



FREE WEB TURKEY 2023 INTERNET CENSORSHIP REPORT



Free Web Turkey 2023 Internet Censorship Report

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ABOUT MLSA AND FREE WEB TURKEY

Founded in 2017, the Media and Law Studies Association (MLSA)'s main field of activity is to provide legal support to journalists and individuals facing trial in freedom of expression cases.

As MLSA, within the scope of the Free Web Turkey project, which we have been carrying out in the field of internet freedoms since 2020, we aim to guide websites, media organizations, citizens and all content producers in general who face censorship in digital media on how to deal with censorship. We also aim to provide legal counseling, tools to protect them from censorship and internet services to make their work easier.

In addition, we bring together groups working in the field of digital freedoms and freedom of expression to organize panels and roundtable discussions to raise awareness against censorship, publish articles on these issues and conduct workshops for content producers.

Another aim of our project is to expand the network of communication and solidarity between institutions, which is one of the most essential things in combating digital censorship. In doing so, we aim to protect the freedom of expression enshrined in the law, the Constitution and international conventions, and to ensure the effective exercise of this right.

Turkey is going through a very challenging period, with human rights violations on the rise and the frequent use of practices that restrict freedom of expression and freedom of the press.

At the time of writing, 28 journalists and media workers are in prison for their professional activities, such as their writings, news reports and/or social media posts¹ and hundreds of journalists, writers, bloggers and social media users are on trial for their news, posts, opinions and likes.

Freedom of the press has always been problematic in Turkey. Starting in the mid-2000s, the Justice and Development Party (AKP)'s transfer of mainstream media outlets to business people close to the government through the Savings Deposit Insurance Fund (TMSF) exacerbated this situation. These takeovers have created many media outlets that support government policies. According to some ob-

¹ Media and Law Studies Association, "List of journalists and media workers in prison", <https://www.mlsaturkey.com/tr/cezaevindeki-gazeteciler-ve-medya-calisanlari-listesi>

servers, 95 percent of the national print and broadcast media in Turkey today are pro-government.²

The crackdown on freedom of the press and freedom of expression increased after the coup attempt in 2016.

During the state of emergency (OHAL), which was declared on July 21, 2016 following the coup attempt and extended seven times for three-month periods³, 178 media outlets, including 5 news agencies, 16 television channels, 24 radios, 63 newspapers and 20 magazines were shut down, 67 journalists were arrested, around 2,500 journalists were left unemployed and nearly 30 publishing houses were closed down.⁴

As a result, journalists and media organizations that are not pro-government have started to convey their news mainly through the internet, especially social media platforms. However, in an environment where almost all media is directly or indirectly controlled by the government⁵, the internet, which is the only medium where different opinions can be shared, is also targeted by the government.

For example, the 2023 Digital News Report by Oxford University's Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism reminded us that critical digital and social media voices are regularly restricted in Turkey. However, the report noted that the media, largely controlled by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his supporters, played a key role in Erdoğan's re-election.⁶

Founded in 2019 to contribute to the fight against censorship and raise awareness, in this report, we, as the Free Web Turkey platform, document and record the steps taken to suppress internet freedom in Turkey between January 1 and December 31, 2023.

2 "Unemployment in the press and the number of lawsuits filed reached a record high due to government pressure", Journalists' Association of Turkey, 10.01.2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20221116102533/https://www.tgc.org.tr/18-slider/2384-10-ocak-2020.html>

3 Zehra Yıldız, "Extended 7 times, lasted 2 years: The balance sheet of the state of emergency", Euronews, 18.07.2018, <https://web.archive.org/web/20230204100743/https://tr.euronews.com/2018/07/18/7-kez-uzatildi-2-yil-surdu-ohal-in-bilancosu>

4 Cansu Pişkin, "In the State of Emergency, the government imposed its own regime", Evrensel, 20.07.2017, <https://web.archive.org/web/20231030122126/https://www.evrensel.net/haber/326864/ohalde-iktidar-kendi-rejimini-dayatti>

5 Association of Journalists, "Media Monitoring Report 2023-2", 18.01.2024, <https://media4democracy.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/MIR-2023-YILLIK-CALISMA-baski-1.pdf>

6 "Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2023", Reuters Institute & University of Oxford, 21.06.2023, <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/digital-news-report/2023>



SUMMARY

With the increasing number of access bans imposed on websites, news, social media accounts, social media posts and other content in Turkey, internet censorship has become an important part of the human rights debate in the country.

Free Web Turkey's report aims to contribute to these debates.

This report, which we created with the data we obtained as a result of a year of monitoring activities and open source scanning, includes data on how many domain names, news, social media posts, social media accounts, e-mail addresses, mobile applications, digital documents, etc. were blocked in Turkey between January 1 and December 31, 2023.

During this period, there were many incidents that restricted internet users' freedom of expression. The report takes a detailed look at developments in internet freedom in Turkey in 2023.

The report also includes important information such as the grounds and authorities that blocked domain names, news, social media posts, social media accounts, e-mail addresses, mobile applications, digital documents and similar content, and the subject matter of the blocked content.

Moreover, this report also includes legal regulations on internet freedoms in Turkey, shares highlights of the digital materials blocked in the country in 2023. In this way, the report also refreshes the memory and reveals the extent of censorship in the country.

This report, prepared by Free Web Turkey, aims to contribute to the current debate on internet freedoms in Turkey by providing data and analysis on access blocking in 2023.

LEGAL REGULATIONS ON INTERNET FREEDOMS

The first internet connection in Turkey was established on April 12, 1993.⁷ However, as in many other countries, internet use became widespread in the second half of the 1990s. Since the first connection, the main purpose of internet censorship in Turkey has been to prevent “objectionable” political content and obscenity.⁸

The first regulation on the Internet was enacted in 2001 with *Law No. 4676 on the Amendment of the Law on the Establishment and Broadcasting of Radio and Television Enterprises, the Press Law, the Income Tax Law and the Corporate Tax Law*. With this law, two internet-related regulations were added to the *Law No. 3984 on the Establishment and Broadcasting of Radio and Television Enterprises*, which entered into force in 1994 (repealed by Law No. 6112, which entered into force on March 3, 2011) and *the Press Law No. 5680*.

These regulations have also led to interventions against internet freedoms. According to Özgür Uçkan, one of the leading advocates of a free internet, although everyone tends to start internet censorship in 2007, the period of the rise of internet censorship is 2001-2006. Between 2000 and 2007, many websites were blocked. Many access-blocking orders were issued based on the relevant articles of the Turkish Penal Code (TPC), the *Civil Code* and the *Law on Intellectual and Artistic Works*, and were directly implemented by internet service providers.⁹

While there was no specific regulation on internet freedoms, the censorship mechanism started to operate through other relevant legal regulations. However, internet regulations began in 2007, which many consider to be the beginning of censorship.

BASIC REGULATIONS AND AMENDMENTS REGARDING THE INTERNET ENVIRONMENT

Law No. 5651

The first law on publications on the internet was *Law No. 5651 on the Regulation of Publications on the Internet and Combating Crimes Committed through these Publications*, which entered into force on May 23, 2007.

