



REPORT SUBMITTED TO MS. DUBRAVKA ŠIMONVIĆ
THE UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

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About Eşik

Eşik - Eşitlik İçin Kadın Platformu (Women's Platform for Equality, Turkey) is an independent platform of more than 310 women's and LGBTI+ organizations. Eşik Platform builds on a long tradition of women's organizations working together on specific issues including violence against women, alimony rights, reforms to the civil and penal codes, and the monitoring of the Istanbul Convention. Eşik, which means "threshold" in Turkish, was formed out of a recognition that the attacks on women's hard-won rights have become more systematic in recent years and that they require a coordinated response.

The immediate predecessor to Eşik was the Women's Platform Against Amnesty for Child Sexual Abusers (TCK 103 Platform or TPC 103 Platform), which itself dates back to 2016. TCK 103 Platform brought together 200 women's organizations and succeeded, for the time being, in preventing the passage of a draft law that would change Article 103 of the Turkish Penal Code. Recent attempts to change this law (in 2016 and more recently in 2020) would grant amnesty to sexual abusers of children. Among the work the TCK 103 Women's Platform conducted is a 71-page report that was shared with the press and members of parliament.¹

Following statements made by high-ranking officials of the ruling Justice and Development Party that Turkey could withdraw from the Istanbul Convention, the TCK 103 Platform evolved into the Women's Platform for Equality, Turkey. Established on August 1, 2020, Eşik adopted a name that highlights equality as the central principle for which it works.

¹ TCK 103 is the abbreviation for "Türk Ceza Kanunu 103. Madde", that is, Article 103 of the Turkish Penal Code (TPC) regarding the crime of sexual abuse of children. TCK 103 Çocuk Cinsel İstismarı Affına Karşı Kadın Platformu Bilgi Dosyası (July 2020) <https://www.tck103kadinplatformu.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/TCK103PlatformuBilgiDosyasi2020.pdf>

Report on Femicides in Turkey

Submitted to Ms. Dubravka Šimonovič

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women

By EŞİK - Eşitlik İçin Kadın Platformu (Women's Platform for Equality, Turkey)

Women's and LGBTI+ human rights, rule of law and democracy are under constant attack in Turkey

This contribution to the Special Rapporteur's report on femicides is submitted in a political context where women's hard-won rights are under attack in an increasingly authoritarian Turkey.^{2 3 4 5 6} Following a very brief discussion of one of these recent and consequential attacks, we provide the data requested for the Special Rapporteur's Report on Femicide.

In the Conclusions, we respond specifically to the six questions contained in the call for inputs.

Presidential Decision to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention is unprecedented and unlawful

On March 20, 2021, Turkey announced, through a Presidential Decision published in the Official Gazette, that it was withdrawing from the Istanbul Convention (IC). This was the first time that Turkey announced withdrawal from an international human rights treaty.

In response, EŞİK released a public statement declaring the Presidential Decision unlawful and unconstitutional.⁷ The Decision is against Turkey's laws because Turkey's Parliament *unanimously* ratified the Convention in 2012, and it is Parliament, not the President, that has the authority to make the decision to withdraw.⁸ Even if the Decision were lawful, it is, of course, still wrong in a country where violence against women (VAW) and femicides are prevalent.

² Duvar English. "Turkey's top religious official once again targets LGBT individuals" (25 April 2020)

<https://www.duvarenglish.com/domestic/2020/04/25/turkeys-top-religious-official-once-again-targets-lgbt-individuals>

³ Reuters. Turkish police detain 159 people at protests over Erdogan-appointed university head. (1 February 2021)

<https://www.reuters.com/article/turkey-security-bogazici-int/turkish-police-detain-159-people-at-protests-over-erdogan-appointed-university-head-idUSKBN2A13OU>

⁴ Human Rights Watch. "Turkey: Kurdish Mayors' Removal Violates Voters' Rights" (7 February 2021)

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/02/07/turkey-kurdish-mayors-removal-violates-voters-rights>

⁵ Jones, D. "New law threatens the future of Turkish NGOs" (10 January 2021) <https://www.voanews.com/europe/new-law-threatens-future-turkish-ngos>

⁶ Çameli, Tuba. Kayyum belediyelerinde baskılar, yargı tacizi ve kadın mücadelesi - Bir devlet politikası olarak kadın kırımı, Interview with Adalet Kaya, Birartibir Forum, (25 April 2021) <https://www.birartibir.org/aidiyetler/1130-bir-devlet-politikasi-olarak-kadin-kirimi>

