



FROM 2015 TO TODAY

PROHIBITIONS ON

ISTANBUL

LGBTI+

PRIDE MARCHES

S P O D

From 2015 to Today Prohibitions on Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride Marches

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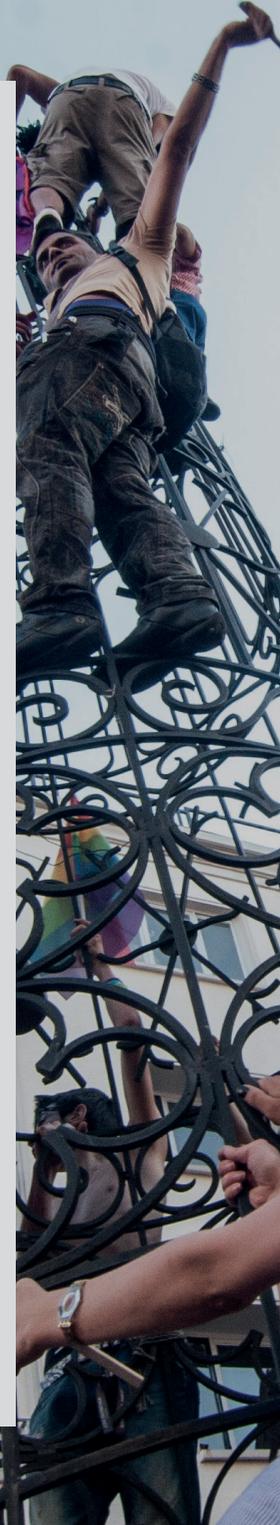
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INTRODUCTION

This report, prepared by SPoD Law and Access to Justice Coordinator Attorney Umut Rojda Yıldırım, is a brief summary of the rights violations experienced during the Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride Marches from 2015 to 2022. For 7 years, the story of every LGBTI+ person who could not participate in the Pride Marches, who was subjected to police attacks, who was tried with unjust lawsuits is actually between the lines of this report. While preparing the report, particularly the archive of KaosGL news website, the annual human rights monitoring reports of KaosGL Association and the Special Bulletin prepared by the Association for Monitoring Equal Rights were utilized. It should be noted that this report can only be a part of the state-sponsored and originated vortex of hate that has been rising against LGBTI+ persons since 2015.

The biggest deficiency felt during the writing of the report is that no systematic monitoring and advocacy activities have been carried out outside of LGBTI+ organizations against the violations of rights that have been happening in front of our eyes for years. This process, which started with the prevention of LGBTI+ Pride Marches, should be read together with the banning of Saturday Mothers/People, the detentions of Peace Mothers every week, police attacks on Gezi Resistance commemorations, and the attacks on the October 10 Massacre commemorations every year. Our wish is that LGBTI+ Pride Marches will again fill the streets and avenues freely with hundreds of thousands of people. We hope that this report can guide human rights defenders and stakeholders in terms of LGBTI+ advocacy activities.

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1 HISTORY OF LGBTI+ PRIDE MARCHES IN TURKEY AND THE WORLD

The term LGBTI+, which is a combination of the initials of the words lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and "+", which is the umbrella identifier of other sexual orientations and identities, has been used in our country as well as in the world for many years.

LGBTI+ Pride Weeks and Pride Marches, which have been organized for 20 years in Turkey and nearly 50 years in the world, are within the scope of the freedom of peaceful assembly in related to Article 34 of the Turkish Constitution and Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

LGBTI+ Pride Months has a historical importance for the LGBTI+ community. In Pride Months LGBTI+ people from all over the world basically celebrates their existence and activities are carried out for this purpose. Pride Months usually ends with marches at the end of June every year. Pride Marches are being organised in Istanbul for 20 years and Pride Weeks for 30 years. Apart from this, Pride Marches and Pride Weeks have been organized and continue to be organized in many provinces of Turkey.

Pride Marches are being held all around the World since 1969. On 28th June 1969, LGBTI+'s revolted under the leadership of black sex worker trans womens who could not stand oppression, violence and discrimination in the bar called Stonewall Inn, and the riot that broke out during a routine police raid on the bar marked the milestone of the LGBTI+ rights movement. The day, which is one of the turning points of the LGBTI+

struggle, is celebrated all over the world under names such as Pride Weeks or LGBTI+ Pride Marches. The Pride referred to here is the honor of one's own being, the reflection of not being ashamed of one's own existence. Since 1969, the last week of June has been celebrated as Pride Week by LGBTI+ people all over the world, and on the last day of the month, the Pride March is organized with the participation of hundreds of thousands of people.

The first public action of LGBTI+s in demanding rights in Turkey was the hunger strike of trans womens in Gezi Park in 1987. The hunger strike was organised to draw public attention to the systematic violence, oppression and discriminatory policies implemented by the Beyoğlu District Police Department of the period. Six years later, the first Pride March was attempted in Turkey. In 1993, after a series of events held in Beyoğlu under the name of "Sexual Freedom Events", a march was planned, but the Governorship did not allow the march to take place. Before the march, LGBTI+'s were detained from the streets even before they reached Istiklal Street, targeting news appeared in newspapers, their families were called by the police and the delegation coming from abroad to support the events was deported.¹ After this incident, the Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride March was not attempted for 10 years, while Istanbul Pride Weeks started to be held during this period.

In the end, the Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride March started in 2003 with a crowd of 40-50 people² and in 2013 it was joined with the participation of hundreds of thousands of people³ and was followed with interest by both national and international press. The Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride March, which was organized with the increasing voluntary and organized efforts of LGBTI+ people over the years, turned into a march attended by bureaucrats, MPs, diplomats, mayors, European Parliamentarians from all over the country and the world within 10 years. The last Istanbul Pride March, which did not pass under the shadow of bans and police violence, was held in 2014.

1 Pathways Notch in Official History, KaosGL Association

2 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/2003-istanbul-onur-yuruyusu---renkli-ekran-soylesileri-can-yaman>

3 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/on-binler-onur-ve-ozgurluk-icin-yurudu>

a. From 2010 to 2017: Trans Pride March

In addition to Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride Week in 2010, for the first time, Trans Pride Week was organized one week before Pride Week and the week ended with the Trans Pride March. The reason for organizing Trans Pride Week separately was stated in the press release of 2010 as follows:



“For the first time in Turkey, a Trans Pride Week is being organized. The reasons for organising the Trans Pride Week is to draw attention to the discrimination and human rights violations against transgender people by the state and to ask you to listen to the problems from the subjects. In the last year, pressure and violence against transvestites and transsexuals have increased considerably and hate murders have reached a peak. The mentality of the state, which has become evident with fines and arbitrary practices of the police, has also increased the pressure against the LGBTT community, especially against transvestites and transsexuals.”⁴



Starting in 2010, Trans Pride Marches were organized for 8 years. Before the ban in 2015, the 6th Trans Pride March was held on 21 June 2015 on Istiklal Street without any ban or violence. In 2016 and 2017, Trans Pride Marches were subjected to attacks along with the bans. These marches will be referred to by the title of the mentioned years.

