



EPA Statement on Recent Developments Affecting LGBTI+ People and Mental Health Professionals in Türkiye

The European Psychiatric Association (EPA) expresses its serious concern regarding recent developments in Türkiye affecting LGBTI+ individuals and organisations, as well as professional organisations working in the fields of psychiatry, mental health and sexual health.

Recent measures taken in the context of the “My Family is Safe” (“Ailem Güvende”) operation have included restrictions on access to the websites and social media accounts of organisations working on LGBTI+ rights mental and sexual health, as well as detentions and other measures affecting individuals and organisations. More recently, access in Türkiye to the official X account of the Psychiatric Association of Türkiye was blocked, reportedly on grounds of “obscenity”.

The EPA is particularly concerned by the association of sexual and gender diversity, and of scientific and professional information relating to it, with notions of obscenity or criminality. Sexual orientation and gender diversity are part of human diversity and should not, in themselves, be considered mental disorders. This position is firmly grounded in scientific evidence and established psychiatric and medical standards. The EPA has previously affirmed that diverse sexual orientations and gender identities do not represent mental disorders and has warned against the harmful effects of their stigmatisation.

Psychiatrists and other mental health professionals have a responsibility to provide evidence-based information, promote access to appropriate healthcare and contribute to public understanding of mental health. They, and the professional organisations representing them, must be able to fulfil these responsibilities without intimidation, censorship or undue interference arising solely from the legitimate exercise of their professional and scientific activities.

Stigmatisation and discrimination can have serious consequences for mental health and may create additional barriers to accessing healthcare. The ability of health professionals and their representative organisations to communicate evidence-based information freely and responsibly is therefore an important matter of both professional integrity and public health. This concern has also been raised by the Psychiatric Association of Türkiye and the Turkish Medical Association.

The European Psychiatric Association expresses its solidarity with the Psychiatric Association of Türkiye, mental health professionals, and all those affected by these developments. We call for the protection of scientific and professional independence, respect for fundamental rights and non-discrimination, and the ability of psychiatrists and other healthcare professionals to carry out their work in accordance with scientific evidence, professional ethics and the principles of human rights.



EUROPEAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION



The EPA remains committed to promoting mental health, combating stigma and discrimination, and defending the conditions necessary for the ethical and independent practice of psychiatry across Europe.

Prof Andrea Fiorillo

President, European Psychiatric Association (EPA)