7 “Internet in Turkey is 25 Years Old”, TÜBİTAK Bilim Genç, 12.04.2018, <https://web.archive.org/web/20221103080738/https://bilimgenc.tubitak.gov.tr/makale/turkiyede-internet-25-yasinda>

8 Esra Serdar Tekeli, “Internet Regulations and Surveillance within the Framework of Freedom and Censorship Debates”, 30.05.2021, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240427173543/https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/yenimedya/issue/62586/939249>

9 Özgür Uçkan, “A short history of internet censorship in Turkey... and a possible future!”, Sansüre Sansür, 12.09.2009 <https://web.archive.org/web/202311234839/https://sansuresansur.blogspot.com/2009/09/turkiyede-internet-sansurunun-ksa.html>

According to its justification, Law No. 5651 was born out of the necessity to enact a special law that would enable an effective and correct structuring to combat crimes committed through the opportunities provided by the internet environment in Turkey. The purpose and scope of the law is to determine the obligations and responsibilities of content providers, hosting providers, access providers and collective use providers, and to regulate the principles and procedures regarding measures against content that constitutes the material element of certain crimes committed on the internet.

With this regulation, internet service providers were obliged to keep logs, to record IP address information, MAC addresses and similar data of the computers connected to their networks on a daily basis and to keep all files created within one year retrospectively.

Law No. 5651, which regulates the obligations of hosting and access providers, also provides for measures such as blocking access and removal of content. Among the most important features of the law are the definition of internet-related actors, determination of responsibilities and regulation of measures.

Under Law No. 5651, judicial authorities are authorized to take the measures foreseen in relation to crimes committed over the internet. However, the law also authorizes the Association of Access Providers (AAP) to take administrative measures to block access to websites.

The situations in which access blocking will be carried out in relation to crimes committed over the Internet are specified in paragraph 1 of Article 8 of Law No. 5651 as follows:¹⁰

a. in the Turkish Penal Code dated 26/9/2004 and numbered 5237;

- Incitement to suicide (Article 84)
- Sexual abuse of children (Article 103, paragraph 1)
- Facilitating the use of drugs or stimulants (Article 190)
- Supply of substances hazardous to health (Article 194)
- Obscenity (Article 226)
- Prostitution (Article 227)
- Providing a place and opportunity for gambling (Article 228)

b. Offenses included in the Law No. 5816 on Crimes Committed Against Atatürk

¹⁰ Law No. 5651 on the Regulation of Publications on the Internet and Combating Crimes Committed through These Publications (2007)

- c. Offenses under the Law No. 7258 on the Organization of Betting and Games of Chance in Football and Other Sports Competitions
- d. Crimes specified in the first and second paragraphs of Article 27 of the Law No. 2937 on State Intelligence Services and National Intelligence Organization.

These crimes are not specific to Law No. 5651, which is regulated for the internet environment. These crimes are cataloged crimes in the Turkish Criminal Code (TCK) No. 5237. Catalog crimes are the whole set of crime types that express that there are more special conditions for applying security measures. In relation to crimes committed over the internet, a precautionary access ban can be imposed on websites containing content that falls within one of the catalog crimes, and content that violates personal rights can be removed from the internet environment.

In 2015, Article 8/A was added to *Law No. 5651* with *Law No. 6639 on the Amendment of Certain Laws and Decree Laws*.¹¹

This article authorizes the judge and the president to block access to the internet based on one or more of the following reasons: protection of the right to life and the security of life and property, protection of national security and public order, prevention of crime or protection of public health. Accordingly, upon the request of the judge or, in cases of delay, the Presidency or the ministries related to the protection of national security and public order, the prevention of crime or the protection of public health, the president may issue a decision to remove the content and/or block access to a publication on the internet.

In the years that followed, Law No. 5651 was repeatedly amended to give the state and institutions under the control of the government even greater powers of surveillance and censorship.

Some of these regulations were *Law No. 6527 on the Amendment of Certain Laws* and *Law No. 6552 on the Amendment of the Labor Law and Certain Laws and Decree Laws and the Restructuring of Certain Receivables*.

With these amendments, the Telecommunications Communication Presidency (TİB), which was shut down after the transition to the presidential system in 2018, could block access to content on the order of the head of TİB without any limitation or gradation. However, the Constitutional Court (AYM) found that these amendments gave the administration too wide a scope for intervention and were unconstitutional and canceled the article in question.¹²

11 Official Gazette No. 29327, 12.04.2015, <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2015/04/20150415-1.htm>

12 Constitutional Court, E. 2014/149 K. 2014/151 T: 02/10/2014, R.G. Date-Number: 01/01/2015-29223

ADDITIONAL WORK ON THE REGULATION OF INTERNET PUBLICATIONS

Omnibus law on violation of personality rights

In December 2013, in the wake of the corruption investigations, a new omnibus law was drafted to amend Law No. 5651. The bill was sent to the Planning and Budget Commission of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM), which combined 42 different laws and Decree Laws (KHK), including 125 articles and amendments to Law No. 5651, into a single bill and submitted it to the General Assembly of the TBMM on January 16, 2014. The bill was adopted as *Law No. 6518* in February 2014 and two new access blocking methods were included in the legislation with the articles added to Law No. 5651.¹³

Article 9 of Law No. 5651, which was amended through Law No. 6518, titled “Withdrawal of content and blocking access”, made it possible to block access to content due to “violation of personal rights”, and Article 9/A made it possible to block access to content due to “privacy of private life”.¹⁴

In addition, Article 6/A was added to the law and the Association of Access Providers (ESB) was established through this article. This article stipulates that access-blocking decisions issued by judges due to “violation of personal rights” and “blocking access to content due to privacy” must be sent to the ESB.

Law No. 7253 or the ‘Social Media Law’

Another of the amendments regarding internet broadcasts was the *Law No. 7253 on the Amendment of the Law on the Regulation of Publications on the Internet and Combating Crimes Committed through These Publications*, also known as the “Social Media Law”, which entered into force after being published in the Official Gazette dated July 30, 2020.

The law defined companies that own online platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Youtube as “social network providers” and imposed a series of obligations and sanctions on these social media companies with millions of users. One of these obligations was the requirement for social network providers with more than one million daily users to have a representative office in Turkey. If a social network provider did not have a representative in Turkey, it was gradually subjected

¹³ Official Gazette No. 28918, 19.02.2014, <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2014/02/20140219-1.htm>

¹⁴ Cumhuriyet, “İşte 10 maddede İnternet sansürü”, 05.02.2014, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240101121552/https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/iste-10-maddede-internet-sansuru-38013>

to fines, advertising bans and, eventually, bandwidth throttling. This threatened to make it impossible to access social network providers from Turkey.

Law No. 7253 also obliges social network providers to archive the personal data of their users in Turkey. Keeping personal data also allows judicial and administrative authorities to request it. In addition, social network providers are obliged to respond to applications for content that requires the removal of content and blocking access within 48 hours at the latest. This obligation leads to the conclusion that the right to be forgotten and similar rights will be prioritized.

