TÜRKİYE RIGHTS & JUSTICE BULLETIN

Weekly Human Rights & Justice Developments in Turkey

CROSSBORDER JURISTS

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As part of our legal and human rights advocacy mission, we closely monitor 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

07 November: Ali Yıldırım, a member of the Şahinbey Municipal Council from the YENİ Party, was arrested on charges of "insulting the President".

03 November: Ahead of the United Nations (UN) 31st Conference of the Parties (COP31, Climate Summit) to be held in Antalya on 9-20 November, home raids were conducted in Antalya. It was reported that Mehmet Şerif Özdemir, Board Member of the Human Rights Association (İHD) Antalya Branch and Executive Board Member of Tüm Emeklilerin Sendikası; Lawyer Kazım Yiğit from the Progressive Lawyers Association (ÇHD) Antalya Branch; and İlhan Karakurt, Tüm Bel-Sen Branch President and KESK Branches Platform Term Spokesperson, were detained.

03 November: The detention of DEM Party deputies, including Selahattin Demirtaş and Figen Yüksekdağ, has entered its 10th year.

02 November: Osman Kavala has been in prison for nine years. Kavala stated: "I was 60 years old when I entered prison. After this age, I spent almost all of the time that I could work actively in the field of civil society, and a significant portion of the years I could live healthily, in prison."

02 November: In Turkey, 72 people were detained due to alleged links to the Gülen Movement, and 41 people were arrested.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION

04 November: On the second anniversary of the appointment of trustees to the municipalities of Mardin, Batman, and Halfeti (Urfa), governed by the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party), protests were held in many cities.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND THE PRESS

05 November: In October, 11 journalists were detained and 6 journalists were arrested.

03 November: In Turkey, access to 2,137 X accounts, including those of journalists and human rights activists, was blocked in two months.

03 November: President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was named among the world's "press freedom predators" for the fourth time by Reporters Without Borders (RSF); the organization cited prosecutions and prison sentences against journalists as examples of systematic judicial harassment.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE AND THE RULE OF LAW

07 November: The legal struggle of academics known as "Academics for Peace" is in its 10th year. Out of 406 academics dismissed by statutory decrees (KHK), reinstatement was finalized for only 23.

04 November: The World Justice Project (WJP) published the 2026 Rule of Law Index. Turkey ranked 117th out of 143 countries with a score of 0.41. Turkey's overall score decreased by 0.4 percent compared to the previous year.

04 November: The European Commission released its report on Turkey. The report stated: "The EU's serious concerns regarding the continued deterioration of democratic standards, the rule of law, judicial independence, and respect for fundamental rights have not yet been addressed. In 2026, detentions and charges targeting elected officials, opposition figures, political activists, civil society and business representatives, journalists, and others, including legal steps targeting the main opposition party, intensified." It was also emphasized that concerns regarding judicial independence deepened.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

06 November: The Human Rights Association (İHD) Istanbul Branch announced in its 3-month "Marmara Region Prisons Human Rights Violations Report" that 899 rights violations were identified.

06 Kasım: İnsan Hakları Derneği (İHD) İstanbul Şubesi, 3 aylık "Marmara Bölgesi Hapishaneleri Hak İhlalleri Raporu"nda 899 hak ihlalinin tespit edildiğini açıkladı.

06 November: Turkey's prison population rose to 437,889 as of November 4, 2026. The occupancy rate in 402 prisons with a total capacity of 304,304 reached 144 percent.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

04 November: In October, men killed 20 women, and at least nine girls and boys were abused by men.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

05 November: According to data from the German Ministry of the Interior, Germany deported 2,025 people to Turkey in the first nine months of 2026. It was reported that Turkey was by far the most preferred destination in deportation procedures.

03 November: A boat carrying a mother, father, and their 2 children aged 6-7 attempting to cross the Maritsa River into Greece capsized in the morning hours.

While the mother and father managed to reach the shore on their own, their children went missing in the river.

GENDER RIGHTS

06 November: Access to 9 dating and social networking platforms was blocked by a court decision in Turkey. It was noted that the blocked platforms were notably aimed at enabling LGBTI+ individuals to socialize, communicate, and build community.