⁴ <https://kaosgl.org/haber/trans-onur-yuruyusu-nun-8-yili-bize-ikinci-sinif-vatandas-gibi-davranilmasina-izin-vermeyecegiz>



2 THE BEGINNING OF BANS: 13TH ISTANBUL LGBTI+ PRIDE MARCH – 2015⁵

In 2015, it was announced by the Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride Week Committee that the 13th Istanbul Pride March would take place on 28 June 2015 at 17:00 on Istiklal Street as usual. One week before the march, the 6th Trans Pride March was held on 22 June 2015 on Istiklal Street without any problems. On 28 June, before the Pride March had even started, the police took extensive security measures around Istiklal Street and started to intervene with tear gas and TOMAs against tens of thousands of people trying to gather. The governor's office announced that the Pride March was banned on the grounds that it "touches people's sensitivities due to the month of Ramadan". Thereupon, the HDP and CHP MPs, who were there to participate in and support the Pride March, had a meeting with the Governorate, which resulted in a negative outcome and the Pride March could not be held.⁶ Before the Pride March even started, journalists Kaos GL editor Yıldız Tar and Bianet editor Çiçek Tahaoğlu were detained by the police and released from the police vehicle without any official record. After the attacks, Pride March continued throughout the day, 1 person was injured in their right eye with a rubber bullet fired by the police and faced the risk of losing their eye.⁷ Many LGBTI+'s faced police violence all day long and sometimes violence of groups disguised as civilians.

a. Legal action against the prohibition decision:

Any administrative application or litigation process against the prohibition decision has not been lodged.

5 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/onur-yuruyusursquonde-saat-saat-ne-oldu>

6 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/onur-yuruyusursquone-polis-saldirisi-ve-lgbti-direnisi>

7 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/vali-yarali-yok-dedi-sinan-tek-gozunu-kaybedebilir>

b. Criminal proceedings against public officials and participants

i. Criminal complaint against police officers

LGBTI+ organizations SPoD, KaosGL, Lambdaistanbul and Kırmızı Şemsiye filed a criminal complaint for the prosecution of Riot Police Department officers following the police attack on the 2015 Pride March. After the criminal complaint, the Prosecutor's Office requested permission from the Governorship to investigate the police officers who attacked the march, but the Istanbul Governorship did not give permission to investigate the police officers who attacked the march. The Governorate argued that the Pride March was 'banned' and that the all-day police attack was 'within legal limits' and claimed that despite the evidence presented by LGBTI organizations and the footage in the press, there was 'no information, documents or video footage showing that the police officers had abused their duties'.⁸ The Prosecutor's Office decided not to prosecute the criminal complaint on the grounds that "the right to legitimate defense was exercised within the limits of proportionality".⁹

ii. Criminal complaint against the Ministry of Interior, Istanbul Governor and Istanbul Provincial Police Chief

After the 13th Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride March, which was banned for the first time and protesters were subjected to intense police attacks; SPoD, KaosGL, Lambdaistanbul and Red Umbrella associations also filed criminal complaints against Sebahattin Öztürk, Minister of Interior of the time, Vasip Şahin, Governor of Istanbul and Selami Altınok, Istanbul Provincial Police Chief. Following the criminal complaint, the Prosecutor's Office requested permission from the Governorate of Istanbul for the continuation of the investigation since the persons against whom the criminal complaint was

8 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/onur-yuruyusursquone-saldiran-polislere-sorusturma-izni-cikmadi>
9 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/onur-yuruyusursquone-saldiriya-iliskin-takipsizlik-kararina-itiraz-da-reddedildi>

filed were public officials and the Governorate of Istanbul decided not to grant permission for the investigation on 6.11.2015. The annulment filed against the decision was rejected by the Istanbul Regional Administrative Court on 24.02.2016. The Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, on the other hand, decided on 11.05.2016 that there was no grounds for an investigation on the grounds that no permission for an investigation had been granted. The objection filed by the associations against the aforementioned decision was also rejected and the decision was finalized.

Thereupon, Red Umbrella Sexual Health and Human Rights Association filed an individual application to the Constitutional Court on 12.08.2016, claiming violation of the freedom of peaceful assembly. With the decision dated 28.12.2021 and application number 2016/14547, the Constitutional Court ruled that the application was inadmissible as the allegations were manifestly groundless. It is not known whether the decision was appealed to the European Court of Human Rights.¹⁰

iii. The love of Şaban and Recep: Article 216 of the Turkish Penal Code (Publicly insulting religious values held by a section of the public)

A lawsuit was filed against three people carrying the banner "Ramadan (Ramazan)¹¹ cannot prevent the love of Şaban and Recep" during the 2015 Istanbul Pride March by the Prosecutor's Office on the charge of "publicly denigrating religious values adopted by a section of the public" (TPC 216) following complaints made by some lawyers stating "I saw the banner, I was filled with hatred, I felt like doing something".¹² The complainants also requested to intervene in the case, but these requests were rejected.¹³ The Istanbul 33rd Criminal Court of First Instance ruled that the act charged against them was not an offense in the law and acquitted them.¹⁴

10 Constitutional Court's decision numbered 2016/14547

11 Ramazan (Ramadan) is also being used as a name in Turkey.

12 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/askin-neresi-hakaret>

13 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/Isquotabanla-receprsquoain-askirsquo-davasinda-bilirkisi-talebi-reddeildi>

14 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/sabanrsquola-receprsquoain-aski-beraat-etti>



3 14TH ISTANBUL LGBTI+ PRIDE MARCH – 2016

In 2016, it was announced by the Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride Week Committee that the march would be held on 26th of June. Then, on 17th of June, the Governorate of Istanbul announced on its website that both the Pride March and the Trans Pride March were banned. The justification for this ban was that “no such meetings and demonstration marches will be allowed to be organised on the aforementioned days, taking into consideration the safety of our citizens and public order. The places where such events can be organised have been announced in advance in accordance with the law.”¹⁵ It is understood from the wording of the press release and from the verbal discussions with the Governorate that the march is not permitted because Taksim is not one of the meetings areas specified by the Governorate.

14th Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride March, which was planned to take place on 26 June, was banned by the Governorate of Istanbul, and the organising committee requested to make a press statement in front of Taksim Tunnel, but this request was also not allowed by the Governorate as it was ‘deemed inappropriate’. Thereupon, the Istanbul LGBTI Pride Week Committee, with the theme of ‘We are dispersing’, announced that “On Sunday 26 June, we are dispersing to every corner of Istiklal Street. We are reuniting with each other on every street and avenue of Beyoğlu on Sunday to “return life to its ‘normal’ flow.”.

