

URGENT ACTION

PRIDES MUST BE ALLOWED TO PROCEED

Pride marches across Türkiye are once again under threat. For years, governorates have issued unlawful bans on Pride events, and police have used unnecessary force to disperse peaceful participants. Since 2015, authorities have routinely used the Law on Meetings and Demonstrations (Law No. 2911) and powers under the law on Provincial Administration (Law No. 5442) to justify these bans, which goes against Türkiye's human rights obligations. This year must be different. Authorities must immediately stop imposing unlawful restrictions on Pride events and they must fulfil their legal duty to enable and protect peaceful assemblies, not suppress them.

TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter to the government official(s) listed. Use the sample letter below as a guide or use your own words.
- [Click here](#) to report your action(s) on **UA 57.25**. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

Mr. Ali Yerlikaya
Minister of Interior
T.C. İçişleri Bakanlığı,
Bakanlıklar/ANKARA
Türkiye
Email: ozelkalem@icisleri.gov.tr
diab@icisleri.gov.tr

Send a copy of your letter to the address below

CC: Embassy of Türkiye in the United States
Ambassador Sedat Önal
2525 Massachusetts Avenue, NW,
Washington DC 20008
Email: embassy.washingtondc@mfa.gov.tr

Dear Minister,

I'm writing to urgently call on you to ensure that all those who wish to peacefully exercise their right to freedom of assembly to celebrate Pride marches across Türkiye are allowed to do so without undue hindrance, including unlawful bans by the authorities and unlawful use of force by law enforcement officials.

Over the past ten years, since 2015, LGBTI Pride marches across several provinces in Türkiye have been unlawfully and systematically hindered in violation of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and expression, and to non-discrimination. Law enforcement officials have used unnecessary force to disperse LGBTI rights activists and supporters exercising their rights. Scores have been arbitrarily detained, many hauled before the court on baseless charges and some later acquitted, in prosecutions that should never have been initiated.

I urge you to ensure that Türkiye fulfils its positive duty to enable and protect the exercise of the right to peaceful assembly and expression and to non-discrimination, as enshrined in international human rights law and standards by allowing Pride marches in Istanbul and elsewhere to proceed without undue restrictions.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Authorities in Türkiye have unlawfully and systematically hindered Pride marches since 2015, violating the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly, expression, and non-discrimination, protected under both the Turkish Constitution and international law, including the ICCPR and European human rights standards. Authorities have imposed blanket bans on Pride marches and related LGBTI events, including film screenings and picnics. In 2022, LGBTI rights organizations documented at least 10 Pride events banned across the country, with over 530 people detained during the Pride season.

During the [2023 Pride season](#), at least six provinces (Eskişehir, Aydın, Kocaeli, Antalya, Adana, İzmir) and four districts (Kadıköy, Şişli, Beyoğlu, Dağca) announced blanket bans on Pride month events lasting from a day to a month. At least 224 people were arbitrarily detained across the country, including peaceful protesters, lawyers, journalists, foreign nationals, and bystanders. Many detainees faced baseless prosecutions or intimidation, contributing to a climate of fear and suppression.

The [2024 Pride season](#) also saw continued bans, police violence, and public vilification of LGBTI rights activists and their allies, demonstrating a persistent pattern of repression. Although fewer people were detained than in previous years, this was largely due to the chilling effect of prior crackdowns, forcing organizers and participants to find innovative ways to circumvent bans and protect themselves. Solidarity actions remained notable but limited.

States have a positive obligation to facilitate peaceful assembly, enshrined in both domestic law and international human rights treaties that Türkiye is party to. The Turkish Constitution guarantees the right to freedom of peaceful assembly without government authorization. Turkish authorities must refrain from imposing blanket bans as they are a disproportionate restriction on the right to peaceful assembly and may have a discriminatory impact on LGBTI people. Any dispersal of assemblies must comply with the principles of legality, necessity, proportionality, and nondiscrimination, and only used as a last resort to protect legitimate aims that outweigh this right. Law enforcement officials must avoid force wherever possible, and any use of force must be necessary and proportionate.

The continued suppression of Pride events and LGBTI rights defenders violates Türkiye's legal obligations and undermines the fundamental rights of its citizens.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Turkish, English, or your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: August 7, 2025

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: LGBTI community in Türkiye (ALL)