

Dear Activists,



my name is Julia Ehrt. I am the present co-chair of Transgender Europe. Transgender Europe is a network of trans organizations and groups in Europe and we work for the improvement of the situation of transgender people.

Unfortunately I cannot join you for the occasion of the trans remembrance meeting but Carla LaGata will join you in a few days representing Transgender Europe. Let me take this opportunity to first of all congratulate Pembe Hayat on behalf of Transgender Europe to this conference. The range of topics you will cover in the next seven days, the diversity of people speaking on the conference from Turkey and abroad is just amazing. This conference is an important part of trans work that Pembe Hayat does in Turkey. It gives visibility to transgender issues and raises awareness to the situation of transgender people in Turkey.

Both things are urgently needed!

I think we all know that the situation of Transgender people in Turkey is very difficult. The TGEU Trans Murder Monitoring Project revealed that Turkey is the country in Europe with the highest number of reported murders of trans people – 6 alone in this year. But despite of all this you – trans people, sex workers, activists, allies – are part of one of the most active and most vibrant transgender communities in Europe. I personally admire the courage of each and every one of you and your dedication to change the situation of trans people in Turkey to the better. Your commitment to human rights work in Turkey is vital to the trans community. Trans rights are human rights!

However TGEU believes that adding to the work done in Turkey itself international pressure is needed.

Pembe Hayat has called for an international campaign on the human rights situation of transgender people in Turkey. Transgender Europe will support this campaign. We will among other things help to find funders and reach out to other international allies to join the campaign. As network of trans organizations in Europe we will continue to have a spotlight on the situation in Turkey among our member organizations. We hope that together with other international human rights organizations this will shed a strong light on the worrying situation in Turkey and raise international attention for the subject.

TGEU is looking forward to further cooperation with you and now I wish you all a great and encouraging conference!