A total of 19 people were detained at the end of the day of the march on charges of violating Law No. 2911.¹⁶ Member of the European Parliament T. Reintke and German MP V. Beck were also detained for a short period of time in Istiklal Street and then released without any official record.

¹⁵ <http://www.istanbul.gov.tr/basin-duyurusu-17062016>

¹⁶ Law Numbered 2911 is regulating the demonstrations and assembly in Turkish law.

a. Legal action against the prohibition decision

Kaos GL Association filed an annulment lawsuit for stay of execution against the banning decision of the Istanbul Governorate and the 4th Administrative Court of Istanbul rejected the request for suspension execution after the day of the march. The appeal against the rejection decision was also rejected by the Istanbul Regional Administrative Court.¹⁷ Subsequently, the case was also rejected on the merits. It is learnt that no individual application was made to the Constitutional Court regarding the decision.

b. Case of Violation of Law No. 2911

A criminal case has filed against the 19 people who were detained on the day of the march on the allegation of violating Law No. 2911. All 19 people were acquitted.¹⁸

c. 7. Trans Pride March and Violation of Law No. 2911

Again in 2016, before the 7th Trans Pride March, Alperen Ocakları¹⁹ launched a campaign of threats and hate speech against the march and the Istanbul Governorate announced on 17 June that the march would not be allowed.²⁰ On the day of the march, no one, including journalists, was allowed to stand in Tunnel Square. At 16 o'clock the intervention started and at least 11 people were detained throughout the day. The detainees were released on the same day.²¹

During the third hearing of the case against the detainees for allegedly violating Law No. 2911 on Meetings and Demonstrations on 17 June 2017, all

17 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/yargi-onur-yuruyusursquone-yasagi-savunmaya-devam-ediyor>

18 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/akp-nin-istanbul-onur-yuruyusu-karnesi-8-yasak-en-az-103-gozalti-1>

19 Far-right nationalist group from Turkey

20 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/istanbul-valiligi-Isquoonur-yuruyuslerine-izin-verilmeyecekrsquo>

21 <https://m.bianet.org/bianet/lgbti/187934-trans-onur-yuruyusu-basin-aciklamasi-harbiye-de-yapildi>

defendants were acquitted.

In the report prepared by SPoD, KaosGL, LiSTAG, Pembe Hayat and written by journalist Yıldız Tar, the right violations that took place on the day of the march are described in detail.²² The conclusion of the report is as follows;



“As it can be understood from the data in the report, the constitutional rights of LGBTI citizens were prevented on 19 June 2016.

“The right to organise meetings and demonstrations” was usurped by the Governorate of Istanbul, thousands of police officers of Istanbul Security Directorate violated the right to life of the people who wanted to participate in the march, made homophobic and transphobic hate speech, harassed homophobia and transphobia opponents who took to the streets for equality and freedom. They remained silent against the attacks of transphobic groups disguised as civilians. Although the police detained some of the groups who were there for the attacks, in many cases, they only watched the attacks of the groups on LGBTIs.

“As can be seen from the photographs published in the press, the police violated international conventions and the constitution of the Republic of Turkey and attacked the march with disproportionate violence.

“As associations defending the human rights of LGBTIs, we find the prevention of the Trans Pride March and the police attack against democracy and human rights in our country where LGBTIs

²² <https://kaosgl.org/haber/trans-onur-yuruyusu-davasinda-beraat>

are prevented from accessing basic rights and hate crimes target LGBTIs. We announce that we will follow the legal process to punish those responsible. We invite the authorities to act responsibly and ensure the safety of the LGBTI+ Pride March on 26 June in order to avoid similar scenes.”

”

Two opposing groups gathered to prevent the Trans Pride March and attacked the participants by shouting slogans containing hate speech and chanting. 15 people from the attacking group were released after identification procedures.

d. Discretionary mitigation for threatening the Pride March

On 18 September 2022, former Alperen Ocakları Istanbul Provincial Chair Kürşat Mican, one of the organisers of the RTÜK²³-supported hate march “Big Family Gathering” was prosecuted by Istanbul Anatolian 44th Criminal Court of First Instance for “inciting the public to hatred and hostility and publicly humiliating a section of the public based on social class, religion, sect, gender, regional difference” by threatening the Istanbul LGBTI+ and Trans Pride Marches in 2016, with a prison sentence of up to 6 years. Mican was sentenced to a judicial fine of four thousand liras on the grounds of “discretionary mitigation” on the charge of insulting a section of the public based on gender difference.²⁴

23 Supreme Board of Radio and Television in Turkey

24 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/lgbtirsquolari-tehdide-lsqouiyi-halrsquo-indirimi>

**EVÎN
RÊXISTINÊ!**

**GENEL
AHLAK-
SIZ!**

4 15TH ISTANBUL LGBTI+ PRIDE MARCH – 2017

In 2017, it was announced by the Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride Week Committee that the march would be held on 25 June, and again the day before the march, it was announced that the march was banned with a press release on the website of the Istanbul Governorate. This time the reason given was “Taksim Square and its surroundings, where the march was called for, are not among the meeting and demonstration march areas declared by our Governorate. In addition, no application has been duly made to our Governorate in accordance with the provisions of Law No. 2911. In the meantime, it is seen that there is a serious reaction to this call from different segments of society on social media platforms.”²⁵ Again this year, it was stated that Taksim is not among the areas for assembly and demonstration marches and it was claimed that there was a very serious reaction to the Pride Marches by different segments of the society.

On the day of the march, intensive security measures were taken in and around Taksim and protesters were intervened with pepper spray, anti-riot water cannon vehicles and rubber bullets. The police blocked Istiklal Street in the early hours of the day and did not allow people wearing rainbows or those who they thought would participate in the march to enter the street throughout the day. Despite all the attacks, protests were organised throughout the day in various parts of Beyoğlu.

Four lawyers who provided legal support to Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride Week were unlawfully detained and released after an hour of detention without a official record.