Dubbed the “Censorship Law” by civil society organizations, professional associations, journalists and human rights defenders, this regulation makes the already existing censorship even more suffocating. In addition, the law can, potentially, have very dangerous consequences for citizens by completely dismantling data security.

RECENT CHANGES REGARDING THE INTERNET ENVIRONMENT

Despite Law No. 5651 regulating the procedures and principles of internet broadcasting, additional work is regularly carried out.

On July 28, 2021, a forest fire started in Manavgat district of Antalya and spread to many cities in Turkey. The 299 forest fires that broke out in 53 provinces, mostly in the Mediterranean, Aegean, Marmara, Western Black Sea and Southeastern Anatolia regions, received wide coverage in mainstream media and alternative media.¹⁵

The coverage of the forest fires and the resulting tragedy in the region by the so-called “alternative media”, which publishes through digital channels and, unlike the pro-government media, covers the events based on universal journalistic principles, has brought criticism that the mainstream media is covering up the forest fires and the resulting tragedy in the region.¹⁶ The coverage by artists, activists and volunteers who traveled to the region also reinforced these criticisms.

In response, Presidential Communications Director Fahrettin Altun made a statement on his social media account. Altun said that the news produced in alternative media and social media are lies and disinformation, that they are deliberately made with ideological motives and that those responsible will be held accountable before the law.¹⁷

15 “Latest on forest fires in Turkey: 267 of 270 forest fires in 53 provinces under control”, Euronews, 10.08.2021, <https://web.archive.org/web/20230320233951/https://tr.euronews.com/2021/08/01/turkiye-de-yang-nlarda-son-durum-20-yerde-sondurme-cal-smalar-suruyor>

16 Emel Altay, “Introduction to journalism for celebrities: Advice for social media journalists”, Journo, 11.09.2021 <https://web.archive.org/web/20231101072140/https://journo.com.tr/unluler-icin-gazetecilik>

17 Fahrettin Altun, Twitter, 31.07.2021, <https://twitter.com/fahrettinaltun/status/1421398444204335106?s=20>

Government officials then announced that they were working on a new draft law in response to criticism that some media outlets close to them did not report during the fires and allegations of disinformation on social media.

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan also made a statement on disinformation journalism, which allegedly increased during the forest fires. Erdoğan stated that the government is working on a new draft law, modeled on Germany's *Press, Internet and Social Media Law*.¹⁸ Ali Özkaya, Deputy Chairman of the Constitutional Commission, said that those who create and disseminate fake news on social media will be sentenced to one to five years in prison and those who insult will be sentenced to two years in prison and will be banned from using social media for some time.¹⁹

As a result, a new law regulating online publications, the “*Law on the Amendment of the Press Law and Certain Laws*”, which the public calls the “*Censorship Law*” and government officials call the “*Anti-Disinformation Law*” because it includes new sanctions against the press and social media.

ANTI-DISINFORMATION OR CENSORSHIP LAW

The Law on the Amendment of the Press Law and Certain Laws, prepared by the People's Alliance representing the Justice and Development Party (AKP) and the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) and submitted to parliament on October 13, 2022, entered into force on October 18, 2022, after being published in the Official Gazette.²⁰

The 40-article Law No. 7418 contains important provisions on the right to information and the exercise of the right to freedom of expression.

Although the law was rejected and debated by the public in its entirety, Article 29 was the one that raised the most concern.²¹ This article, added to the Turkish Penal Code, defines a new offense of “publicly disseminating misleading information” and envisages a prison sentence of one to three years for those who commit this offense. The article defines who can be charged with this offense as follows:

“Whoever publicly disseminates untrue information concerning the internal and external security, public order and public health of the country with the sole inten-

18 Ayşe Sayın, “Social media: What are the problems that may arise with the new regulation?”, BBC Türkçe, 23.08.2021, <https://web.archive.org/web/20230630071655/https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-58298974>

19 “Sosyal medyaya “Türkiye modeli” düzenleme: 5 yıl hapis ve 5 years in prison and social media ban penalty on the agenda”, Independent Türkçe, 26.07.2021, <https://web.archive.org/web/20231101055937/https://www.indyturk.com/node/391336/siyaset/sosyal-medya-t%C3%BCrkiye-modeli-d%C3%BCzenleme-5-y%C4%B1la-kadar-hapis-ve-sosyal-medya>

20 Official Gazette No. 31987, 18.10.2022, <https://web.archive.org/web/20221017215716/https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/18.10.2022>

21 Sude Güner, “What does Article 29 of the ‘censorship law’ mean? Retweet or comment can also be considered a crime!”, Cumhuriyet, 16.06.2022, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220616143707/https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/turkiye/sansur-yasasinin-29-maddesi-ne-anlama-geliyor-retweet-ya-da-yorum-da-suc-sayilabilir-1948043>

tion of creating anxiety, fear or panic among the public, in a manner that is conducive to disrupting public peace.”

The law does not include any definition of “disinformation” to help understand what is disinformation and what is not.

Article 29 refers to those who circulate false information as “disseminators” rather than “producers” or “originators”. This means that not only those who publish a story - which judicial authorities have determined to be disinformation - but also those who like and share it on social media platforms can face this charge.

The law stipulates that the penalty is increased by half if the perpetrator commits the crime by concealing his/her real identity or “within the framework of the activities of an organization”.

The law also authorizes the Information Technologies Authority (BTK) and the Press Advertisement Agency (BİK) to request data on the messaging of any internet user from closed instant messaging applications such as WhatsApp, Messenger, etc.

The law obliges social network providers to report to the ICTA the number of active individual and corporate users in Turkey, the number and duration of voice calls, the number and duration of video calls and the number of instant messages.

The law obliges the relevant social network provider to comply with the Turkish Penal Code’s provisions on “publicly disseminating misleading information”, “disrupting the unity and territorial integrity of the state”, “crimes against state secrets”, “sexual abuse of children”, The law obliges the Turkish representative to provide the judicial authorities with the information necessary to reach the perpetrators who create or disseminate internet content subject to the crimes of “crimes against the constitutional order and its functioning” and “espionage”, if requested by the prosecutor during the investigation phase and by the court where the trial is conducted during the prosecution phase.

The law obliges social network providers to share information about the content and its creator with authorized law enforcement authorities if they “learn of content that endangers the security of life and property of individuals and if there is a danger of delay”. However, the law imposes severe penalties on companies that refuse to provide this information or general information about accounts used by users deemed “criminal” under the law and do not impose sanctions on these accounts.

These include a fine of 30 million TL or a 95 percent bandwidth throttling. This throttling means making the platform inaccessible in Turkey. Another sanction

is that the ICTA can fine social media companies up to 3 percent of their global turnover.

The law defines online news websites as “periodicals” and includes them within the scope of the Press Law. This means that those working in editorial jobs on an online news website can now also obtain a press card. Press card applications will now be submitted to the Presidential Communications Directorate.

However, the conditions for obtaining a press card, as well as the conditions for its revocation, have been redefined. Accordingly, Article 16 stipulates that if a press card holder is found to have lost the necessary qualifications and his/her press card is revoked, he/she will be deprived of his/her press card for one year from the date of revocation, and if it is revoked due to activities and behaviors contrary to press ethics and principles, he/she will be deprived of his/her press card for five years.

