# LGBTQ+ Protesters Defy Ban in Istanbul and Gather for Impromptu Pride



Over 100 LGBTQ+ protesters gathered in Istanbul yesterday for an impromptu Pride demonstration after the local governor banned the annual march. The Istanbul governor's office cited unauthorized activities by "various illegal groups" as the reason for the ban, leading to the fencing off of Taksim Square and Istiklal Avenue, traditional venues for the event.

Despite the ban, demonstrators assembled in the Suadiye neighborhood, waving rainbow flags and reading statements before quickly dispersing upon police arrival. There were unconfirmed reports of at least 15 protesters being detained, according to the Istanbul Pride Committee.

Images on social media showed participants holding pride flags and calling for an end to political polarization and anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric. Although Turkey was once one of the few Muslim-majority countries to permit Pride marches, the government has taken a more restrictive stance on public events that do not align with its conservative values in recent years. The first Pride march in Turkey took place in 2003, shortly after President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's party assumed power.