A total of 29 people, including 4 lawyers and journalists, were detained during the day-long intervention and were released the same night. A

²⁵ <http://www.istanbul.gov.tr/basin-duyurusu-24-06-2017-40>

total of 27 people from the aggressor and opposing groups were detained and released after identification without a official record.²⁶

a. Legal action against the prohibition decision

Any administrative application or litigation process against the prohibition decision has not been lodged.

b. Case of Violation of Law No. 2911

A lawsuit was filed against the 24 detainees at Istanbul 48th Criminal Court of First Instance on charges of violating Law No. 2911. The trial started on 16 November 2017 at Istanbul 48th Criminal Court of First Instance and concluded on 7 May 2019 with the acquittal of everyone.

c. 8th Trans Pride March

Before the 8th Trans Pride March, which was planned to be held on 2 July 2017, entrances to Taksim and Istiklal Street were closed by the police and extensive security measures were taken.²⁷ After the unlawful intervention by the police, the march could not be held due to the prevention, while the press statement could be held in Pangalti. After the press statement, a total of 7 activists were detained as they marched towards Harbiye.²⁸

d. Compensation for unlawful detention

On 7 May 2019, the activist, who was charged with violating Law No. 2911, was acquitted and the verdict of acquittal was finalised. They claimed for compensation for unlawful detention in accordance with Article 141 of the Code of Criminal Procedure No. 5271. The Ankara 5th High Criminal Court partially accepted his claim decided to 600 TL compensation to be paid.²⁹

26 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/onur-yuruyusursquonden-notlar-lsquokudurun-ayolrsquo>

27 <https://sendika.org/2017/07/8-trans-onur-yuruyusune-polis-saldirisi-430665/>

28 <https://www.birgun.net/haber/8-trans-onur-yuruyusu-engel-tanimadi-167805>

29 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/onur-yuruyusu-nde-gozaltina-alinan-aktivist-tazminat-davasini-kazandi>



5 16TH ISTANBUL LGBTI+ PRIDE MARCH – 2018

In 2018 to exclude one of the excuses produced by the Governorate for many years for the Pride March such as “social sensitivities” Pride March was waited for the end of Ramadan and the date of the march was announced as 1 July. Before the march, the roads leading to Taksim and Istiklal Street were closed, extensive security measures were taken and arbitrary searches were carried out throughout the day. After the press statement that made in Mis Street, the police intervened the masses who wanted to march on Istiklal Street with pepper spray and rubber bullets and 11 people were detained.³⁰

a. Legal action against the prohibition decision

Any administrative application or litigation process against the prohibition decision has not been lodged

b. Case of Violation of Law No. 2911, Resisting Against a Public Officer and Endangering Traffic Safety

A lawsuit was filed against 6 detainees at Istanbul 12th Criminal Court of First Instance on charges of “resisting against a public officer” and “endangering traffic safety” in addition to violating Law No. 2911 on Meetings and Demonstrations³¹ At the final hearing, all 6 people were acquitted for Law No. 2911. One person was sentenced to 5 months for resisting against a public officer and one person was sentenced to 2 months and 15 days for endangering traffic safety. The announcement of verdicts was deferred.

30 <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-44675781>

31 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/2018-onur-yuruyusu-davasi-polis-gorevi-kotuye-kullandi-darp-etti-dava-hukuksuz>



YASAK
NE
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6 17TH ISTANBUL LGBTI+ PRIDE MARCH – 2019

Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride Week Committee announced that the 17th Istanbul Pride March to be held on 30th June on Istiklal Street was rejected “on the grounds that no demonstration is allowed in Taksim” after the meeting with the Deputy Governor of Istanbul. It was stated that the deputy governor declared the march was not welcomed on the grounds that, they were a “socially hesitant group” for not only Taksim, but for all open space meetings to be held in Istanbul. The committee also applied the Governorate to organise the march in Bakırköy Market Area.

On the day of the march, as in previous years, the exits to Istiklal Street were closed and it was observed that security forces arbitrarily checked the identity of “people who they thought to be LGBTI+”.

Approximately three thousand people gathered on Istiklal Street for the march and they were directed to Mis Street after the Pride Week Committee had a meeting with the police and it was announced that the press statement would be held there. After the press statement in Mis Street, the Pride Week Committee said “We are leaving Mis Street and we are dispersing to every street in Taksim. We continue to dance and have fun on the streets!”. Later, security forces intervened the dispersed crowd with pepper spray, shields and police dogs. After press statements were made at different points, the intervention of the security forces continued and at least 5 people were detained. However, unlike other years, no detainee was prosecuted.

a. Legal action against the prohibition decision

In 2019, an application was made by the Pride Week Committee for the Pride March to be held in Bakırköy Market Area, and the Governorate of Istanbul decided to ban the meeting in order to prevent provocative actions and incidents within the provincial borders, to protect the peace and security of the public, including those who will participate in the open air meeting, to protect the peace and security of the public, personal inviolability, safety, public health and public morality, the rights and freedoms of others, to prevent possible violence and terrorist organisation incidents, and to prevent provocative actions and incidents.

On 27 November 2019, Istanbul 9th Administrative Court rejected the annulment filed by SPoD and Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride Week committee against the banning decision with the demand for a stay of execution on the grounds that there is no contradiction to the law in the transaction established for a limited period of time and on the basis of public security, since it is possible to limit the banning decision for the purposes of national security, public order, prevention of crime, protection of public health and public morals or the rights and freedom of other, within the framework of legal authority and by protecting the essence of the right. On 7 October 2020, the 10th Administrative Case Chamber of the Istanbul Regional Administrative Court, which examined the file upon objection, accepted the case on the following grounds and decided to cancel the ban as final decision.³²



As such, it is unlawful for the defendant administration to ban the meeting and demonstration march that the plaintiff wants to organise and prevent them from exercising their right to do so, based on the assumption that some abstract complaints and possible reactions of those who oppose the common ideas that those who want to organise the meeting and demonstration

³² <https://kaosgl.org/haber/mahkeme-2019-istanbul-onur-yuruyusu-icin-bakirkoy-yasagini-iptal-etti>

march defend and want to announce to others will turn into action, without revealing a clear, concrete and imminent danger that a crime will be committed.



b. Ban on Queer Olympix events and legal objection against

Queer Olympix is Turkey's first queer sport events, organised by Atletik Dildo, an LGBTI+ football team founded in Istanbul, since 2017 and held in Istanbul as a week where LGBTI+ and sports activists come together and various sports competitions and events are organised.