In addition, the right to receive official advertisements from BİK was also granted to news websites.

The law obliges news websites to announce their business address, trade name, e-mail address, electronic notification address and contact information, and the name of the hosting provider on their websites. It also stipulates that the date of the first presentation of a piece of content and the subsequent update dates must be indicated on the content in a way that does not change each time it is accessed.

The law requires news websites to submit a declaration on their field of activity and to include their electronic notification address in this declaration. News websites were also included in the scope of periodical publications. It was envisaged that the declaration would be submitted to the BİK instead of the public prosecutor’s offices because “the workload of the judiciary would increase”. It was noted that a news website that fails to fulfill its declaration obligation or does not correct the deficiencies within two weeks would not be granted the right to “periodical publication”.

In addition, online news websites have been obliged to preserve the content they publish for two years, ensuring its accuracy, integrity and accessibility, against a possible request by the Chief Public Prosecutor’s Office,.

With the law, BİK, which was established to ensure the fair distribution of official advertisements to newspapers, is now in a position to fine publishers just like the Radio and Television Supreme Council. The law authorizes BİK to both cut advertisements and impose fines on printed newspapers and websites.

CONSTITUTIONAL COURT'S PILOT DECISION ON ACCESS BANS

On January 7, 2022, the Constitutional Court (AYM) announced its decision on nine access ban objection applications, including those of BirGün, Diken, Gazete Duvar, soL, Artı Gerçek, TarımdanHaber and Çiğdem Toker.²²

The Constitutional Court, which consolidated the objection applications, determined that the violations stemmed from the law and decided to apply the pilot decision procedure. Accordingly, the Supreme Court decided that Article 9 of the Law No. 5651 on the Regulation of Broadcasts on the Internet should be amended as it constitutes an obstacle to freedom of the press and freedom of expression. The unanimous decision also listed the criteria to be included in the new regulation.

Accordingly, the Constitutional Court's recommendations included criteria such as the blocking of access being the last resort or the last measure to be taken, the necessary safeguards to ensure that this method does not lead to arbitrary practices and is not at a level to eliminate the exercise of freedom, the scope of the access blocking procedure being legal and sufficiently clear, the limit of the intervention of public authorities, the determination of alternative sanctions, the right of appeal and appeal for the decisions and the balance in the decisions to be taken.

The Court sent the judgment to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (TGNA) for the necessary legislative amendments, giving the TGNA one year to do so and stating that it would not consider past and future applications on the same issue during this period. The Court also stated in its decision that in the absence of new legislation, all applications would result in a violation of rights.

However, despite the Constitutional Court's ruling, no arrangements were made in 2022 nor in 2023.

ACCESS BLOCKING AUTHORITY IN TURKEY

Access-blocking decisions can be taken or requested by judicial bodies such as criminal judgeships of peace, courts and prosecutor's offices, as well as a number of administrative institutions in Turkey under various laws, regulations and regulations. Mostly issued by criminal judgeships of peace under Articles 8, 8/A, 9 and 9/A of Law No. 5651, access blocking decisions can also be issued by prosecutors' offices during the investigation phase under Article 8.

²² "Violation of the Freedoms of Expression and Press and the Right to Effective Application Due to the Blocking of Access to a Series of News on Internet News Websites (Pilot Decision)", Constitutional Court, 07.01.2022, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220107061531/https://www.anayasa.gov.tr/tr/haberler/bireysel-basvuru-basin-duyurulari/internet-haber-sitelerindeki-bir-dizi-habere-erisimin-engellenmesi-nedeniyle-ifa-de-ve-basin-ozgurlukleri-ile-etkili-basvuru-hakkinin-ihlal-edilmesi-pilot-karar>

However, public prosecutors can also issue access blocking orders under additional article 4(3) of the *Law No. 5846 on Intellectual and Artistic Works* to remedy copyright violations.

Administrative institutions have been authorized to issue access-blocking orders under different laws, regulations and ordinances. Based on Law No. 5651, more than 20 different institutions and organizations in Turkey have the authority to block or request access to internet content under various regulations.

These institutions are:

- Presidency and relevant ministries
- Telecommunications Communication Presidency (TIB) until its closure
- President of the Information and Communication Technologies Authority after TIB was shut down
- Association of Access Providers (ESB)
- Ministry of Health, Turkish Medicines and Medical Devices Agency (TİTCK)
- Capital Markets Board (CMB)
- Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Department of Tobacco and Alcohol
- General Directorate of National Lottery Administration, Department of Games of Chance
- Turkish Jockey Club (TJK)
- Spor Toto Organization
- Presidency of Religious Affairs, High Council of Religious Affairs
- Presidency of Religious Affairs, Mushafları Review and Qiraat Board
- Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK)
- Supreme Electoral Council (YSK)
- Ministry of Trade, General Directorate of Consumer Protection and Market Surveillance
- Ministry of Treasury and Finance
- All authorized bodies under the Product Safety and Technical Regulations Law
- Provincial directors of industry and technology under the Ministry of Industry and Technology
- Governorships and Ministry of Interior

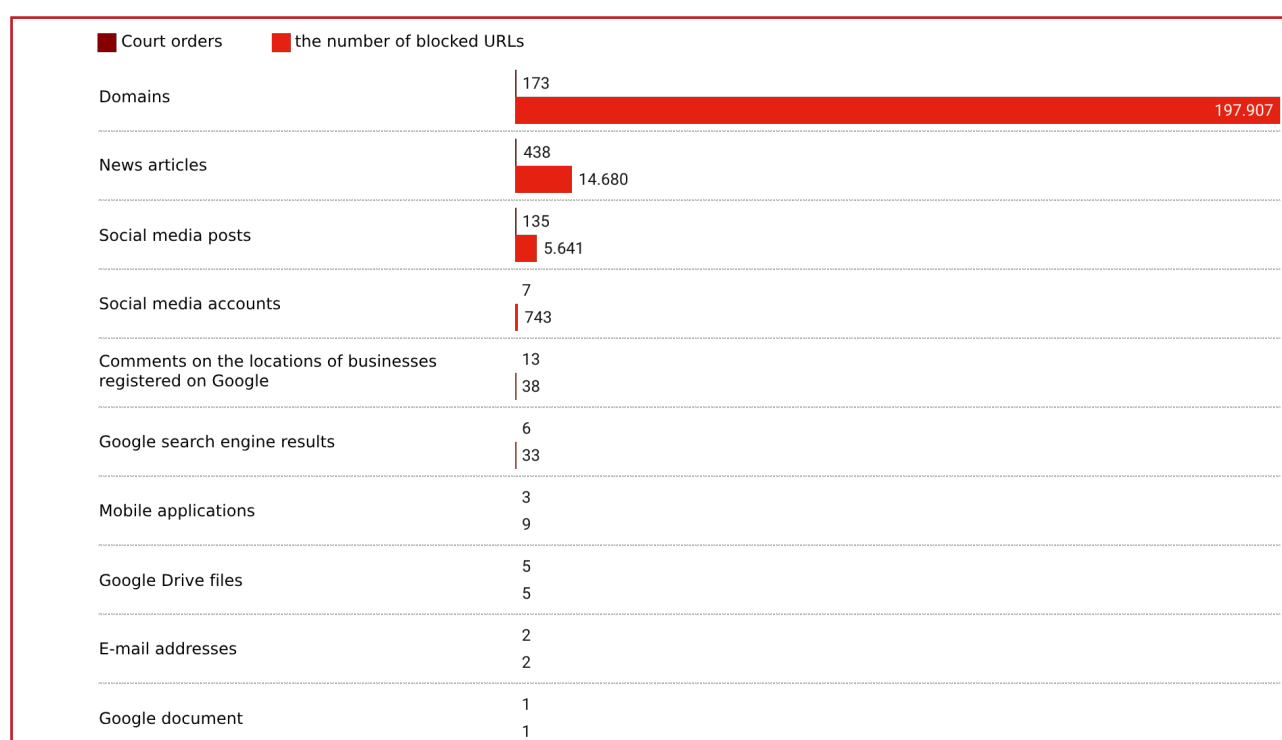
- Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency (BRSA)
- Turkish Football Federation (TFF)
- Interested parties within the scope of the Child Protection Law

FREE WEB TURKEY FINDINGS

According to an open source survey conducted by Free Web Turkey, 219,059 URLs were blocked by at least 783 court orders between January 1 and December 31, 2023.

The blocked addresses include many URLs, including domain names, news, files in Google's cloud storage (Drive), search engine results and user comments.

DISTRIBUTION BY TYPE OF CONTENT



In 2023, access to at least 197,907 domain names, 14,680 news articles, 5,641 social media posts, 743 social media accounts, 38 comments on the locations of businesses registered on Google, 33 Google search engine results, 9 mobile applications, 5 Google Drive files, 2 e-mail addresses and 1 Google document were blocked.

Domain names accounted for the highest percentage of blocked content at 90.34%, with news coming in second at 6.70%. These were followed by social media posts (2.58%) and social media accounts.

BASIC BREAKDOWN OF DOMAIN ACCESS BANS ACCORDING TO THE ISSUES THEY ADDRESS

Topic of the content	Court orders	The number of blocked URLs
Offences specified in Article 8 of Law No. 5651.	118	197.734
Forums	3	115
News websites	29	30
Digital tools	7	8
Corruption and irregularity	3	7
Micro blog	6	6
Charge of an offence	4	4
Organisational crimes	2	2
Crimes against women and children	1	1

In 2023, the highest number of access restrictions was imposed on domain names with 197,907, and this number was reached with 173 decisions.

Of these 197,907 domain names, 197,734 were domain names alleged to publish content **that commits and/or prepares the ground for the commission of the offenses specified in Article 8 of Law No. 5651**. Article 8 lists these crimes as the crimes of incitement to suicide, sexual abuse of children, facilitating the use of drugs or stimulants, supplying dangerous substances for health, obscenity, prostitution, providing a place and opportunity for gambling; crimes against Atatürk, the crime of betting or providing a place or opportunity for betting, and crimes against the activities and personnel of the National Intelligence Organization.

Domain names belonging to forums followed by 115.

While 115 domains belonging to **forums** were blocked with 3 different decisions, 113 of these 115 domains consisted of popular webmaster forums that allow freelance and full-time web developers to exchange ideas with each other and get jobs.

Türk Telekom complained about threads in these forums describing various methods of converting operators' mobile/virtual money into cash, and requested an access block for the entire website instead of the relevant thread. The blocking decision was made accordingly.

News websites followed the forums. In 2023, 30 domain names belonging to news websites were blocked with 29 different decisions.

Digital tools used by software developers, gamers, journalists, writers, content producers, customers, NGO employees and influencers, all of which operate in a completely legal manner, were also blocked in 2023.

Eight URLs leading to the websites and mobile applications of seven different digital tools that facilitate users' work, play and daily lives were blocked.

While 7 domain names revealing various **corruption and irregularity** allegations were blocked with 3 different decisions, access to **internet dictionaries** was also blocked in 2023.

Last year, 6 different access blocking orders were issued for online dictionaries and 6 URLs were blocked. All of these decisions were issued to block Ekşi Sözlük, Turkey's most popular online microblog. With these decisions, 6 domain names belonging to Ekşi Sözlük were blocked, including eksisozluk.com twice.

PROMINENT ACCESS BLOCKING DECISIONS ON DOMAINS

Blocking webmaster forums

On December 11, 2023, R10.net, WM Tool and Webmaster Forum, one of the biggest meeting points for web developers, who are people who design/develop websites, and website administrators (webmaster), were blocked from access by the Samsun 3rd Criminal Judicature of Peace on December 11, 2023.

The Information and Communication Technologies Authority (BTK) or the Association of Access Providers (ESB) did not provide any information on the reason for the blocking. However, according to Armağan Tezel of Free Web Turkey, the forums were blocked at the request of Türk Telekom due to threads describing “mobile jamming” methods.²³

Mobile exchange involves the conversion of services, promotions or subscriptions, usually provided by operators, into real money. The access block was lifted on December 12 following appeals from forums.

²³ Armağan Tezel, “Türk Telekom requested, access to webmaster forums blocked: ‘We are the source of income for hundreds of thousands of users, they and we are both victimized’”, Free Web Turkey, 13.12.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240118182130/https://www.freewebturkey.com/turk-telekom-istedi-webmaster-forumlarina-erisim-engellendi-yuz-binlerce-kullanicinin-gelir-kapisiyiz-onlar-da-biz-de-magdur-edildik>

News websites

Just like in 2022, access to the domain names of many online newspapers and magazines was blocked in 2023.

The blocked newspapers were again comprised of publishers defined as “free press” and adopting a publishing policy diametrically opposed to the ideology of the government.

They were blocked more than once: Red Flag blocked 5 times, ETHA blocked 4 times

In 2023, 30 domain names of newspaper and magazine websites were blocked with 29 different decisions. Moreover, some publishers’ domain names were blocked more than once.

For example, kizilbayrak75.net (January 11), kizilbayrak76.net (February 23), kizilbayrak77.net (March 23), kizilbayrak78.net (May 26) and kizilbayrak80.net (October 5) of the **Kızıl Bayrak** newspaper, which publishes under the slogan “The voice of class, revolution and socialism”, were blocked **by five different court orders**.

The website of **Etkin News Agency (ETHA)** is one of the online newspapers that was blocked from access more than once. The domain names etha49.com (February 28), etha50.com (March 17), etha51.com (April 6) and etha52.com (October 5) were **blocked from access with 4 different decisions** in 2023.

ETHA’s domain names were also subjected to intense censorship in 2022. So much so that ETHA, which started 2022 by publishing on etha28.com, closed the year by publishing on etha49.com. Accordingly, access blocking orders were issued for 21 domain names of the agency in 2022.²⁴

Komün Dergi, which has a socialist publishing policy, was one of the publishers whose domain name was blocked more than once in 2023. The magazine’s 3 different domain names, komundergi9.com (February 28), komundergi10.com (March 16) and komundergi11.com (October 5) **were blocked with 3 different decisions**.