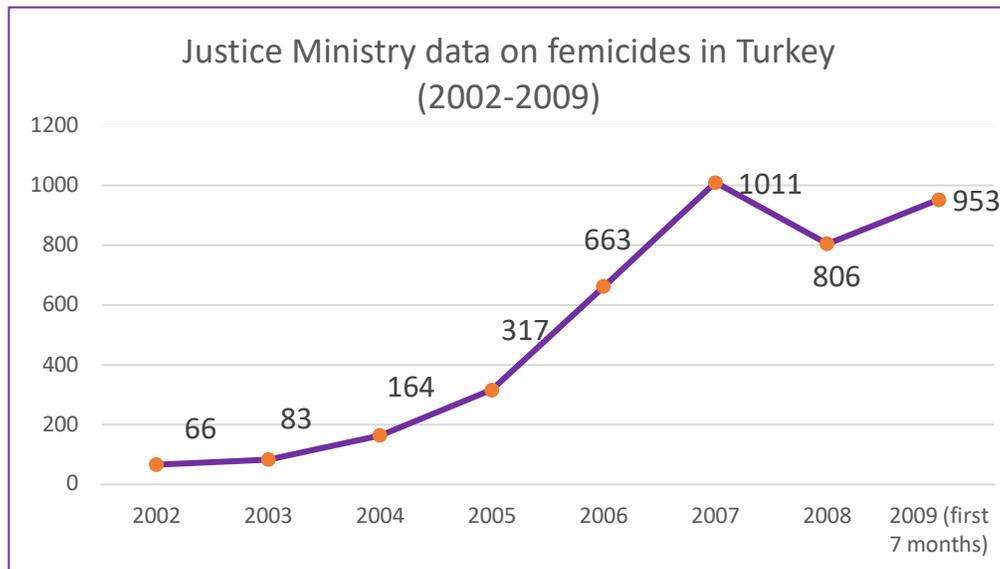
⁷ Eşitlik İçin Kadın Platformu or EŞİK (Women's Platform for Equality) "The Presidential Decision on the Istanbul Convention is Null and Void" (21 March 2021) <https://esikplatform.net/the-convention-remains-in-force/>

⁸ Altıok, "Turkish Withdrawal from Istanbul Convention is Null and Void" Forum EU. (9 April 2021) <https://forum.eu/article/turkish-withdrawal-from-istanbul-convention-is-null-and-void/1129>

Reliable femicide data do not exist, but available data suggest high and increasing prevalence

There is no national femicide watch or observatory in Turkey, nor is there credible complete data on femicide/feminicide/gendercide. The police and the gendarmerie (law enforcement agency with jurisdiction over rural areas) collect femicide data, but these are not shared publicly.⁹ For official femicide data, we rely on statements that ministers delivered in response to written inquiries submitted by members of Turkey's parliament.

Figure 1.



Source: Justice Minister Sadullah Ergin (2009)¹⁰

Figure 1 comes from Mr. Ergin, who was Justice Minister in 2009. It shows that in the first 7 months of 2009 alone, 953 women were murdered. That averages three femicides per day. Crucially, these official figures do not include “suspicious deaths” of women – those that appear to be suicides, accidents and poisoning. In this sense, even the incomplete figures we have access to, as high as they are, are likely to be undercounting the actual prevalence of femicide.

Soon after the release of the 2002-2009 data, and in response to another written inquiry, the Ministry of Family and Social Services (FSS) issued new and radically lower figures for 2009. Femicide figures that are publicly available are presented in Table 1. A comparison of the data from the Ministry of Family and Social Services to those from the media outlet Bianet for 2009-2011 shows that the official figures fall

⁹ Palmén *et al.* (2016). *WAVE: Violence Against Women Comparative Report: Italy, Spain and Turkey*. Notus Applied Social Research. Retrieved on April 30, 2021 from https://notus-asr.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/WAVE_CR_TR_FINAL_7March2016-2-2.pdf

¹⁰ Yılmaz, Ö. “7 ayda 953 kadın öldürüldü” *Milliyet Newspaper* (11 August 2009) <https://www.milliyet.com.tr/gundem/7-ayda-953-kadin-olduruldu-1159501> and Jones, D., “Turkey’s rate of murdered women skyrockets” (27 February 2011) <https://www.voanews.com/europe/turkeys-murder-rate-women-skyrockets>

short even of those femicides that were reported in media. Femicides that make it to the news constitute only a subset of all femicides.

