

TURKEY RIGHTS & JUSTICE BULLETIN

Weekly Human Rights & Justice Developments in Türkiye



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JURISTS**

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As part of our law and human rights advocacy mission, we closely follow developments in law and human rights in Turkey. Within the scope of this work, we publish a weekly bulletin documenting/archiving the summary of the previous week.

ARBITRARY DETENTIONS AND ARRESTS

October 16: Cumhuriyet writer Murat Ağirel, who was under house arrest due to his reports on the fund investigation, was detained following a search at his home and taken to the Istanbul Police Headquarters. The Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office issued detention warrants for Emir Sarıgül, Ömer Sarıgül, Aylin Kotil, Volkan Aslanbaş, and Cavidan Tanrah Artuner, in addition to Ağirel. The prosecution [announced](#) that allegations concerning NEW Party Erzincan MP Mustafa Sarıgül would be forwarded to the Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office for separate evaluation.

October 15: Halk TV writer and broadcaster Bahadır Özgür was detained on charges of "violating the confidentiality of the investigation" as part of the fund investigation conducted by the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, taken to Vatan Police Headquarters, and spent the night in detention. Özgür's X account with

163 thousand followers was [blocked from access](#).

October 15: Human rights defender Bahadır Altan was [detained](#) on the grounds of a social media post in which he called on the opposition for a joint struggle.

October 14: 32 people were [detained](#) in operations conducted across various provinces over alleged links to the Gülen movement.

October 13: In the second wave of operations carried out as part of the investigation into the CHP-run Etimesgut Municipality, 25 people were detained, including deputy mayors Fikret Gözüoğlu and Gültekin Bayındır. On August 3, 40 people, including Mayor Erdal Beşikçioğlu, had been [arrested](#).

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION

October 12: The Istanbul 65th Criminal Court of First Instance announced its verdict in the lawsuit filed regarding the protests that began following the detention of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu on March 19, 2025; a total of 88 youths were acquitted across two separate files, while 2 people were sentenced to 7 months and 15 days in prison each for "incitement to commit a crime" due to a social media post, with the announcement of the verdict being suspended. Speaking at the hearing, President of the Istanbul Bar Association Prof. Dr. İbrahim Kaboğlu [stated](#) that the decision of the Istanbul Governorship banning demonstrations and marches, which law enforcement relied upon, was canceled and finalized by the administrative judiciary, and that the lawsuit meant a violation of freedom of expression.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND THE PRESS

October 15: The Ankara 8th Peace Criminal Court [issued a confiscation order](#) for the book titled "The Book of Mahir Çayan", which contains the ideas and views of THKP-C founder Mahir Çayan as well as evaluations of Çayan by many figures including Abdullah Öcalan, on the grounds of "terrorist propaganda".

October 14: Police raided the headquarters of Halk TV as part of an investigation conducted by the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office and halted the channel's broadcast. Companies connected to the channel's owner Cafer Mahiroğlu were seized, and a trustee was [appointed](#) to the channel by the Savings Deposit Insurance Fund (TMSF).

October 14: Following the appointment of a trustee to Halk TV and the suspension of its broadcasts, its YouTube channel with 2.59 million subscribers (@Halktvkanali), X account with 3 million followers (@halktvcomtr), Facebook page with 1.5 million followers (halktvcomtr), Instagram account with 1.2 million followers (@halktvcomtr), TikTok account with 256 thousand followers (@halktv), and Telegram channel with 5,247 subscribers (@halktvcomtr) were [blocked from access](#).

October 14: In Turkey, in the approximately 20-month period from March 2025 to October 2026, 10 different television channels were seized and trustees were [appointed](#) to their management.

October 14: Access was blocked to the X accounts of the headquarters and Istanbul provincial branch of the Workers' Party of Turkey (TİP) due to broadcasts and posts regarding fund corruption allegations. TİP management and Chairman Erkan Baş reacted strongly to the decision, [describing](#) the measure as political censorship and an attack on the public's right to information.