In 2023, three different decisions banned access to Gazete Patika’s three domain names: gazetepatika18.com (May 30), gazetepatika19.com (June 8), and gazetepatika21.com (October 5).

Özgür Gelecek newspaper was one of the newspapers whose domain name was blocked more than once in 2023. The newspaper’s **3 different domain names**

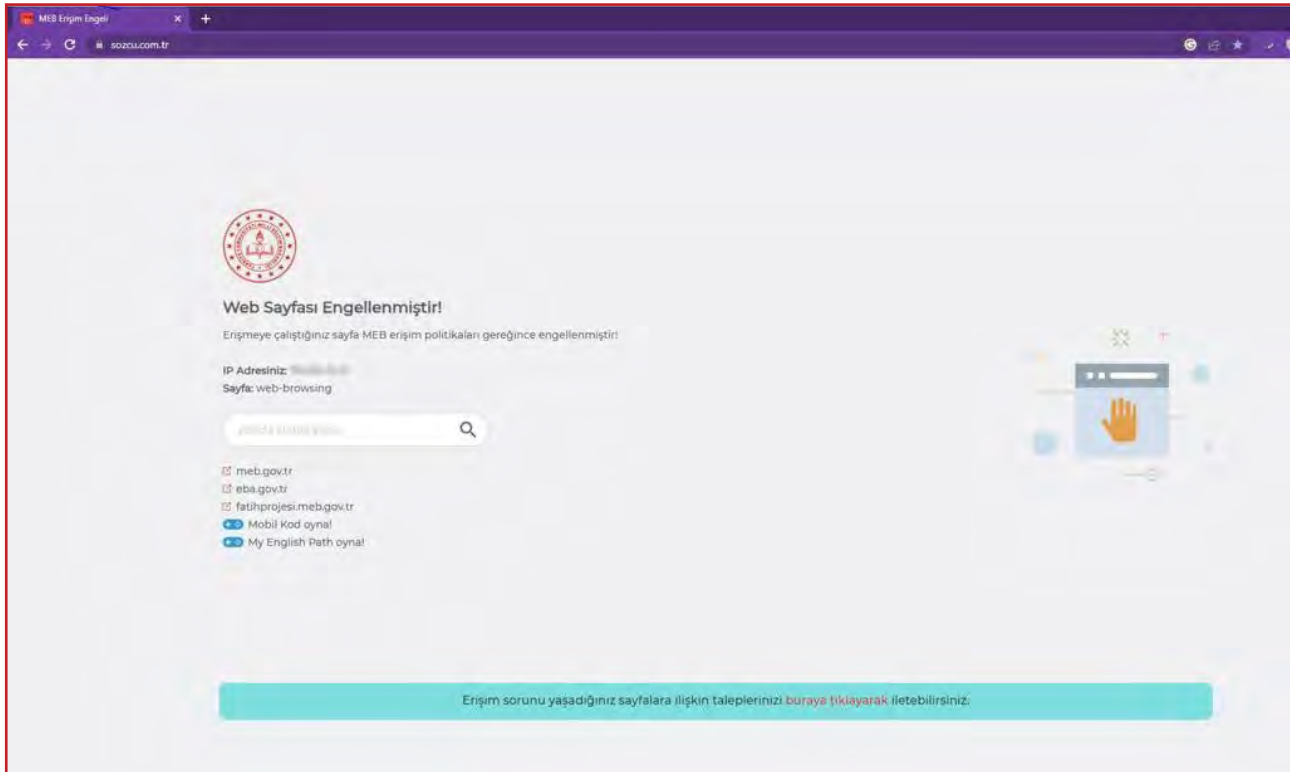
24 Free Web Turkey 2022 Internet Censorship Report, Free Web Turkey, October 2023, <https://archive.md/cFuCx>

ozgurgelecek46.net (May 4), ozgurgelecek47.net (May 26) and ozgurgelecek49.net (September 21) were **blocked with 3 different decisions**.

Yeni Demokrasi Newspaper was **another** newspaper whose domain name was **blocked twice** in 2023 with **two different decisions** and was subjected to multiple access blocking orders. The newspaper's domain names yenidemokrasi31.net (January 24) and yenidemokrasi33.net (September 21) were blocked last year.

The domain names of the newspapers Alinteri, Yeni Yaşam, Yeni Demokrat Gençlik, Jinnews and Avrupa Demokrat were also blocked once in 2023. Although not an online newspaper, the 100SÜZLER platform, which compiles and collects allegations of corruption and irregularities involving the government and people close to the government, was also among the news websites blocked in 2023.

Ministry of National Education blocks access to Sözcü Newspaper



In 2023, access bans on newspapers were imposed not only through court rulings and a legal process. The access ban imposed on Sözcü Newspaper showed that access to news websites can also be blocked due to internal decisions.

The newspaper's domain name sozcu.com.tr was blocked by the Ministry of National Education on May 14.

The situation was detected after users tried to log in to sozcu.com.tr from computers using the internet infrastructure of educational institutions affiliated with the

ministry and were met with the warning “The page you are trying to access has been blocked in accordance with the access policies of the Ministry of National Education.”

This means that 77,000 schools, 1.2 million teachers and 19 million students in Turkey cannot access sozcu.com.tr as long as they use their school internet connection.

Sözcü Newspaper noticed the situation on May 16 and reported it on the same day with the headline “Ministry of National Education blocked access to **sozcu.com.tr**”.

After the news was widely reported in the press, the spokesperson said that ministry officials reached out to the spokesperson and lifted the access blocking order.²⁵

RTÜK orders access ban for Voice of America

The website of the Turkish edition of Voice of America (VOA), the largest international multimedia news organization in the US, which publishes in more than 45 languages worldwide, was also among the news websites blocked from access in 2023.

The Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK) announced that VOA Turkish had been broadcasting without an On-Demand Broadcasting Service (On-Demand Broadcasting Service) license, which allows live news broadcasts over the internet and gave the newspaper 72 hours on August 21, 2023, to apply for a license and pay the three-month broadcast license fee.²⁶

RTÜK said that if the fee is not paid and the license application is not submitted within 72 hours, an access-blocking request will be made for VOA Turkish through the criminal court of peace.

“It is not possible for us to comply with any directive aimed at enabling censorship,”²⁷ VOA said in a statement. VOA did not apply for a license and **voaturkce.com** was blocked by the Ankara 9th Criminal Judgeship of Peace on August 28, 2023, upon RTÜK’s request.

In a statement released by VOA after the decision, RTÜK’s license requirement appears to be designed to censor the press.²⁸

25 “Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı sozcu.com.tr’ye erişim engeli”, Sözcü Newspaper, 16.05.2023, <https://archive.is/ZJNuE>

26 “Announcement”, Radio and Television Supreme Council, 21.08.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20230821090054/https://www.rtuk.gov.tr/duyuru/4572>

27 Dilge Temoçin, Hilmi Hacaloğlu, Yıldız Yazıcıoğlu, “VOA Turkish’ye yeni erişim engeli uyarına ABD Dışişleri Bakanlığı’ndan açıklama”, Voice of America Turkish, 22.08.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20231018173926/https://www.voaturkce.com/a/voa-turkce-yeni-erisim-engeli-uyarisi-rtuk-72-saat-sure-verdi-abd-disisleri-bakanligi-aciklama-yapti-sansur/7235312.html>

28 Hilmi Hacaloğlu, Ezel Şahinkaya, “VOA Turkish reacts to ‘access blocking’ decision: ‘It is not right to remain silent against censorship’” Voice of America Turkish, 29.08.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20230830085251/https://www.voaturkce.com/a/voa-turkce-hakkindaki-erisim-engelleme-kararina-tepki-sansure-karsi-sessiz-kalmak-dogru-degil/7245531.html>

RTÜK requested a license for Deutsche Welle's alternative domain names, blocked them when they were not granted

RTÜK conducted the same process for the Turkish edition of Deutsche Welle (DW), Germany's public broadcaster, which broadcasts in 30 different languages.

On November 10, 2023, RTÜK found that DW Turkish was broadcasting without an Internet İBYH license and gave the broadcaster 72 hours to apply for a license.²⁹

However, RTÜK ruled that DW Turkish should obtain a license not for the global domain **dw.com**, but for the alternative domains **dwturkce.com** and **inspiredminds.de/en**, which it was already using at the time.³⁰

Because RTÜK had already blocked access to the global domain **dw.com**, where DW's Turkish-language broadcasts were also published, on June 30, 2022, with a decision taken by the Ankara 1st Criminal Judge of Peace, again on the grounds that it was broadcasting without a broadcast license.³¹

DW did not apply for a broadcast license within the 72 hours allotted to it on November 10 and did not pay the three-month broadcast license fee. Subsequently, the alternative domain names **dwturkce.com** and **inspiredminds.de/en**, which DW had started to use due to the blocking of **dw.com**, were blocked from access by the Ankara 9th Criminal Judge of Peace on November 17, 2023.

Digital tool/service platforms: Onlyfans blocked on top of Linktree

Among the domains blocked in 2023 were digital tools offering paid or free services on the internet and websites of applications offering paid services.

Internet users could not understand why access to the websites of digital vehicle/service platforms in this category was blocked, except for Martı, a scooter sharing system that offers transportation services.

Neither the Information and Communication Technologies Authority (ICTA), nor the Association of Access Providers (AAP), nor the Presidency of Communications provided any explanation as to why the digital tools/service platforms in question were blocked.

29 "RTÜK, DW Türkçe's alternative addresses also asked for a license: Access will be blocked if no license is obtained", Free Web Turkey, 09.10.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20231211134227/https://www.freewebturkey.com/rtuk-dw-turkce-nin-alternatif-adreslerine-de-lisans-istedi-lisans-alinmazsa-erisim-engellencek>

30 "Announcement", Radio and Television Supreme Council, 10.11.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20231110080011/https://www.rtuk.gov.tr/duyuru/4624>

31 "Deutsche Welle and VOA blocked access in Turkey", Deutsche Welle Türkçe, 30.06.2022, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220630214255/https://www.dw.com/tr/deutsche-welle-ve-voa-t%C3%BCrkiyede-eri%C5%9Fime-engellendi/a-62321660>

A citizen applied on behalf of 80 million people and blocked access to OnlyFans: 'It threatens the Turkish family structure'

OnlyFans, an adult content platform that allows content creators to make money by producing exclusive content for their subscribers, was also among the blocked platforms.

The domain name onlyfans.com of OnlyFans, which is mostly used by sex workers and citizens who produce pornographic content, was blocked from access by Istanbul 1st Criminal Judgeship of Peace on June 7, 2023.

The platform was blocked shortly after nationalists and conservatives in particular launched a vigorous campaign to shut down OnlyFans in late May and early June.

According to the access blocking order, the Istanbul 1st Criminal Judicature of Peace received a request from a citizen to “block access to the social platform OnlyFans, which clearly threatens the Republic of Turkey, public morality and the Turkish family structure.”³²

Gamers were also affected: Key-Drop blocked

Key-Drop.com, the domain name of Key-Drop, a popular in-game product purchasing site used by professional gamers and gamers, was blocked by the Information and Communication Technologies Authority (BTK) on June 15, 2023.

The site, which was also suspected of being conducive to gambling and blocked on this ground, was unblocked on June 16, 2023.

Access block on Linktree, a tool for civil society organizations and influencers

Linktr.ee, the domain name of Linktree, which provides convenience to internet users by collecting the content/profiles to be highlighted on a single link, was blocked from access with the decision of the General Directorate of National Lottery Administration dated October 13, 2023.³³

The access ban on the grounds of “illegal betting and use in financing terrorism” was lifted on October 27, 2023.

32 Armağan Tezel, “OnlyFans’e erişim engeli: ‘Bans are always sweet, our number of subscribers increased even more’”, Free Web Turkey, 02.04.2024, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240405123809/https://www.freewebturkey.com/onlyfans-e-erisim-engeli-yasaklar-her-zaman-tatlidir-abone-sayimiz-daha-da-artti>

33 “Linktree’ye erişim engeli getirildi”, Free Web Turkey, 19.10.2023, <https://archive.is/QcHeT>

BTK blocks bulk email sending service Sendgrid

Sendgrid (sendgrid.com), an email marketing platform that helps businesses automate their email campaigns, was blocked by the Information and Communication Technologies Authority (BTK) on December 5, 2023.³⁴

The access blocking order, the grounds for which were not disclosed, was lifted on December 6, 2022.

Access to Vercel blocked

Vercel App, which is used by software developers to design, develop and make the front-end of websites ready for use, was blocked with the decision of the National Cyber Incident Response Center (USOM) on December 6, 2023.

The access block imposed on the grounds that it was used by cyber fraudsters in “phishing” activities was lifted after a while.

Access to Read the Docs blocked

Read the Docs, which is also used by software developers and provides online documentation creation services for software projects, was blocked with the decision of the Information and Communication Technologies Authority dated December 8, 2023, on the grounds that it “contributes to illegal betting and terrorist financing”.

Istanbul Chamber of Taxi Tradesmen blocked access to Martı

The Istanbul Chamber of Automobile Tradesmen, led by Eyüp Aksu, President of the Istanbul Chamber of Taxi Tradesmen, claimed that Martı, which offers a scooter sharing system, was engaged in illegal pirate transportation with its “Martı TAG” and “Martı Motorcycle” applications and filed a lawsuit against the company at the Istanbul 14th Commercial Court of First Instance.