Table 1. Femicide Data in Turkey by various official and civil society sources (2002-2020)

Year	Justice Ministry	FSS Ministry	Interior Ministry	Police Academy report (2019)	KCDP*	Bianet
2002	66					
2003	83					
2004	164					
2005	317					
2006	663					
2007	1011					
2008	806					
2009	953**	171				198
2010		177				217
2011		163				257
2012		128***			210	165
2013					237	214
2014					294	281
2015					303	284
2016			304	301	328	261
2017			353	350	409	290
2018			279	281	440	255
2019			336		474	328
2020			266		300	284

Sources: Satıl, C. 2021.¹¹ Interior Minister. 2021.¹² Tastan, C. and Küçük Yıldız, A. 2019.¹³ We Will Stop Femicides (WWSF) Platform 2021.¹⁴ Figure for the first 7 months of 2009. ** Figure for the first 9 months of 2012.***

¹¹ Satıl, C. "Türkiye'de Kadın Cinayetleri" Doğruluk Payı (8 March 2021) <https://www.dogrulukpayi.com/bulten/turkiye-de-kadin-cinayetleri>

¹² Soylu, S. Tweet (2 January 2021) <https://archive.is/zt1ur>

¹³ Tastan, C. and Küçük Yıldız, A. 2019. Dünyada ve Türkiye'de Kadın Cinayetleri: 2016-2017-2018 Verileri ve Analizler. Polis Akademisi Yayınları. Retrieved on April 27, 2021 from: https://www.pa.edu.tr/Upload/editor/files/Kadin_Cinayetleri_Rapor.pdf

¹⁴ We Will Stop Femicides Platform (Kadın Cinayetlerini Durduracağız Platformu) <http://kadincinayetleriniurduracagiz.net/kategori/veriler>

The government of Turkey disregards women's groups' requests for comprehensive and credible statistics, as well as GREVIO's (2018)¹⁵ recommendations. A recent report on femicides by the gendarmerie revealed that between 2008 and 2017, 2,487 women were killed, with a significant increase in the number of killings after 2013.¹⁶ WWSF Platform and Bianet's data also suggest an increase in femicides. WWSF and Bianet's data are gathered from media reports. There is little doubt that these fall below actual numbers of femicides¹⁷, even though they are higher than the occasional data provided by state agencies (Table 1). Further obscuring femicide prevalence is the widespread misclassification of femicides as suicides.

Violence Against Women and Femicides during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Parallel to global trends, while a 40% decrease in crime rates was observed in Turkey from March 2019 to 2020, rates of violence against women increased significantly.¹⁸ In March of 2019, there were 1,804 incidents of domestic violence in Istanbul alone, rising to 2,493 in March 2020 – an increase of 38.2%.¹⁹

Data from hotlines and women's shelters also suggest an increase in violence against women during the pandemic.²⁰ Data and analysis from the Purple Roof Women's Shelter Foundation (Purple Roof), which comprises a wide network of shelters around Turkey, also suggest an increase. Calls to WWSF Platform and Turkey's Federation of Women's Associations' (TKDF) hotline increased significantly. TKDF's data suggest that physical violence increased by 80%, psychological violence by 93%, and those seeking a space in a women's shelter by 78%.²¹ These data do not give us the full picture. TFWA did not receive any calls on sexual abuse, for instance, but this does not mean that none took place. It is much more likely that women simply endured violence in the context of restrictions on movement, high levels of unemployment, and poverty. Additionally, there is *not one sexual crisis center in the country*.

Purple Roof, on the basis of their work with survivors, municipalities, bar associations, social services and Centers for Violence Prevention and Monitoring (ŞÖNİM), reported that there was a clear lack of planning and ability on the part of institutions tasked with preventing VAW. According to Purple Roof, "The pandemic was used as an excuse to *not* combat violence against women. Existing problems deepened and bad practices became more widespread."²²

¹⁵ Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), *Baseline Evaluation Report Turkey* (2018), 35-40 discussion of data, recommendations tied to data 114-16,, <https://rm.coe.int/eng-grevio-report-turquie/16808e5283>.

¹⁶ The report and the statistics are discussed in the 2020 New York Times article, Beril Eski, "The Murder of a Ballerina," *The New York Times* (Feb. 4, 2020), <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/04/opinion/turkey-women-murders.html>.

