

UNI WORLD WOMEN'S COMMITTEE STATEMENT AGAINST THE WITHDRAWAL OF TURKEY FROM THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION

With a Presidential decision dated **March 19, 2021** and issued by President and ruling AKP Chair Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Turkey **has withdrawn from the Council of Europe Convention <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/090000168008482e> on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence.**

President of Turkey was actually waiting for the best time to pull the trigger. In Turkey, the Covid-19 outbreak could never be taken under control and the country is facing many serious issues in mass vaccination. Turkey was already in an economic crisis before the pandemic which intensified the economic crisis. The short-time work compensation will be terminated in the end of March 2021, the income support will be terminated by mid-May 2021 and the temporary restrictions on redundancies/dismissals will be removed. So, in a couple of months, millions of workers will be either unemployed or put on unpaid leave without any pay compensation. Turkish Lira keeps devaluating and the debt crisis is getting deeper.

As the health crisis and economic crisis fuel the political crisis, Erdogan has initiated a new set of policies that are seen as attacks to consolidate his conservative and nationalist supporters and withdrew Turkey from the Convention.

On March 25, Women protested <https://bianet.org/english/male-violence/241386-urgent-appeal-to-council-of-europe-against-withdrawal-from-istanbul-convention> Turkey's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention in Istanbul's Üsküdar district. Underlining the importance of the Convention for women and LGBTIQ+, women reiterated their determination to struggle for the Convention.

During the protest, women also referred to the allegations about the Istanbul Convention's allegedly detrimental effects on "family structure and social values" in Turkey. Noting that the ones voicing such arguments defend an order of society and family where women are children and subjected to all types of violence. Women who are subjected to violence, are massacred in family. Children are subjected to violence and sexual abuse in family. The Istanbul Convention stands up against this very mindset and was put into effect not to destroy families, but to ensure that the perpetrators of violence and murders in families where women and children are subjected to violence and massacred could be penalized. The Convention protects the right to life of all women, veiled/unveiled, believer/non-believer, married/single, and the LGTBIQ+ communities.

Some statistics

300 women were killed by men in Turkey **in 2020**, and 171 women were found suspiciously dead: <http://kadincinayetlerinidurduracagiz.net/veriler/2949/2020-report-of-we-will-end-femicide-platform>

In February 2021, 28 women were killed by men, 12 women were found suspiciously dead: <http://kadincinayetlerinidurduracagiz.net/veriler/2957/2021-february-report-of-we-will-end-femicide-platform>

According to the Metropoll Strategic and Social Research Center's survey, Turkey's Pulse, conducted in July 2020, 64% of respondents disapprove of withdrawing from the Istanbul Convention, 19%



express no opinion, and only 17% express clear support. A month later, the latter figure declined to 7%, largely due to the awareness-raising campaigns led by the women's movement.

The Istanbul Convention is the world's first joint binding effort to fight and to prevent all forms of violence against women including child marriage, marital rape, domestic violence, female genital mutilation and economic violence.

The UNI World Women's Committee joins the UNI Europa Women's Committee in condemning the decision of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to withdraw his country from the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence and urges his government to reaffirm its international commitment to protect the human rights of women and girls and all their citizens.

The UNI World Women's Committee joins the UNI Europa Women's Committee in firmly denouncing the repression being used against trade unionists and so-called minorities as the Turkish government escalated its attack on the LGBTI community <https://www.duvarenglish.com/police-detain-bogazici-university-students-for-carrying-pride-flags-news-56796>

The UNI World Women's Committee joins the UNI Europa Women's Committee in welcoming the ETUC statement [ETUC statement in response to Turkey's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention.docx](#) in response to Turkey's announced withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention, as adopted at its Executive Committee on 22-23 March 2021 calling on President Ursula von der Leyen to use any and all effective measures available to ensure that all EU Member States ratify and to work as a matter of urgency to finalise the accession of the EU to the Istanbul Convention

The UNI World Women's Committee calls on to the Turkish Government to reconsider urgently their withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention