

Updates from Turkey:

Dear Colleagues,

It has been a while since we sent the international solidarity call to ISPP and EASP. We appreciate the support of the executive committees of ISPP and EASP as well as the responsiveness of their members to our solidarity call by possible means. Thank you very much for your sensitivity and solidarity for collective action for the situation of academics in Turkey.

Since our call to financially and professionally support academics in Turkey, we have gone through many events and actions in Turkey. With this email, we would like to provide you a short summary of what has been going on, along with reliable news articles for each item on the list:

- April 16th Referendum: Citizens of Turkey were sent to the polls under the State of Emergency for a referendum changing the constitution and increasing presidential powers on April 16, 2017. As a result of a last minute change by Higher Election Council, unsealed votes (approximately 2.5 million votes with a striking majority of “yes” votes) were legalized, allowing the constitutional changes including a political regime change (with 51.3% votes). The State of Emergency have been extended for three more months on April, 19. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/massive-electoral-fraud-in-turkeys-referendum\\_us\\_58f556dfe4b048372700dade?ncid=engmodushpimg00000004](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/massive-electoral-fraud-in-turkeys-referendum_us_58f556dfe4b048372700dade?ncid=engmodushpimg00000004)

- 3 new KHK: In total 484 academics (among them are 66 peace petitioners) have been purged in the most recent State of Emergency decrees (KHK), including Gözde Özdikmenli Demir (head of the Psychology Department at Muğla University). Below is a report regarding affected academics:

#### **Rights violations against Academics for Peace**

	<b>Public</b>	<b>Private</b>	<b>Total</b>
Removed and banned from public service with the decree laws*	364	8	<b>372</b>
Dismissal	37	39	<b>76</b>
Resignation	15	10	<b>25</b>
Forced Retirement	20	1	<b>21</b>
Removed and banned from public service with the decree laws + dismissal + resignation + retirement	401	51	<b>452</b>
Disciplinary Investigation	442	63	<b>505</b>
Disciplinary investigations. Decision of the Investigation Committee: Dismissal from public service. Pending CoHE (YÖK) approval.	107	5	<b>112</b>
Preventive suspension	78	11	<b>89</b>
Suspension from administrative duty	3	4	<b>7</b>
Police custody	53	3	<b>56</b>
Pre-trial detention**	2	2	<b>4</b>

\*Among the Peace Petition signatories, 42 academics, who had been earlier dismissed or forced into resignation, were also removed and banned from public service with the decree laws. In addition, PhD students within the Faculty Training Program suffer from rights violations due to the amendments in the procedures and principles and the decree laws.

\*\* 3 academics had to stay in pre-trial detention for 40 days and 1 for 22 days until they were released after the first court hearing.

Source: <https://barisicinakademisyenler.net/node/314>

- KHK related suicides: Until 29 April, 37 persons, mostly civil servants but also teachers have committed suicide after being dismissed by KHK. There are also civil servants or teachers who started to work outside their employment area, such as construction work and to our knowledge one teacher died on the work site because of hazardous working conditions

<http://www.birgun.net/haber-detay/purge-in-turkey-has-led-at-least-37-dismissed-or-suspended-people-to-commit-suicide-157844.html>

<https://news.sol.org.tr/teacher-died-occupational-murder-172234>

- KHK hunger strikes: Among the dismissed were Nuriye Gülmen (academic) and Semih Özakça (teacher) who started sit-in strikes. Currently, they are in the 170th day of sit-in strike and 60th day of hunger strike to demand justice and removal of dismissal from authorities. As of May 5, our colleague Esra Mungan (cognitive psychologist at Bogazici University) joined symbolic one-day hunger strike along with other academics to support Gülmen and Özakça: <https://bianet.org/english/human-rights/186212-a-group-of-peace-academics-go-on-hunger-strike-for-gulmen-ozakca>.

If you want to support them, you can follow the english website and send support messages via their contact page. You can also send e-mail/fax to Thorbjørn Jagland (Secretary General) and Nils Muižnieks (commissioner@coe.int, Commissioner for Human Rights) from Council of Europe as well as to Kati Piri (kati.piri@europarl.europa.eu) from European Parliament.

<https://hungryforourjobs.wordpress.com/2017/04/05/we-have-been-on-an-indefinite-hunger-strike-for-our-job-bread-and-honour-from-9th-of-march/> <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCe79J-43g9DHyLaid96qG1A>

- France: CNRS executive board suggested warning TUBITAK by freezing ongoing agreements

[http://www.cnrs.fr/comitenational/cs/recommandations/24-25\\_avril\\_2017/Reco\\_Relations\\_avec\\_le\\_TUBITAK.pdf](http://www.cnrs.fr/comitenational/cs/recommandations/24-25_avril_2017/Reco_Relations_avec_le_TUBITAK.pdf)

- Academics from Dicle University in Diyarbakir were first purged by decree, then taken into custody by police. They have since been released, but the process signals systematic threatening.

<http://www.kurdistan24.net/en/news/ab186346-126c-4320-9753-d7b3145c0184/Turkish-police-arrest-16-academics-in-Diyarbakir-University>

- Many academics who have not yet been purged are being oppressed in their current positions for being a Peace Petitioner, for being involved in oppositional political public discourse or for being targeted as a threat to the state without any reliable concrete/legal evidence. They are asked to “sign in” daily as proof that they have come into the office, and they are not provided academic leave to participate in international conferences. Although there are many examples, we hesitate to give a full list given security concerns. However, upon consent, we feel responsible to inform the ISPP conference committee that a PhD researcher and a peace petitioner, has been prevented by her university from attending the upcoming general meeting in Edinburgh, despite having an accepted paper to present. She is also not allowed to take personal leave.

As the news suggest, our oppressive conditions are worsening and our possibilities to continue our academic lives are threatened. We specifically underline their need to stay connected with academia. Therefore, we hope you can continue to actively support academics in Turkey. Here is a reminder and a

follow-up of how you can do this:

Reminder:

- (1) Commissioning universities and diplomatic relations to prepare short term work possibilities, research grants or research asylums abroad to help psychologists to continue their academic work.
- (2) Providing small to mid-scale research funds for the psychologists who have been banned from leaving Turkey, to help them to pursue their research in Turkey and sustain their livelihoods and scholarly careers.
- (3) Sharing daily/weekly social media reports on developments related to the state of emergency in Turkey and to the violation of multiple rights.
- (4) Providing honorary memberships or affiliated memberships for psychologists banned from academia to help them preserve their academic titles. (New additional remark: If possible and/or applicable, international pairing partners can take initiative to ask their partner in Turkey whether they would need/want honorary affiliation)
- (5) Holding a round table discussion for future actions of solidarity during ISPP and EASP general meetings.

Follow-up suggestions:

- (6) Holding round table meetings in future conferences regarding academic freedom
- (7) Project writing schemes in international research institutes and centers for colleagues who are dismissed or under risk
- (8) Skype and recorded video options (and free-registration to conferences) for colleagues who are not allowed to go to international meetings

In hope to stay in International Solidarity!

Social and Political Psychology Platform of Turkey