3rd Queer Olympix started on 23 August in Heybeliada, were banned by the Kadıköy District Governorate's decision notified to the organisers in Kalamış Park on the morning of 24 August. The reason for this ban decision was explained as "for the groups and individuals who will participate in the event to be held; for precautionary purposes against provocations that may occur due to social sensitivities; "public order, prevention of crime, protection of public health and public morality" in accordance with Article 17 of Law No. 2911.³³

SPoD and Queer Olympix filed an annulment against the ban decision, underlining that this banning decision is contrary to the relevant laws, the Constitution, the case law of the ECtHR and international conventions; and that the governorate's justification is absurd and arbitrary. This file, which SPoD carried out as a campaign, was decided on 14.05.2020. Istanbul 5th Administrative Court concluded that there was no conformity with the law in the transaction regarding the banning of the aforementioned event, since it was seen that concrete information and documents revealing the basis of the decision to ban the events could not be submitted to the file by the district governorship, and the banning decision was cancelled.³⁴

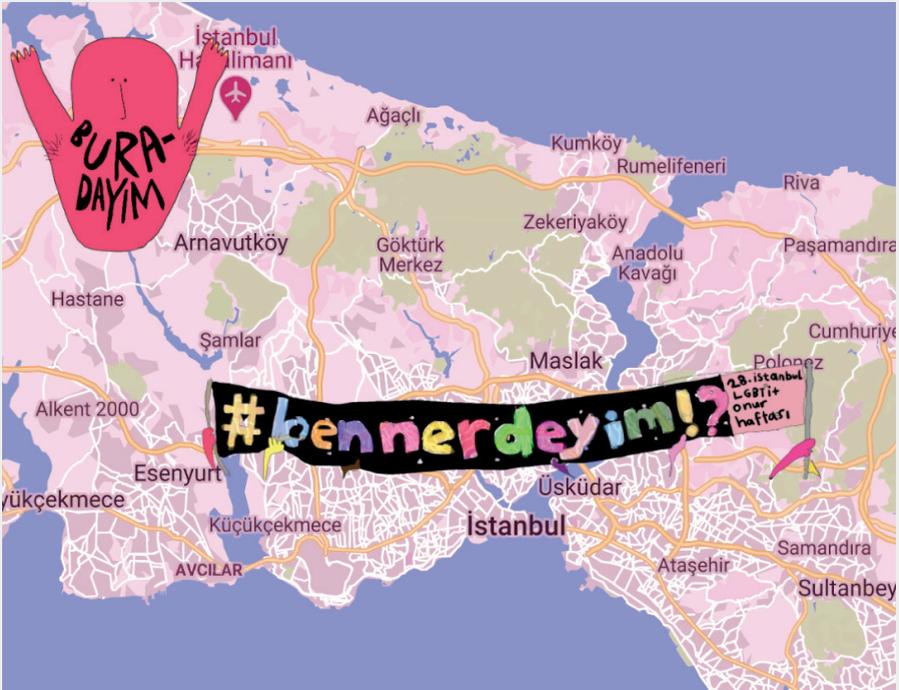
³³ <https://kaosgl.org/haber/emniyet-mudurlugu-istedi-kadikoy-kaymakamligi-queer-olympix-i-yasakladi>

³⁴ <https://spod.org.tr/spod-ve-queer-olympix-kadikoy-kaymakamligina-karsi-actiklari-davayi-kazandi>



7 18TH ISTANBUL LGBTI+ PRIDE MARCH – 2020

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 18th Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride March and the 28th LGBTI+ Pride Week events were held online. In 2020, although the march could not take place, the police did not stop harassing LGBTI+’s. On the evening of the online march, a group of LGBTI+’s gathered on Mis Street, listening to songs and having fun, were squeezed into a narrow area as a result of the police blocking the street with vehicles, and were threatened by the police to be detained in the evening and dispersed.



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8 19TH ISTANBUL LGBTI+ PRIDE MARCH – 2021

With the easing of Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, the Pride Week Committee applied to Istanbul Governorate for the 19th Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride March with the request to hold the march on Saturday, 26 June 2021 at Maltepe Meeting Area. With the reply letter dated 23.06.2021, the Governorate stated that it was not deemed appropriate “because provocative actions and incidents may occur within our provincial borders, in order to protect the peace and security of the public, including those who will participate in the open-air meeting, personal inviolability, safety in relation to savings, public health and public morality, the rights and freedoms of others, to prevent possible violence and terrorist incidents, and to prevent provocative actions and incidents”.³⁵ Upon this news, the Pride Week Committee called for a meeting in Taksim on 26 June 2021 at 17:00.

Beyoğlu District Governorate, on the other hand, stated the following events to be held in Taksim Square and Beyoğlu district on 26 June 2021 were banned due to following reasonings: “The meeting, march, press declaration, sit-in, opening a stand, pitching a tent, setting up a tent, distributing leaflets, protest action, etc. announced to be held in Taksim Square on 26/06/2021 Saturday at 17:00 were banned in order to protect the rights and freedoms of others and to prevent the commission of crime”.³⁶

35 <https://m.bianet.org/bianet/lgbti/246257-19-istanbul-lgbti-onur-yuruyusu-yasaklandi>

36 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/beyoglu-kaymakamligi-ndan-lgbti-onur-yuruyusu-gunu-eylem-yasagi>

After the call to gathering, the first attack and detention took place in Mis Street at 14:00 and later in various parts of Beyoğlu throughout the day. At least 42 people, including AFP reporter Bülent Kılıç and at least 2 children, were detained and released the same night.³⁷

a. Picnic ban in Maçka Park

Before the day of the march, the vegan picnic and barber workshop, which was planned to be held in Heybeliada on 22 June as part of the 29th Pride Week events was moved to Maçka Park on 25 June as a result of verbal information and pressure by the Adalar Police Department. However, according to the decision notified to the Committee by Şişli District Governorate on 22 June, the press declaration, sit-in, prolonged waiting, trade union activities to be held within the borders of Maçka Park for 30 (thirty) days as of 22.06.2021 “for the purposes of national security, public order and prevention of crime, in accordance with Article 17 of the Law on Meetings and Demonstrations No. 2911 and Article 32/b of the Provincial Administration Law No. 5442, are banned on the grounds that there may be provocative actions”.³⁸

After the unlawful banning order, the police tried to prevent the entrance to Maçka Park with flags, masks, bags, etc. that containing rainbow or LGBTI+ symbols. At 15:30, a serious police presence and control started inside and outside the park for the events planned to be held between 16:00 - 19:00. The rainbow flags inside the park were forcibly collected and the participants were disturbed with the allegation that social distancing rules were violated. As of 18:30, the police started to attack the participants who did not resist the police violence and harassment warnings and obeyed the social distancing rules. Police also injured lawyers, caused 1 person’s arm to be broken and 1 person was beaten and detained. Eventually police forces were telling LGBTI+’s to leave the Park completely.³⁹

37 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/polisleri-as-da-gel-kurbanin-olam-onur-yuruyusu-her-yerdeydi>

38 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/sisli-kaymakamligi-ndan-lgbti-lara-30-gun-yasak>

39 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/29-istanbul-lgbti-onur-haftasi-piknikyasaklanamadi>

b. Legal action against the prohibition decisions

i. Rejection by Istanbul Governorate for the Maltepe Meeting Area and Ban Decision by Beyoğlu District Governorate