¹⁷ Büyük, H. "Women Face Rising Violence in Male-Dominated Turkey." (2 September 2019) Retrieved on April 29, 2021 from: <https://balkaninsight.com/2019/09/02/women-face-rising-violence-in-male-dominated-turkey/>

¹⁸ EŞİTİZ Söyleşileri 6: Kovid-19 Sürecinde Dünyadan Örnekler (5 May 2020) Retrieved no April 30, 2021 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QiwYnqKUS4g>

¹⁹ <https://tr.euronews.com/2020/04/11/suc-oranlari-dustu-ceteler-faaliyetleri-duruyor-aile-ici-siddet-artti-koronavirus-evde-kal>

²⁰ Daniel Bellut Pelin Ünker, "Domestic violence rises in Turkey during COVID-19 pandemic," *DW* (April 10, 2020), <https://www.dw.com/en/domestic-violence-rises-in-turkey-during-covid-19-pandemic/a-53082333>.

²¹ <https://www.evrensel.net/haber/401726/tkdfden-vahim-tablo-koronavirus-gunlerinde-kadina-yonelik-siddet-yuzde-80-artti>

²² Purple Roof Women's Shelter Foundation (Mor Çatı). 2020 Faaliyet Raporu https://morcati.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/MorCati_Faaliyet_Raporu_2020.pdf

Beyond the patchwork of data that point to a quantitative increase in VAW during the pandemic, what is vital is the lack of coordination among agencies tasked with preventing violence against women. This is evident in the narratives of women whose lives are shaped by gender-based violence and state violence. Süryan Büyük's case is instructive. She lived in Hantepe village in Diyarbakir, and was subjected to violence by her husband for 10 years. The entire village knew about this, including her relatives, the village headman, and the imam. She had appealed 6 times to the gendarmerie, who simply sent her back to her home. Finally, after a brief stay at a shelter with her two children, she decided to relocate to the city with the extraordinary support of women's organizations, but on January 28, 2021, when she went back to pack her things, she was brutally murdered by her husband.²³

In Diyarbakir, a city of 900,00 inhabitants, there are only 3 shelters, and the location of one is public knowledge, making it an unsafe place. Currently, when survivors file complaints with the police, they are asked to document that they are COVID-19 negative. If the police are convinced that there is, indeed, violence, the woman is then directed to the city's Center for Violence Prevention and Monitoring (ŞÖNİM). These bureaucratic hurdles deter women from reporting the violence at home.²⁴

Women's shelters are woefully insufficient throughout Turkey - both in terms of numbers and trained staff. Per Turkey's state report to GREVIO, as of 2016, there were a total of 137 shelters with a total capacity to accommodate 3,433 victims/survivors. Of these, 101 shelters are affiliated with the Ministry of FSP, 32 are run by local municipalities, and 4 by women's NGOs. Some shelters have even been closed "for maintenance" during the pandemic.²⁵

Given the lack of systematic, transparent and regularly provided official data on femicides, women's organizations continue to rely on media reports in gathering data, which suggest a decrease in femicides during the COVID-19 pandemic (Table 1). Recently, civil society organizations started monitoring "suspicious deaths of women." For 2020, WWSF Platform reports 171 suspicious deaths of women; and Bianet reports 255 such deaths. Published reports of femicides may have decreased due to limits on reporters' freedom of movement and their lack of access to information. Available data does not allow us to know how many femicide victims are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or intersex (LGBTI+).

Prevention, protection, prosecution and policies to combat violence against women

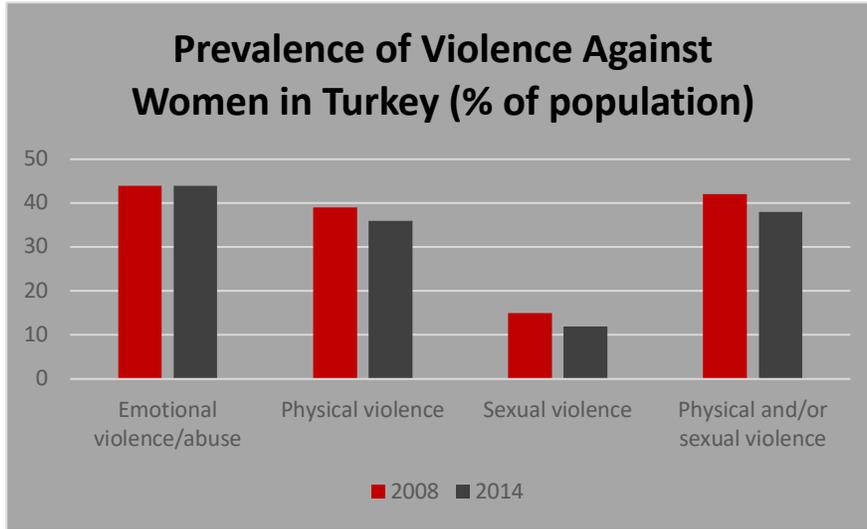
Femicides are the tip of a large iceberg in Turkey. Demographic surveys based on representative samples and qualitative data show that VAW, which also compromises the health and wellbeing of children who witness it, is very prevalent in the country (Figure 2). These studies also show that 89% of women who experience violence do not report it *anywhere* (Figure 3).

