



Dear board members of Eğitim Sen,
Dear board members of KESK,
Dear comrades and friends,

For several years our trade union organisation FNV and its members have been involved in projects of co-operation with (members of) your unions. This co-operation is focused on several topics, including women's rights and LGBTI¹ rights and the struggle against discrimination – in this case, on the basis of gender, sexual orientation or gender identity.

We have experienced this co-operation as inspiring and useful, but we also notice that the conditions in Turkey in general have changed. It seems that the idea of a fully democratic society with fundamental rights for everyone is now even more difficult to reach than it seemed a few years ago. The right to assemble (in unions or other organisations), the freedom of speech and expression (in papers, in other media), women's rights, sexual and reproductive rights, and other fundamental rights are ignored or even violated in an increasing number of instances.

We admire your commitment in these difficult times to adhere to democratic procedures and maintain your organisations, although under attack. We also understand that under these circumstances, trade unions must set priorities in their policies, and that sexual liberties might not be the first issue to be identified as a priority. And yet we know that many of your union members also suffer from discrimination and exclusion based on their (presumed or actual) sexual preference or gender identity.

Therefore we hope and recommend that you can (continue to) support members in your union who want to work on these issues, show them your solidarity and attach your unions' names to the Pride events in Turkey.

Leo Hartveld, general secretary

¹

Lesbian women, gay men, bisexuals, transgenders and people with an intersex condition.