No administrative lawsuit was filed against the Istanbul Governorate's decision of not to approve the Maltepe Meeting Area and the ban imposed by the Beyoğlu District Governorate. One of the main reason for this is that possible rejection of the lawsuit by the judiciary due to political pressure and legitimacying the banning of LGBTI+'s from public spaces.

ii. Ban on Maçka Park

In the annulment filed by SPoD and Istanbul Pride Week Committee on the same day against the Şişli District Governorate's decision to ban events in Maçka Park, Istanbul 3rd Administrative Court first rejected the request for a stay of execution, and then On 25 May 2022, the court decided to dismiss the annulment on the grounds that there was no violation of the law with the following reasonings:



The desired gathering and activities are not among the meeting and march routes announced in the district within the scope of Law No. 2911, and for this reason, a clear and imminent danger may arise in terms of public security since there is a high probability of committing the crime of resistance against the law enforcement officers who will have to intervene in the event that is desired to be carried out in violation of the law due to the illegality, in addition, an official application containing the clear identity information of the people who organised the event in question is not available to the respondent administration, and it is not clear who organised this event for what purpose, for this

reason, since the gatherings will be uncontrolled, people in the organisational structure may turn them into illegal actions and the Corona virus (Covid 19) epidemic, which has been declared as a pandemic by the World Health Organization as of the date of the event and meeting, continues widely in our country and there is a possibility that the disease may spread during this event and meeting, Therefore, since it is understood that the in question was established for the purpose of protecting public order and public health within the framework of the authority granted to the respondent administration in the Provincial Administration Law No. 5442 and the Law No. 2911 on Meetings and Demonstrations in accordance with the principles set out in our Constitution



The Administrative Court did not even take into consideration that the events subject to the lawsuit were vegan picnic, yoga and barbering workshops and they found it lawful to ban the Maçka Park for 30 days and only for LGBTI+ persons. During the lawsuit process, Şişli District Governorship did not respond to any question asked by the Court regarding the justification of the administrative action and did not submit a defence petition. An appeal has been filed against the relevant decision and no decision has been issued as of the date of this report.

On 24 June 2021, the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights made an open call to Minister of Interior Süleyman Soylu and Minister of Justice Abdulhamit Gül, for criticising Turkey's stance towards LGBTI+ rights and stating that hate crimes, march and event bans increase crimes and hate speech against LGBTI+ people, and the relevant letter was also submitted to the case file.⁴⁰

40 <https://go.coe.int/EPIDe>

c. Insulting a public official

The person who was beaten and detained during the attack in Maçka Park was prosecuted for insulting a public officer as a result of the complaint made by the police officer who attacked him on the same day. Following the indictment accepted by the Istanbul 44th Criminal Court of First Instance in the case where both the witness and the defendant are police officers hearing was adjourned to 21 February 2023.⁴¹

d. Lawsuits filed with the Violation of Law No. 2911

In 19th Pride March, highest number of people got detained since the 2015. A total of 5 different lawsuits were filed against 39 people, including 2 children, with indictments that same as police reports prepared by the Terrorism and Organised Crime Investigation Bureau.

i. Cihangir 3's

At the first hearing of the case held at Istanbul 14th Criminal Court of First Instance on 31 March 2022, 3 persons were acquitted⁴² with the following reasonings:



It was stated that they were arrested within the scope of the prohibition order, but as in the aforementioned judgement of the Court of Cassation, no matter that the defendants insisted on not dispersing despite the warning and use of force was not included in the minutes, In order for the offence to occur, the defendants must insist on not dispersing as a result of the use of force by the law enforcement officers after the warning, but when the content of the minutes is examined, it is stated that the defendants were

41 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/macka-davasinda-tanik-polis-de-sikayetci-polisi-yalanladi>
42 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/istanbul-onur-yuruyusu-davalari-cihangir-de-gozaltina-alinan-uc-kisiye-ilk-durusmada-beraat>

caught after the warning made by the law enforcement officers, and no matter that the defendants insisted on not dispersing upon the use of force was not reflected in the file, and for the reasons explained, it was concluded that the offence attributed to the defendants did not occur in terms of its elements.



ii. Cihangir 8's

In the 3rd hearing of the case held at Istanbul 16th Criminal Court of First Instance on 8 February 2022, 8 people were acquitted⁴³ with the following reasonings:



There is no evidence that the demonstrators committed any acts of violence against the environment and the police, blocked the road, damaged the environment and property, and as stated in Article 20/1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights and the ECtHR's judgement dated 23/07/2013 and numbered 42606/05 application. As stated in Article 20/1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights and the ECtHR's decision dated 23/07/2013 and numbered 42606/05 application, it is stated that a certain degree of tolerance should be shown towards peaceful protests that do not pose a danger to public order and do not involve violent behaviour, and taking into account Article 90 of the Constitution, it is understood that the acts charged will not constitute a criminal offence due to the demonstrations of the defendants whose violent content cannot be determined



43 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/onur-yuruyusu-lgbtq-meclisleri-davasinda-beraat>

iii. Cihangir 2's (Juvenile)

At the first hearing held by the Istanbul 4th Juvenile Court on 10 May 2022, two children were acquitted⁴⁴ with the following reasonings:



Considering the defences of the SSWs, since it is understood that there is no evidence in the file that they participated in the meeting and that there is no evidence in the file that they have a tendency to violence, in accordance with the principle that the accused benefits from the doubt



iv. Cihangir 7's

The trial started on 9 March 2022 by the Istanbul 18th Criminal Court of First Instance and no decision was taken at the last hearing on 21 September 2022. The next hearing was adjourned to 13 January 2023.⁴⁵

v. Mis 19's

TiP, Kaos GL, SPoD, Media and Law Studies Association (MLSA) and Amnesty International Turkey followed the first hearing held by Istanbul 60th Criminal Court of First Instance on 13 May 2022 against 19 people who were detained from Mis Street at around 3 pm on the day of the march, even before the ban order of Beyoğlu District Governorate was in force. The trial is ongoing and the next hearing was adjourned to 23 December 2022.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ <https://kaosgl.org/haber/istanbul-onur-yuruyusu-nde-gozaltina-alinan-2-cocuk-beraat-etti>

⁴⁵ <https://kaosgl.org/haber/2021-onur-yuruyusu-1-cihangir-davasinda-goruntuler-bilirkisiye-gonderilecek>

⁴⁶ <https://kaosgl.org/haber/19-kisinin-yargilandigi-istanbul-onur-yuruyusu-davasi-23-aralik-a-ertelendi-yargilanan-19-kisi-iddianame-3-paragraf>

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9 20TH ISTANBUL LGBTI+ PRIDE MARCH – 2022

2022 was the year which the public officials did not refrain from making hate speeches against LGBTI+'s at every opportunity and the decision to leave the Istanbul Convention overnight with a single signature because it "legitimises homosexuality" on top of that.