²³ Çameli, Tuba. Interview with Adalet Kaya. (25 April 2021) <https://www.birartibir.org/aidiyetler/1130-bir-devlet-politikasi-olarak-kadin-kirimi> (A longer version of Çameli's interview with Adalet Kaya, which includes with details on the cases is on file with EŞİK).

²⁴ The details of Süryan Büyük's case as well as the cases of Gülis tan Doku, İpek Er as well as an investigation of what happened in the case of Gercüs are also discussed in Cameli's interview with Adalet Kaya. Çameli, Tuba. Kayyum belediyelerinde baskılar, yargı tacizi ve kadın mücadelesi - Bir devlet politikası olarak kadın kırımını

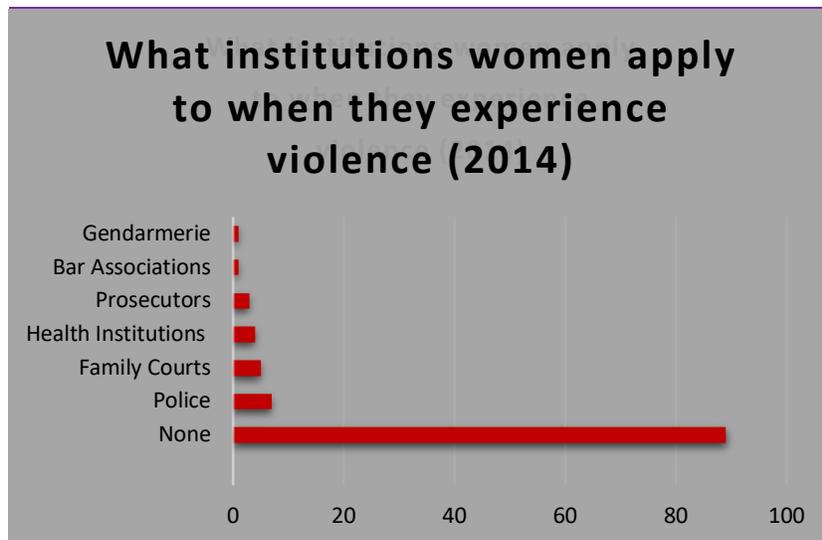
²⁵ EŞİTİZ Söyleşileri 3: Kovid-19 Sürecinde Belediyelerin Kadın Politikaları. (29 April 2020.) Retrieved on April 29, 2021 from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGltesnWnrl>

Figure 2.



Source: Hacettepe University Demographic Studies Institute and the Ministry of Family and Social Services (2015).

Figure 3.



Source: Hacettepe University Demographic Studies Institute and Republic of Turkey Ministry of Family and Social Services (2015).²⁶

²⁶ T.C. Aile ve Sosyal Hizmetler Bakanlığı ve Hacettepe Üniversitesi Nüfus Etütleri Enstitüsü (2015). Türkiye’de Kadına Yönelik Aile İçi Sıddet Araştırması. Elma Teknik Basım. Ankara. This report is based on a study of 24,048 households, involving the most recent of the studies by Hacettepe University in 2014. The first was conducted in 2008.

High prevalence of VAW, coupled with the fact that only 11% of those who experience violence report it to law enforcement or other institutions, means that those who get protective injunction orders are a very small subset of women who need them. A close look at these figures (Table 2) paints a dire picture also.

The Istanbul Convention puts responsibility on states through the “four Ps”: to *prevent* to all forms of VAW; *protect* and support survivors, *prosecute* perpetrators, and adopt *policies* to combat VAW. As Feride Acar, the first president of GREVIO stated at a recent meeting, Turkey’s withdrawal from the IC encourages perpetrators of violence.²⁷ In fact, on March 22, 2021, two days after the President’s decision to withdraw from the IC, 6 more femicides occurred in Turkey *in a single day*.²⁸

Though Turkey has a Coordination Plan for Combatting Violence Against Women,²⁹ its government lacks the political will to prevent violence against women, protect those who need protection or prosecute perpetrators as required under international law, including the IC.³⁰ On the contrary, the government’s discourse and actions encourage perpetrators, and give them the message that they will enjoy impunity.³¹ This was evident in the decision to withdraw from the IC and the joy with which it was received by some of the most reactionary segments of society.

