

Türkiye's crackdown on LGBTI rights – the impact on trans people in prison

[article](#), [protection from violence and hate](#), [trans activists](#)

Since 12 September 2026, Turkish authorities have intensified a nationwide crackdown on LGBTI people, organisations and human rights defenders. At least 117 people have reportedly been detained, with at least 83 held in pre-trial detention.

The operation, branded “My Family is Safe” has involved arrests, raids on homes and organisations, digital restrictions, and the use of ‘public-morality’ and ‘obscenity’ provisions under Turkish criminal law.

The impact on trans people

Criminalisation, discriminatory policing and restrictive prison practices in Türkiye come together to heighten risks for trans people in detention. At least 27 of those placed in pre-trial detention are trans women, many of whom have been charged with ‘prostitution’ and/or ‘obscenity’ offences.

Trans detainees report strip searches and humiliating treatment and placement in detention arrangements that do not match their gender identity. Prison reports describe prolonged isolation, barriers to hormone treatment and HIV medication, limits on clothing and belongings, access to drinking water, overcrowding, and difficulty reaching legal and medical support.

The wider context in Türkiye

These developments should be understood against a broader deterioration in the legal and political environment for LGBTI people in Türkiye. Since 2025, restrictions on trans-specific healthcare, public expression and LGBTI civil society have grown. Proposed legislation would further limit legal gender recognition, trans healthcare and gender expression. Some restrictions not yet in law are reportedly already applied in practice.

Our calls to action

To the Turkish government:

- Unconditionally release all persons detained for their human rights work and for exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association or peaceful organising.
- End the use of vague provisions on ‘obscenity’ and ‘indecent acts’ to criminalise LGBTI people, particularly trans people, and the organisations defending their rights, including through investigations and prosecutions targeting lawful expression, advocacy and community organising.
- End torture and ill-treatment in police custody and prisons toward trans and LGBTI+ people in prison, including humiliating and abusive strip searches.
- Ensure that trans people in prison are placed in detention facilities and accommodation arrangements that respect their gender identity.
- Guarantee continuous access to hormone treatment, HIV medication and other essential healthcare, including during transfer between detention facilities.

To the EU, Council of Europe, United Nations, Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)/ Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), diplomatic missions, human rights organisations, donors and partners:

- Condemn the raids and detentions directly to the Turkish authorities.
- Press for safeguards against further reprisals.
- Defend human rights defenders and freedom of association, publicly and in political dialogue

To the EU and European governments:

- Raise the detained people's cases, especially trans prison conditions, with Turkish authorities.
- Monitor detention and court proceedings, including through diplomatic presence at hearings.
- Activate legal, protection and emergency support for those affected.

To European institutional funders:

- Stand by civil society partners and maintain funding.
- Reject attempts to criminalise international support for human rights work.

Your support makes change possible

We work across Europe and Central Asia to advance trans rights, build strong communities, and drive change through research, advocacy, and community-building.

Your donation helps us continue this vital work — defending trans lives, amplifying trans voices, and advocating for justice every day.

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