Turkey: Call for Proposals for Policy Brief Series

July 28, 2023

Freedom House seeks proposals for a policy brief that will analyze the impact of the increasing crackdown on Turkey’s LGBTQI+ community in the context of defending fundamental freedoms in Turkey

Freedom House calls for proposals from both rising and experienced independent researchers, scholars, and affiliated research analysts, especially those based in Turkey for forward-looking briefs on the increasing crackdown on the LGBTQI+ community in Turkey and the role of relevant stakeholders to protect LGBTQI+ rights in the context of defending fundamental freedoms in Turkey.

Context:

Long considered an island of tolerance in the region, Turkey is becoming increasingly hostile to LGBTQI+ community members and their organizations. Prominently, the narrative used by President Erdogan, the AKP party and their coalition allies during the recent presidential and parliamentary elections has turned against LGBTQI+ people. In his election victory speech, President Erdogan accused opposition parties of being "pro-LGBT" and he and members of his party have frequently described members of the LGBTQI+ community as “deviants” and “perverts.” Erdogan announced his government’s proposal for a constitutional amendment that would limit rights for the LGBTQI+ community under the guise of protecting “the family establishment from increasing threats by perverse trends.” In the year preceding the elections, pro-government media outlets have demonized student protesters, and in particular anyone perceived to be LGBTQI+ with rhetoric linking them with “terrorist groups”.

This year’s peaceful pride month marches have showcased yet another example of the increasing crackdown on the LGBTQI+ community where authorities violated the participants’ right to free expression and assembly. Pride parades have been banned across the country since 2014 by the authorities with the pretext of public security and health and morality. According to Turkish LGBTQI+ organizations, the authorities this year banned ten LGBT-related events and have detained over 530 people in just 37 days.

Topic:

As part of the policy brief series, Freedom House aims to create a common ground for different civil society actors to address human rights issues in the country. Through these briefs, non-traditional authors, such as lawyers, university faculty, and students, are provided the opportunity to write forward-looking briefs on themes covering fundamental freedoms in Turkey. The last policy brief in the series analyzed growing restrictions on the media, the newly enacted disinformation law and its impact on protecting electoral integrity before the 2023 elections in Turkey.

Freedom House is looking for concept proposals for a policy brief that will explore recent attacks on LGBTQI+ rights in Turkey and provide recommendations for protecting rights. The authors are encouraged to come at this question creatively. The selected brief will examine the increasing crackdown on LGBTQI+ community and the implications of the planned constitutional amendment proposal that aims to “protect family values” and targets LGBTQI+ individuals.
Furthermore, the brief will present recommendations for civil society, national, and international stakeholders to protect human rights, in particular the rights of LGBTQI+ individuals.

**Application Process:**

Freedom House will accept concept proposals submitted to eurasia@freedomhouse.org through **August 21, 2023**, with “Turkey Policy Briefs” in the subject line. The concept proposal should consist of an abstract of no more than 300 words, an outline of the argument and recommendations to be presented, and a CV of the principal researcher or researchers. Organizations may submit proposals for more than one brief. Priority will be given to concept proposals submitted in English. Freedom House encouraged non-traditional journalists, such as lawyers or students, to apply.

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis, and one policy brief will be produced. Contracted researcher(s) will be asked to deliver a draft of 2500-3000 words. The brief will be copy-edited, published, and promoted by Freedom House, with the byline and affiliation of the researcher. An honorarium of between $500 and $1,000 will be provided, depending on the originality, scope and length of the brief.