

**DUBLIN**

Front Line Defenders – Head Office
First Floor, Avoca Court
Temple Road, Blackrock
Co. Dublin, A94 R7W3, Ireland

info@frontlinedefenders.org
www.frontlinedefenders.org

phone +353 1 212 3750
fax +353 1 233 8695

BRUSSELS

Front Line Defenders – EU Office
Square Marie-Louise 72
1000 Brussels
Belgium

euoffice@frontlinedefenders.org
www.frontlinedefenders.org

phone +32 2 230 9383
fax +32 2 230 0028

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Türkiye: Court rules to dissolve Genç LGBTİ+ Association

On 11 December 2025, the İzmir Third Civil Court of First instance ruled to dissolve the **Genç LGBTİ+ (Young LGBTİ+) Association**, on the grounds of ‘obscenity’ for illustrations posted on their social media. The Court stated that this is in violation of the Law on Associations. Additionally, eleven members of the organisation’s executive face upcoming criminal prosecution on the same charge.

[Genç LGBTİ+ Association \(The Young Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans Intersex Youth Studies and Solidarity Association\)](#) was established in İzmir in 2016 with the aim of researching issues affecting LGBTİ+ young people. The association works to create public awareness around such issues, offer solutions and create open spaces for LGBTİ+ young people to express themselves. The association’s work is focused on securing access to basic needs like housing, education and healthcare, youth rights, sexual rights, social activities, human rights advocacy, combating hate crimes and peer support.

On 10 December 2024, the İzmir Governorship reported Genç LGBTİ+ Association to the İzmir Chief Prosecutor’s Office. The Governorship requested a civil lawsuit of dissolution and a criminal investigation to be initiated against members of the organisation. This came after a 2024 audit of the Genç LGBTİ+ Association by Ministry of Interior inspectors. The audit was part of the wave of inspections and administrative harassment that targeted LGBTİ+ organisations in Turkey. The inspectors’ report noted that the organisation’s social media account contained five allegedly ‘obscene’ illustrations posted between 2019 and 2022.

On 11 March 2025, the dissolution case commenced at İzmir Third Civil Court of First instance. However, due to a failure to notify the organisation, its members were not present at the first hearing. While their lawyers were able to present their arguments at a hearing on 8th April 2025, no proceedings took place until the final hearing, where the decision was issued to dissolve the organisation. This was despite many scheduled hearings in between.

On 11 December 2025, the Court [ruled](#) that images posted on the organisation’s social media were ‘obscene’ and ‘encourage and incite individuals in society to engage in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transvestite, or transsexual behaviour.’ The Court found that the organisation could neither be considered ‘in line with the moral values of the society’ nor ‘Article 41 of the Constitution which stipulates that the family is the foundation of the Turkish society.’ Genç LGBTİ+ Association intends to appeal this decision.

Additionally, eleven members of the organisation’s executive face prosecution before the İzmir 47th Criminal Court of First Instance. This case is linked to the decision of the Public Prosecutor’s office to start an initial criminal investigation into the human rights defenders on ‘suspicion of facilitating the publication of obscene material’ and ‘establishing an association for prohibited purposes or to commit criminal acts.’ On 24 March 2025, the prosecutor’s office opened a second criminal

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Kieran Mulvey, Roja Fazaeli, Verónica Vidal, Eamon Gilmore, Dermot Hayes, Nicolas Marcoux, Clément Nyaletsossi Voule, Felogene Anumo, Gayathry S. Venkiteswaran

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James L. Cavallaro, Maryam Elahi, Michel Forst, Hina Jilani, Mary Lawlor

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investigation with identical accusations. This came after receiving a notification from the İzmir Governorship for more information regarding their request for criminal investigation.

On 14 August 2025, the initial criminal investigation was closed on the grounds that the illustrations did not constitute obscenity. The Genç LGBTİ+ Association's lawyers submitted the decision to the Press Prosecutor who was running the second investigation and requested him to also close it. However, they were told that it would continue on suspicion of a different charge, namely, violation of the Law on Associations.

On 28 October 2025, İzmir's Public Prosecutor's office submitted its indictment, charging the human rights defenders with violating the Law on Associations. The first hearing is scheduled to take place on 8 April 2026 at 9am local time. If convicted, the human rights defenders face prison sentences of up to three years, as well as fines.

Front Line Defenders is deeply alarmed by the miscarriage of justice involved in the proceedings against the Genç LGBTİ+ Association and its members. Front Line Defenders believes that the organisation and its members are being directly targeted because of their legitimate human rights works in the defence of LGBTI+ rights, in line with the "war on LGBTI+ rights" that Turkish authorities [have said to be waging](#). The dissolution of the LGBTİ+ rights organisation despite the decision that the illustrations do not constitute 'obscenity', continuous delay of hearings and duplicate proceedings for the same alleged offence, are in violation of the right to a fair trial.

Front Line Defenders calls the authorities in Turkey to:

1. Immediately drop the charges against the eleven human rights defenders and executives of Genç LGBTİ+ Association;
2. Overturn the dissolution decision at appeal and guarantee the right to a fair and independent trial;
3. Cease the crackdown on LGBTİ+ rights organisations and defenders;
4. Ensure a safe environment free from harassment and reprisals for all human rights defenders, especially LGBTI+ rights defenders, to continue working peacefully to secure the full enjoyment of fundamental rights for all.

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