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First UA: 69/25 Index: EUR 44/0133/2025 Türkiye of July 23, 2025

## **TÜRKİYE**

### **FREE PEACEFUL LGBTI+ ACTIVISTS NOW**

Activists Hivda Selen, Sinem Çelebi, and Doğan Nur were arbitrarily detained on the day of the Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride march. Since June 30, they have been held in pre-trial detention on baseless charges simply for taking part in a peaceful protest.

Their first court hearing is scheduled for August 8 at Istanbul Criminal Court of First Instance No. 51. This case is a worrying sign of growing efforts to criminalize LGBTI+ expression and the right to peaceful assembly in Türkiye.

They must be released immediately, and all charges against them must be dropped. No one should be jailed or prosecuted for peacefully standing up for their rights.

#### **Write to the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor urging him to:**

- Ensure the immediate and unconditional release of Hivda Selen, Sinem Çelebi, and Doğan Nur.
- Drop all charges against them.
- Drop all charges against anyone targeted solely for exercising their right to peaceful assembly.

#### **Write to:**

Mr. Akın Gürlek  
Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor  
Çağlayan Meydanı  
Şişli Merkez Mah.  
Abide-i Hürriyet Cad. No: 223  
Şişli/İstanbul, Türkiye  
Email: [istanbulcbs@adalet.gov.tr](mailto:istanbulcbs@adalet.gov.tr)  
*Salutation: Dear Mr. Akın Gürlek*

#### **And copy:**

His Excellency Can DIZDAR  
Ambassador  
Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye  
197 Wurtemberg Street  
Ottawa, ON K1N 8L9  
Tel: (613) 244-2470 Fax: (613) 789-3442  
Email: [embassy.ottawa@mfa.gov.tr](mailto:embassy.ottawa@mfa.gov.tr)

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Since 2015, authorities in Türkiye have repeatedly banned Pride marches and LGBTI+ events, including film screenings and picnics. These actions violate the rights to peaceful assembly, freedom of expression, and non-discrimination, rights protected under Türkiye's Constitution and international law, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and European human rights standards.

In June 2025, Amnesty International issued an [Urgent Action](#) calling on Turkish authorities to allow peaceful Pride events to go ahead without restrictions. The organization also monitored the Istanbul Trans Pride on June 22 and the Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride on June 29. Both events were unlawfully banned. More than 100 people were detained during the two marches.

For the first time since 2015, three people detained during Pride; Hivda Selen, Sinem Çelebi, and Doğan Nur; were placed in pre-trial detention.

The Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride march was banned by authorities. They also shut down metro lines in the Beyoğlu district and canceled ferry services between the European and Anatolian sides of the city. On June 29, large numbers of police were deployed in Beyoğlu, Kadıköy, and Şişli to block access to the march.

That day, 53 people were detained. Among them was Doğan Nur, who was simply walking by when a police officer grabbed him and forced him into a containment area near the Pride gathering. Hivda Selen and Sinem Çelebi were in a different neighborhood. According to her testimony, Hivda Selen was buying coffee when police stopped her for an ID check. Sinem Çelebi was also stopped while walking down the street.

Neither Hivda nor Sinem were told why they were stopped or detained. They were held for several hours before being taken to the police station, in violation of Turkish law.

On June 30, the Criminal Judgeship of Peace No. 5 ordered that Hivda Selen, Sinem Çelebi, and Doğan Nur be placed in pre-trial detention. The others detained that day were released under judicial control.

On July 14, the Istanbul Criminal Court of First Instance No. 51 accepted an indictment charging all 53 individuals with *"unarmed participation in unlawful meetings and demonstrations"* and *"failure to disperse despite warning."*

Amnesty International reviewed the indictment and found no evidence that any of the accused committed a crime under international law. The charges are baseless and must be dropped. No one should face detention or prosecution simply for peacefully exercising their rights.

***Please take action as soon as possible until September 17, 2025. The UA will be duly updated should there be the need for further action.***