Slovene LGBTIQ+ activism since 2006 and have experiences within various structures of organising, community and capacity building, advocacy, research and media work.

Languages: English and Slovene

Dragiša Mio?

He/Him · Graphic Design Consultant





Dragiša (he/him) is graphic designer who works on helping TGEU to convey their messages trough through beautiful visuals and thoughtful design.

He holds MS degree for Graphic Product Design from Faculty of Graphic Arts in Zagreb and has been working with NGO's who fight for human rights and wellbeing for over 7 years now.



## Sebastian Rowlands

They/Them  $\cdot$  Senior Advisor on Resilience and Backlash





As Senior Advisor on Resilience and Backlash, Sebastian will support TGEU to combat the anti-gender movement.

With eight years' experience in sexual and reproductive health and rights, HIV, global health, and LGBTQI+ rights, their interest lies in the intersection of gender and violence, sexuality, social norms, and marginalisation.