Islamist newspapers regularly publish lists of women’s and LGBTI+ organizations, and the names of individual women, making them targets of violence. They also spread propaganda that aims to facilitate early and forced marriages of children and provide amnesty for sexual abusers of children, both of which are directly related to VAW in its various forms (See Figure 4 below). Since October 2019, the Turkish Ministry of Justice has stopped sharing data on sexual abuse of children.³²

²⁷ “Attacks on the Istanbul Convention: The ongoing struggle for women’s rights” (23 March 2021) Retrieved on April 29, 2021 from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zKgnHVfufYI>

²⁸ <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2021/gundem/turkiyede-24-saatte-6-kadin-olduruldu-6331225/>

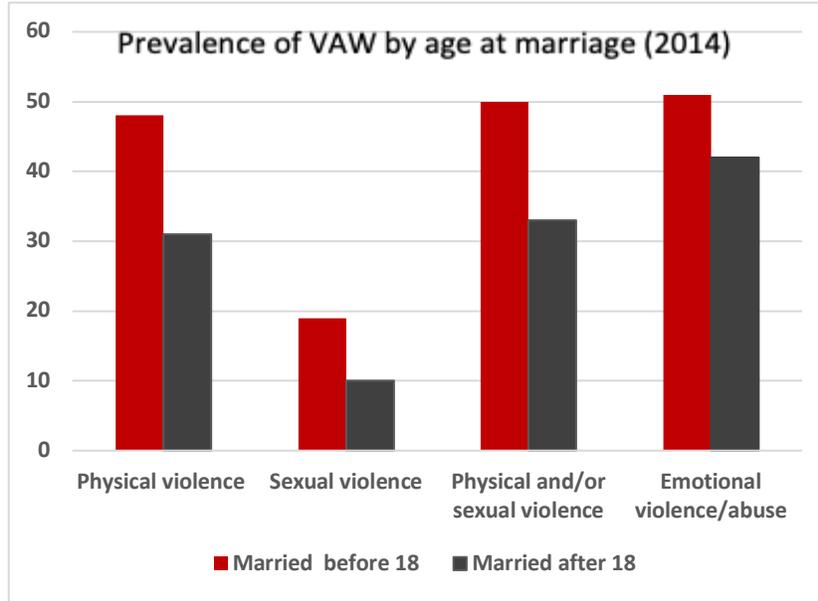
²⁹ Kadına Yönelik Sıddetle Mücadele Koordinasyon Planı (2020-2021)
<https://www.ailevecalisma.gov.tr/media/33061/koordinasyon-planı-v13-1.pdf>

³⁰ The Advocates for Human Rights. (2021). Turkey’s Withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention: A Step Backward for Women’s Human Rights. Retrieved on April 30, 2021 from:
https://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/uploads/turkey_step_back_final.pdf

³¹ A group of young men in Turkey declared April 12, 2021 “rape day” on social media encouraging men to rape women.

³² Simsek, H. “Istismarcıları Gizlediler” (20 October 2019) <https://www.birgun.net/haber/istismarcilari-gizlediler-273150>

Figure 4.



Source: Hacettepe University Demographic Studies Institute and the Ministry of Family and Social Services (2015).

The case of Pelda Karaduman, who was married to the relative who had raped and later murdered her, is instructive of the critical importance of effective implementation of the IC and existing national laws. The fact that existing laws are regularly violated, with impunity for perpetrators, also points to the consequences of persistent attempts to provide amnesty to perpetrators of child sexual abuse.³³ This is an issue that provided the impetus for the formation, in the summer of 2020, of the Women’s Platform Against Amnesty for Child Sexual Abusers (TPC 103 Platform), precursor to EŞİK Platform.³⁴³⁵

Turkey provided data to GREVIO on the number of protective orders issued between 2014 and 2016 (Table 2). Of the 55,757 protective injunction orders issued in 2016, 42,351 were to provide temporary protection from a “life-threatening danger for the person.” 9,429 of these were provided for shelter. Only 6 were provided for short-term aid to cover the cost of day-care, and only 10 of these 55,757 women were provided temporary financial assistance (Table 2).