October 12: Access was blocked to a BirGün report regarding a parliamentary question submitted by TİP Istanbul MP Ahmet Şık to Minister of Treasury and Finance Mehmet Şimşek concerning developments in the capital market and the fund scandal. The decision to block access was [issued](#) by the Bakırköy 1st Peace Criminal Court.

October 12: 21 human rights organizations, including Human Rights Watch (HRW), [called](#) for an end to escalating internet censorship in Turkey following access blocks placed on at least 1,270 accounts on the X platform in

September. Stating that the blocks affecting press and civil society accounts such as T24, Bianet, and İFÖD were disproportionate, the organizations urged social media companies to appeal the decisions and lift the restrictions.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE AND THE RULE OF LAW

October 17: In the 101st hearing of the case in which 436 defendants, including 53 in pre-trial detention and including Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu, are being tried, İmamoğlu completed his defense. At the hearing, the court [decided](#) to release 7 people.

October 17: The 6th Chamber of the Council of State rejected the lawsuit filed against the urgent expropriation decision taken for lignite mining around the Akbelen Forest in the Milas district of Muğla, finding the Presidential decision on urgent expropriation compliant with the law. Citing the coal needs of the Yeniköy and Kemerköy Thermal Power Plants and energy supply security, the court [did not accept](#) the objections of local residents that olive groves and agricultural areas would be harmed, their property rights violated, and that the expropriation served corporate interests.

October 15: An ex officio investigation was initiated by the Bakırköy Chief Public Prosecutor's Office against IMM Mayor and Presidential Candidate Ekrem İmamoğlu on charges of "publicly insulting a public official due to his duty" while presenting his defense at the podium during the IMM trial. The justification for the investigation was [shown](#) as İmamoğlu recounting a phone call with Minister of Justice Akın G rlek and impersonating him during his defense.

October 13: The Istanbul 13th High Criminal Court rejected Osman Kavala's request for release, despite the ECtHR Grand Chamber judgment and the infringement procedure. As justification for the rejection, the court cited that domestic remedies in Turkey had not yet been exhausted and that the Constitutional Court (AYM) had not yet ruled on Osman Kavala's individual application. However, in its infringement decision against Turkey, the ECtHR had explicitly [established](#) that the individual application process before the AYM had not been completed within a reasonable time and was not being operated as an effective domestic remedy.

TORTURE AND MALTREATMENT

October 17: According to the Human Rights Association (İHD) 2025 rights violations report, there are a total of 1,412 sick prisoners in prisons. At Bakır  y Women's Closed Prison, prisoners are forced to sleep on floor beds due to capacity overfill. In the prison where access to hygiene products is restricted, 14 out of 26 people in the ward where political prisoners are held suffer from various illnesses. Prisoners are [subjected](#) to many problems regarding access to medication, medical infirmary visits, and hospital transfer processes.

GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS

October 14: UN human rights experts condemned the "severe crackdown" on LGBTQ organizations in Turkey, stating that legitimate human rights work is being unfairly restricted. The experts reported that the Ministry of Justice announced judicial measures against more than 160 individuals and 20 associations and businesses, and that T24's website and

social media accounts were closed under the "My Family is Safe" operation on grounds of "LGBT propaganda." In the statement, it was [demanded](#) that the operation in question be stopped immediately and that those detained solely for legitimate human rights work be released.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

October 13: It was [reported](#) that 14 unaccompanied foreign children handed over to the Edirne First Admission Arda Children's Homes Site Directorate left the facility on October 11 after receiving grocery permissions, that only 1 returned, and that 13 children are still missing.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

October 17: On October 15, a boat carrying an Iraqi family attempting to cross from Edirne to Greece capsized in the Maritsa River. While the mother and father were rescued, a 12-year-old child taken to the hospital lost his life. Two children of the family were swept away by the current and went missing. As a result of search efforts, the lifeless body of one child was [reached](#).