The 2022 LGBTI+ Pride Marches across Turkey started on 20 May in Boğaziçi and ended on 5 July in Ankara. During 45 days, there were 582 detentions as a result of 10 different banning orders.⁴⁷ Among these detentions, 373 people were detained at the Istanbul Pride March, 70 people were detained at the Boğaziçi Pride March, 26 people were detained at the Istanbul University Equality Club Picnic, and 11 people were detained at the press statement in Yeldeğirmeni. While approximately 120 people were detained and acquitted all charges during the Istanbul Pride Marches from 2015 to 2021, approximately 480 detentions in 45 days indicate the existence of an unnamed war policy against LGBTI+'s.

Similar to Istanbul, LGBTI+ Pride Weeks and Marches in Ankara, Izmir, Eskişehir, Çanakkale, Gaziantep and Datça also were banned by the several governateships. During the bans, events were prevented, LGBTI+'s were threatened and exposed to lynch attempts by state supported hate groups and even by the governorates. From one end of Turkey to the other, LGBTI+'s freedom of expression and their material and moral integrity have been violated before the eyes of the whole society.

⁴⁷ <https://kaosgl.org/haber/onur-yuruyusleri-bilancosu-artiyor-582-gozalti-sokakta-iskence-bitmeyen-isyan>

a. Legal action against the prohibition decisions

According to the event programme announced on 16 June for the 30th Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride Week to be held between 20–26 June, approximately 25 events were planned to be held in Beyoğlu and Kadıköy districts. Following the publication of the event programme, at the first day of the events both officials from Beyoğlu and Kadıköy District Governorates visited the event venues in the name of routine controls and inspections. Later it's learned that both Governorates banned the entire Pride Week events including the Pride March both for the first time in the 30-year history of Istanbul Pride Week with the following reasoning:



It is evaluated that the activities to be held may arouse outrage in the society due to some social sensitivities, this situation may threaten social peace, verbal and physical provocative incidents may occur between the group / persons who will carry out the activities and our citizens, and the protection of public order, the prevention of crime and the protection of the rights and freedoms of others may be endangered. With the statement in the form of "30th Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride Week", meetings, press releases, marches, leaflet distribution, etc. activities to be held under the name of "30th Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride Week", in all open and closed areas within our administration from 20.06.2022 at 00:01 on 20.06.2022 until 26.06.2022 at 23:59 for 7 (Seven) days



This practice had previously manifested itself in 2016 when all LGBTI+ related events planned to be held in Ankara were banned.⁴⁸

48 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/kaos-gl-den-ankaradaki-lgbti-yasaklarina-dair-bilgi-notu>

Following the banning decisions, an annulment was filed in Istanbul 10th Administrative Court on 21 June with the cooperation of SPoD and Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride Week Committee for a stay of execution and then for the cancellation of the banning process in order for the remaining events and the march to be held.

However, in the case regarding the Beyoğlu Governorate's ban decision the Court issued rejection of the stay of execution decision on 26 August, approximately 2 months after the Pride Week. The defense petition filed by the Beyoğlu District Governorship in the case is full of conspiracy theories and it is claimed that many enemies from Gezi to FETÖ, from 17/25 December to global evil foci will use LGBTI+'s for their own purposes and that the security of LGBTI+'s cannot be ensured so therefore they decided the ban the whole Pride Week.⁴⁹ In fact, on the day of the march, 373 people, including 34 children, were detained throughout the day by police officers under the command of the same District Governorate.

The appeal against the rejecting the stay of execution was also rejected by the 10th Administrative Case Chamber of the Istanbul Regional Administrative Court. Even though the merits of the case are still pending and SPoD has filed an individual application to the Constitutional Court for the rejection of stay of execution on the grounds of violation of the right to assembly and demonstration, prohibition of discrimination, right to an effective remedy and right to a reasoned decision.

In the case regarding the Kadıköy Governorate's ban decision, they did not even submit a defense petition and yet on 10 October, the Court decided to reject the request for stay of execution nearly 3 months after the Pride Week. The aforementioned decision has also been appealed by SPoD and it is rejected by the same Regional Administrative Court. For this case also, SPoD has filed an individual application to the Constitutional Court for the rejection of stay of execution on the same grounds. As of the date of this report, any decision has not been made on the merits of this case either.

⁴⁹ <https://kaosgl.org/haber/beyoglu-kaymakamligi-onur-haftasi-yasagini-komplex-teorileriyle-savundu>

b. Highest number ever: 373 detainees

The Pride Week Committee called for a march for 26 June at 17:00 on Siraselviler Street against the banning decisions. On the day of the march, first Taksim and Şişhane stations of the Metro Istanbul were closed by the decision of the Governorate, and then the roads leading to Taksim and its surroundings were closed as of 11:00. At 12:00 Siraselviler Street, where the march was called for, was blocked with police barriers. With the first detention of lawyers and activists in Cihangir at 15:15 without any justification, the masses mobilized. Slogans were heard and detentions were happening in every street of Beyoğlu and Cihangir throughout the day. 373 people were detained throughout the day and this was one of the largest number of attacks and detentions in the 30-year history of Pride's in Turkey. The police acted by trapping LGBTI+'s on the streets of Beyoğlu, and the whole Taksim turned into a war zone. However, press statements were read on every street of Beyoğlu and this was one of the most crowded gatherings of recent years. The mass managed to march in Cihangir despite the detentions and did not leave Beyoğlu until late at night.⁵⁰

The procedures of 373 detainees continued at Beyoğlu Children's Branch and Vatan Police Headquarters until 10 a.m. the very next day. The basic needs of the detainees could not be met for long hours. Due to the large number of detainees and the late hour of the day, the need for lawyer support especially for the statement procedures was shared in solidarity networks. Nevertheless, after midnight, the lawyers, who did not reach 10 in number, took on too much of the burden for the statement procedures and solidarity was not sufficiently reciprocated. Lawyers who went to the Vatan Police Headquarters for statement procedures were not allowed to see the detainees, and detainees were tortured in a way as a result of the 12+ hour long statement procedures that lasted until the morning. Especially in some police shuttles, when the lawyers heard the sounds of torture by the police, both the people in the detention buses were attacked and the lawyers were encircled by the police in the garden of

⁵⁰ <https://kaosgl.org/haber/lgbti-larin-direnisi-polis-saldirisini-asti-bizim-gitmeye-hic-niyetimiz-yok>

the Security Directorate. Women lawyers were attacked by a police chief. The Lawyers Rights Centre of the Istanbul Bar Association and the lawyers present there filed a report on the incident.⁵¹ The Human Rights Foundation of Turkey prepared an information note on applications following the torture and ill-treatment.⁵²