³³ Ertürk, Y. (2016). A move to set free child sex abusers: in the name of “our culture.” Open Democracy. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/5050/midnight-motion-to-set-free-child-sex-abusers-in-name-of-our-culture/>

³⁴ TCK 103 Çocuk Cinsel İstismarı Affına Karşı Kadın Platformu Bilgi Dosyası (July 2020) <https://www.tck103kadinplatformu.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/TCK103PlatformuBilgiDosyasi2020.pdf>

³⁵ For a detailed report on recent issues and a list of women’s and LGBTI+ organizations working on these see CEID’s (2020) report <https://ceidizler.ceid.org.tr/Kadinlara-Yonelik-siddet-ve-Toplumsal-Cinsiyet-Esitligi-Haritalama-ve-izleme-calismasi-2017-2020-Guncellemesi-i120>

To specify the link between these figures and femicides, we highlight that most femicide victims were previously threatened by their current or former intimate partners.³⁶ One recent academic study of intimate partner femicide (IPF) conducted in Turkey finds that the typical IPF perpetrator “has threatened his partner or ex-partner previously because of jealousy/infidelity/honour or separation.”³⁷ To put this in context, not all women receiving threats on their lives apply for a protective order, fearing that they will experience different types of violence when they apply to state institutions. Even when issued, protective orders often fail to protect women.³⁸ Knowing this, many women continue to suffer violence in their own homes.³⁹

³⁶ Husbands and former husbands are the leading group of perpetrators. Toprak and Ersoy’s (2017) representative sample found that “spouses (30.6%) were the leading group of perpetrators, followed by relatives/siblings/offspring and boyfriends.” This is also confirmed by analyses based on femicides reported in media. See for example, Ulukaya, C. (2015). *Kadınları Kim, Nerede, Nasıl Öldürdü: Bes Yılın Cinayet Haritası*. Retrieved on April 29, 2021 from: <https://m.bianet.org/bianet/kadin/169494-kadinlari-kim-nerede-nasil-oldurdu-5-yilin-cinayet-haritasi>

³⁷ Toprak, S. and Ersoy, G. (2017) “Femicide in Turkey between 2000 and 2010” *PLoS ONE* 12(8): e0182409. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0182409> “This study analysed 162 femicide cases that occurred in 12 cities in Turkey from 1 January 2000 to 31 December 2010. Eighty women were killed by their partners (classified as intimate partner femicide, IPF), and 81 women were killed by one of their relatives, friends, or strangers (classified as non-intimate partner femicide, non-IPF). According to the reported results, the typical IPF victim is of child-bearing age, does not have a paid job, is married or divorced, is killed in a domestic setting due to injuries to the thorax or abdomen produced by an edged/pointed weapon or firearm, and is possibly a victim of overkill.”

³⁸ Akyol, M. (29 November 2019) <https://www.evrensel.net/haber/391951/yaptigi-23-suc-duyurusuna-takipsizlik-verilen-kadin-eski-esi-terafından-olduruldu>

³⁹ For a grounded discussion of the experiences of VAW victims and survivors as told from the perspective of a women’s rights activist in Diyarbakir, see Çameli, Tuba. Kayyum belediyelerinde baskılar, yargı tacizi ve kadın mücadelesi - Bir devlet politikası olarak kadın kırımını, Interview with Adalet Kaya, Birartibir Forum, (25 April 2021) <https://www.birartibir.org/aidiyetler/1130-bir-devlet-politikasi-olarak-kadin-kirimi> (A longer version of Cameli’s interview with Adalet Kaya, which includes with details on the cases is on file with ESİK).

Table 2.

PROTECTIVE INJUNCTION ORDERS (2014-2016)			2014	2015	2016
Article 3/1-a	To provide an appropriate shelter to the person and if necessary to children of the person in the vicinity or at another location.	To provide shelter	10.825	13.403	9.429
Article 3/1-b	To provide temporal financial aid to the person without prejudice to aids to be provided within the scope of other laws.	Temporal financial aid	128	314	10
Article 3/1-c	To provide psychological, professional, legal and social guidance and counseling services	Guidance and counseling service	188	465	216
Article 3/1-ç	To provide a temporary protection upon a request of the relevant person or ex officio if there is a life threatening danger for the person	To provide temporary protection	34.443	45.254	42.351
Article 3/1-d	If deemed necessary; four months of day care, maximum two months for those who work, is provided to children of the protected persons to support the person's participation into work life; on the condition to be documented and not to exceed the half of the net minimum wage paid to those older than 16 years of age, and to be covered from the Ministry's related budget.	Day care aid	33	82	6
Article 4/1-a	To change the workplace	To change the workplace	54	111	192
Article 4/1-b	To determine a domicile different from the shared one if the person is married.	To determine a domicile apart from the spouse	121	264	112
Article 4/1-c	To put an annotation to the title deed registry as a family domicile if the conditions are applicable as prescribed within the Turkish Civil Code No.4721 dated 22/11/2001 and upon request of the protected person.	To put an annotation to the title deed registry as a family domicile	6	3	17
Article 4/1-ç	To change the identification and other related documents based on the informed consent of the relevant person as per the provisions of the Witness Protection Law No. 5726 dated 27/12/2007 if it is determined that there is a life threatening danger for the protected person and the measures to prevent this danger are inadequate.	To change identification and other related documents	89	155	58
	Other		1016	1036	1350
TOTAL			48.917	63.102	55.757

