

# DYKE MARCH 2026

## (by SOFRA Queer Migrants e.V.)

**Hello Cologne!**

Dear community, chosen family, friends, and allies!

We, SOFRA Queer Migrants e.V., are standing here today

because we want to **celebrate:**

our love,

our anger,

our stories,

our bodies,

our communities,

and our resilience.

But we are **also** standing here because visibility alone is not enough.

A rainbow flag in a shop window is not enough—while queer migrants fear losing their homes.

Corporate Pride campaigns are not enough—while people are pushed back at borders, deported, or trapped in uncertainty.

A welcome on a stage is not enough—while queer people still face discrimination by authorities, schools, hospitals, shelters, and on the street.

Our work is about much more than bureaucracy.

It is about **dignity.**

It is about people being believed, supported, and reminded: **you do not have to face this alone.**

Once a month, at our SOFRA Open Space and our SOFRA FLINTA gathering, we meet to share experiences, foster solidarity, and build community.

At every gathering, our volunteers cook dinner for everyone.

That dinner says: **you belong.**

There is a place for you at this table.

And that is why being on this stage at the Dyke March matters so much.

The Dyke March is not a pre-party for tomorrow.

It is raw, radical, grassroots activism.

It is where we refuse to be erased.

Where we say: we are here, we are loud, and our liberation **must** be intersectional.

The Dyke March has never been only a celebration. It has **always** been a protest.

It reminds us that our rights were not handed to us as a gift.

They were fought for:

on the streets,

in kitchens and counselling centers,

in shared flats and bars,

in courtrooms and family conversations,

and in every moment when somebody decided: **I will not hide anymore.**

We must say this clearly: you cannot separate the fight against patriarchy from the fight against racism and sexism...

anti-Black racism and antisemitism...

Islamophobia, ableism, transphobia, and xenophobia.

We **cannot** speak about queer freedom while accepting violence against migrants and refugees.

We **cannot** demand safety for ourselves, and stay silent when others are locked out of safety.

This year, new EU rules under the Pact on Migration and Asylum took effect.

They promise "faster" procedures and stronger border management.

But for people seeking protection, "faster" can mean **less** time to be heard, **less** time to recover from trauma, and **less** time to access the support they need.

For queer refugees, this is not an abstract debate.

Imagine fleeing state-sponsored homophobia or transphobia, surviving a dangerous journey, and then being expected to prove the most intimate parts of your identity to a rushed, impersonal system.

Imagine facing isolation or violence in shelters, while wondering whether the people deciding your case will understand why returning may not be safe.

Queer refugees face multiple layers of discrimination.

That is why our solidarity must be more than a slogan. It must be practical, political, and lasting.

SOFRA works every day to break down these walls, but we cannot do it alone.

For everyone asking how to show up beyond today: **donate, volunteer, organize, and speak up.**

Financial support makes translation, legal advice, emergency assistance, and basic needs possible.

**We need you to** challenge racism and anti-migrant hatred where you encounter it: at work, at university, in your neighborhood, family, and friendship circles.

**Believe** people when they tell you about discrimination.

Share resources. Make space. Share power.

Speaking of volunteers: **look around.**

The people holding our banners, preparing meals, welcoming newcomers, accompanying people, and keeping everyday support going are the heart and soul of SOFRA.

Without your work, empathy, and fierce dedication, SOFRA would not exist.

**Thank you.** We see you. We love you. You are changing lives.

And let us remember those who cannot be here today:

people who have not yet found a safe place,

people who cannot travel,

people who are afraid.

We remember those lost to violence, hatred, war, borders, and indifference.

And we stand with those who do not yet know that they are not alone.

To them, we say: **You are not alone. You are not wrong. Your life is valuable. Your freedom is not negotiable.**

Tomorrow, the energy does not stop.

We will take this fight, this joy, and this solidarity to the streets for CSD.

SOFRA and baraka are forming a block in the parade: **Block Number 5.**

Come and find us. March with us. Dance with us.

Let us show this city what community looks like when nobody is left behind!

Because we are not here to ask for a place.

We are here because this place belongs to us, too.

There is no queer liberation without migrants.

Migrant justice **is** queer.

Our diversity is not a threat. It is our strength.

Let us not only be visible today.

For love without borders.

For dignity without conditions.

For freedom for all.

**Thank you, Cologne!**

**Happy Dyke March!**