As of the date of this report in October 2022, no criminal case has been filed against 373 detainees, including 34 children yet the investigations continues.

c. Criminal complaint against the police chief

A criminal complaint was filed to Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office against Istanbul Security Branch Director Hanifi Zengin, who was caught on video while harassing a woman on the day of the Pride March. Despite the offence of torture, which is not subject to an investigation permit the Prosecutor's Office decided to requested for a permission from the Governor's Office due to the fact that Zengin is a public official.⁵³

d. 9th Pride March of Boğaziçi

For 9 years, Boğaziçi Pride March has been organised by Boğaziçi LGBTIA+ Club on campus and has not faced any ban or intervention before. On 20 May 2022, when the march was planned to be held, the Boğaziçi Rectorate sent an e-mail to the students half an hour before the march (16:30), stating that the events to be held on campus other than the Festival of Taşova were banned for security reasons. When the meeting with the security chief did not yield any results, the direction of the march was changed. Until 17:30, nothing happened during the march, and when the mass was going to read a press statement in front of Boğaziçi LGBTIA+ Club, 70 people, including 1 faculty member, were detained as a result of the attack of the riot police, Security Branch police and Private Security

51 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/istanbul-onur-yuruyusu-lubunyalar-saldirilara-ve-tehditlere-ragmen-sokaklari-doldurdu>

52 <https://tihv.org.tr/duyurular/tihve-basvurdugunuzda-tedavi-sureci-nasil-isler>

53 <https://kaosgl.org/haber/vailik-iskenceci-polis-hakinda-sorusturmaya-izin-vermedi-hanifi-zengin-i-aklayamazsiniz>

which were brought to the campus by the Rectorate. After the attack, 70 people were blockaded against some of them who dispersed and were not allowed to disperse in any way. The students who were charged with Law No. 2911 were released the same night.⁵⁴

A part of the interview given by students to KaosGL about police violence⁵⁵ is as follows



We stayed in the blockade for twenty minutes. At that time, the physical violence of the police started. For example, they grabbed me and threw me out of the blockade. I got muscle damage in my arm because they threw me. We saw that other friends of ours received serious blows. There was very harsh intervention. There were some very young people in the march, perhaps coming to the pride march for the first time in their lives, and they found themselves in the middle of the blockade. While we were telling the police to open the blockade as moderately as possible and that we would disperse, a plainclothes police chief said, “Either you come willingly or we will take you by beating you by force”.

We were going to disperse anyway. I repeatedly said, ‘What you are doing is illegal, there are people among us who want to leave. You did not make an announcement to disperse. You did not create any corridor for those who wanted to leave’, but we did not receive any response. Our physical integrity was negotiated.

They took us immediately afterwards. They took the group after us with more violence. The police confiscated my mobile phone. But he cannot confiscate my phone without a report. I asked for a report. When I said I would not give you my phone without a report, he twisted my arm. I had to give him my phone, but there was no report.



⁵⁴ <https://kaosgl.org/haber/9-bogazici-onur-yuruyusu-ne-katilanlara-polis-saldirdi-en-az-33-kisi-iskenceyle-gozaltina-alindi>

⁵⁵ <https://kaosgl.org/haber/bogazici-onur-yuruyusu-nde-yasananlar-burada-ne-oldugunu-herkes-bilmeli>

A lawsuit was filed against 70 detainees in Istanbul 58th Criminal Court of First Instance with the charges of Violation of Law No. 2911. In addition to that 2 people are also charged with Resisting to Obstruct Duty in accordance with Article 265/1 of the Turkish Penal Code and 1 person is charged with Insult. The first hearing will be held on the next days.

e. Picnic of Istanbul University's Equality Club

The vegan picnic announced by Istanbul University Equality Club to be held on 17 June on campus was targeted by some student communities and reactionary circles on social media. After the targeting, the club had to announced the cancellation of the event.⁵⁶ Following this on the same day 26 students who had gathered inside of the Istanbul University were taken into custody by the police under the pretext of protection from the attackers and were taken into a bus without taking any action against the turbaned mass of about 300 people who gathered in front of Istanbul University, shouted takbir, threatened to attack the students and threw objects.⁵⁷ The students who were detained against the picnic were charged with violating Law Nr. 2911 even though the picnic was cancelled due to threats and student got stuck in the University building. As of October 2022, when this report was written, no criminal case has been filed against them.

f. Press statement in Yeldeğirmeni

On 5 June, 11 people were detained as a result of the police attack on LGBTI+'s who gathered in Kadıköy to celebrate the Pride Week and wanted to make a press statement.⁵⁸ As of October 2022, when the report was written, no criminal case has been filed against the detainees.

⁵⁶ <https://www.birgun.net/haber/iu-esitlik-toplulugu-etkinligimiz-seriatci-cetelerin-linc-tehditleri-sebebiyle-iptal-edildi-392222>

⁵⁷ <https://kaosgl.org/haber/istanbul-emniyeti-nin-lgbti-dusmanligi-ne-avukat-taniyor-ne-de-yasa>

⁵⁸ <https://medyascope.tv/2022/06/06/onur-ayi-kutlamasina-polis-mudahalesi-av-rojda-yildirir-minik-bir-kutlamada-bile-11-arkadasimiz-gozaltina-alindi/>

CONCLUSION

Starting in 2015, the bans on the Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride Marches stands in front of the human rights defenders and the Turkish society as an example of human rights violations that have increased exponentially in 7 years. The most basic rights and freedoms of LGBTI+'s are not recognised by the administrations, and their existence in the public sphere is tried to be prevented in every way. Especially with the rising institutionalised LGBTI+ hatred in 2021 as a result of public officials increasing hate speech and attacking LGBTI+s at every opportunity, at least 582 people were detained and tortured in 2022 due to their desire to celebrate the existence of themselves with Pride. It is not a coincidence that the number of detentions between 2015-2021 increased by 400% in 2022. LGBTI+'s are subjected to rights violations in a programmed and conscious manner by the State. The saddest thing is that the right to assembly and demonstration mentioned in this report reveals only one way of violations. From the right to life to the right to work, from the right to housing to the right to education, LGBTI+'s are subjected to discrimination in all areas of life due to their sexual orientation and gender identity.

Although the Pride Marches are the most visible times of the year, human rights defenders and civil society should not lose sight of the fact that LGBTI+ persons continue to exist in the remaining 51 weeks of the year and the attacks on this existence. The LGBTI+ Pride Marches, which have been banned for 7 years, stand against the hate marches that have started to be organized with the support of the state and RTÜK. In addition to the struggle of LGBTI+s to live in this land as equal citizens, all human rights defenders and actors should strengthen this struggle.

Wishing a fair, equal and free world under the rainbow.





Social Policy, Gender Identity and
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