Source: Report submitted by Turkey to GREVIO (2018). <https://rm.coe.int/turkey-state-report/1680737201>

Many women have been killed after filing dozens of complaints to the police and prosecutors. In addition to Süryan Büyük (discussed in more detail above), a few of the many examples include Sevtap Şahin, who was killed despite her 60 complaints, and Ayşe Tuba Aslan, despite her 23 complaints. Per the law, it is possible to issue protective orders for 6 months, but in practice, they have been limited to 1 month. In some life-threatening cases, “protective orders” are provided in the form of a paper with the phone number of the police station. In many cases, judges, due to workload, do not assess the nature of the complaint at length. Due to many factors, the protective orders remain woefully ineffective.

Conclusions

[1] There is no femicide observatory or its equivalent in Turkey, nor is there a plan to establish one.

[2] Our report draws on several studies, including the following: Hacettepe University's Institute of Population Studies and the Ministry of Family and Social Services conducted studies on VAW (2008 and 2014), which were based on nationally representative samples, and followed WHO guidelines; Toprak and Ersoy's (2017) article *Femicide in Turkey between 2000 and 2010* that draws on court files, police records and forensic autopsy records (none of which are publicly available); and Tastan and Kucuker Yildiz's (2019) report published by the Police Academy.

[3] GREVIO's Baseline Report on Turkey (2018) makes several important recommendations on measures to be taken and best practices. The Council of Europe (CoE) specifies 12 steps to prevent VAW.⁴⁰ Palmén et al.'s comparative study of Turkey, Spain and Italy (2016) makes similar recommendations. Toprak and Ersoy (2017) emphasize the need for a European observatory or other femicide observatories and training and sensitizing health staff in Turkey.

[4] Turkey has a Coordination Plan for Combatting Violence Against Women,⁴¹ but its government lacks the political will to prevent VAW, as shown by the Presidential Decision to withdraw from the IC.

[5] Turkey has the legal framework to help combat VAW, but due to a lack of political will, existing laws are not implemented effectively. Good practices are laid out in the CoE's 12 Steps, but Turkey falls far short of complying with these. Now that it is no longer party to the IC, and the government does not listen to women's organizations, we fear further increases in VAW and femicides.

[6] There is a paucity of official data, but existing data suggest an increase in VAW and a decrease in femicides from March 2019 to December 2020. We believe that this apparent decrease is due to limitations on reporters' freedom of movement and their lack of access to information. As detailed in our report, women encounter many challenges in filing complaints, finding shelter and economic support. The institutions tasked with protecting VAW victims are not protecting them.

In the aftermath of its decision to withdraw from the IC, Turkey's government argues that it can address violence against women through its national laws (e.g. Law No. 6284). However, effective implementation of these laws and the IC is lacking. Furthermore, national laws such as Law No. 6284 are targeted by the same political parties and movements that attacked the IC. Islamist columnists celebrated the withdrawal and announced that the "reform" of Law No. 6284 should be the next item on the agenda. This puts the lives and well-being of women, LGBTI+ people and children at further risk. In short, Turkey's rulers' discourse and policies incite and inflict violence against women's and LGBTI+ organizations and activists, and are the biggest obstacle to combatting VAW and ending femicides.

⁴⁰ Council of Europe. 12 Steps to Comply with the IC

<https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168046e809>

ESIK has adapted these recommendations and they can be found on our website <https://esikplatform.net/12-adim/>

⁴¹ Kadına Yönelik Sıddetle Mücadele Koordinasyon Planı (2020-2021)

<https://www.ailevecalisma.gov.tr/media/33061/koordinasyon-planı-v13-1.pdf>

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