As a result of the lawsuit, it was decided to impose a precautionary access ban on Martı’s website.³⁵

34 “BTK blocks bulk e-mail sending service Sendgrid”, Free Web Turkey, 06.12.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240118182128/https://www.freewebturkey.com/btk-toplu-e-posta-gonderim-servisi-sendgrid-i-erisime-engelledi>

35 “Istanbul Chamber of Taxi Tradesmen blocked access to Martı: We will protect our hard-earned taxi license plates until the end”, Free Web Turkey, 08.03.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20230311091120/https://www.freewebturkey.com/istanbul-taksiciler-esnaf-odasi-martiya-erisimi-engelletti-emegimiz-olan-taksi-plakalarimiza-sonuna-kadar-sahip-cikacagiz>

DISTRIBUTION OF THE NUMBER OF BLOCKED DOMAIN NAMES BY BLOCKING AUTHORITIES

The General Directorate of National Lottery Administration	160,274
Ankara Provincial Gendarmerie Command	14,399
Gaziantep Provincial Gendarmerie Command	8,412
Denizli Provincial Gendarmerie Command	6,271
Aydın Provincial Gendarmerie Command	4,376
Capital Markets Board	1,696
İzmir Provincial Gendarmerie Command	1,045
Adana Provincial Gendarmerie Command	462
Ardahan Provincial Gendarmerie Command	350
Aksaray Provincial Gendarmerie Command	218

In 2023, 197,907 domain names were blocked.

When the distribution of the authorities that blocked the most URLs in this category is analyzed, no criminal judgeships of peace were in the top 10, while provincial gendarmerie commands dominated in number.

The General Directorate of National Lottery Administration ranked first with 160,274 blocked domain names, followed by Ankara, Gaziantep, Denizli and Aydın provincial gendarmerie commands.

All domain names blocked by the provincial gendarmerie commands and the General Directorate of National Lottery Administration were blocked for allegedly aiming to gain profit by committing crimes such as *“illegal betting, fraud, obscene images, stock market manipulation, terrorist organization propaganda, contribution to terrorist financing”*.

REASONS FOR BLOCKING BLOCKED DOMAIN NAMES

Article 8	196.010
Leveraged trading from	1.696
Violation of personality rights	136
Protection of national security and public order	50
Those whose reason for blocking cannot be determined	7
Broadcasting without a license	3
Pirate transportation	2
Contrary to MoNE policy	1
Phishing	1
Harmful sites	1

Article 8

When the grounds for blocking domain names were analyzed, the **alleged commission of the crimes specified in paragraph 1 of Article 8 of Law No. 5651** ranked first.

In 2023, **196,010 domain names** were blocked for allegedly committing one or more of the following offenses under the article in question:

- a. in the Turkish Criminal Code dated 26/9/2004 and numbered 5237;
 - Referral to suicide
 - Sexual abuse of children
 - Facilitating the use of drugs or stimulants
 - Supply of substances hazardous to health
 - Obscenity
 - Prostitution
 - Offenses of providing a place and opportunity for gambling,
- b. Offenses included in the Law No. 5816 on Crimes Committed Against Atatürk.
- c. Offenses under the Law No. 7258 on the Organization of Betting and Games of Chance in Football and Other Sports Competitions.

- d. Crimes in the first and second paragraphs of Article 27 of the Law No. 2937 on State Intelligence Services and the National Intelligence Organization (content that constitutes a crime against the activities and personnel of the National Intelligence Organization).

Leveraged trading from abroad

The second most common reason for blocking domain names was **leveraged transactions abroad**. All domain names blocked for this reason were blocked by the Capital Markets Board (CMB).

The CMB blocked access to 1,696 websites on the grounds that Turkish residents were conducting leveraged transactions and derivative transactions that are subject to the same provisions as leveraged transactions abroad via the internet.

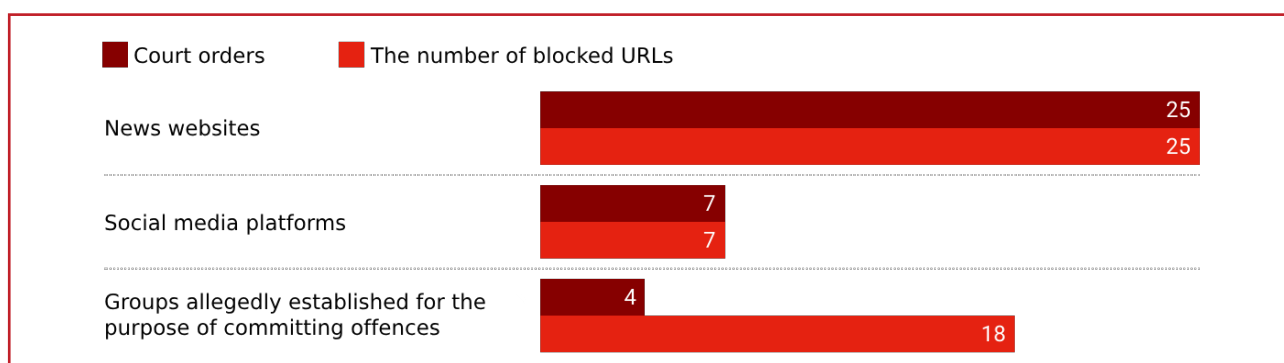
Violation of personality rights

Violation of personal rights ranked third. In 2023, 136 domain names were blocked with 16 different decisions. Among these 136 domain names were OnlyFas and the domain names of popular forums such as Rio.Net, WM Tool and Webmaster Forum.

The vast majority of the domains whose personal rights have been infringed have been used to make various allegations against popular or unpopular figures. These domain names were often in the form of the name of these individuals + the offense attributed to them.

Ex: alivelibirhisizdir.com

Protection of national security and public order



The fourth ranking reason for domain name blocking was “protection of national security and public order”.

In 2023, a total of 50 domain names were blocked through 36 decisions issued by various criminal judgeships of peace on the grounds of “protection of national security and public order”.

Half of the blocked names belonged to news websites, especially those of Kurdish media and leftist/socialist publishers.

Those whose reason for blocking cannot be determined

The reason for the blocking of 7 domains blocked in 2023 could not be determined.

5 domain names were blocked with the decision of the Information and Communication Technologies Authority dated February 3, 2023 and numbered 490.05.01.2023.-78151.

The sixth domain name blocked was *mjsanaokulu.com*, the website of **MJS Kindergarten in Ümraniye** district of Istanbul. The decision dated February 9, 2023, and numbered 490.05.01.2023.-87173, was issued by the ICTA.

The seventh and last website, *jiangzaitoon.io*, was blocked by BTK’s decision dated May 29, 2023 and numbered 490.05.01.2023.-268300. Jiangzaitoon was publishing Turkish comics with LGBTI+ content.

Broadcasting without a license

In 2023, 3 domain names were also blocked upon RTÜK’s request on the grounds that they were broadcasting without an Internet On-Demand Broadcasting Service (İBYH) license.

These domains were *dwturkce.com* and *inspiredminds.de* belonging to Deutsche Welle and *voaturkce.com*, the website of the Turkish edition of Voice of America.

Pirate transportation

Two domain names belonging to Martı, a scooter-sharing system offering transportation services, were blocked on the grounds of **piracy**.

Contrary to MoNE policy

The domain name blocked due to **violation of the MEB policy** was *sozcu.com.tr*, the website of Sözcü Newspaper.

Phishing

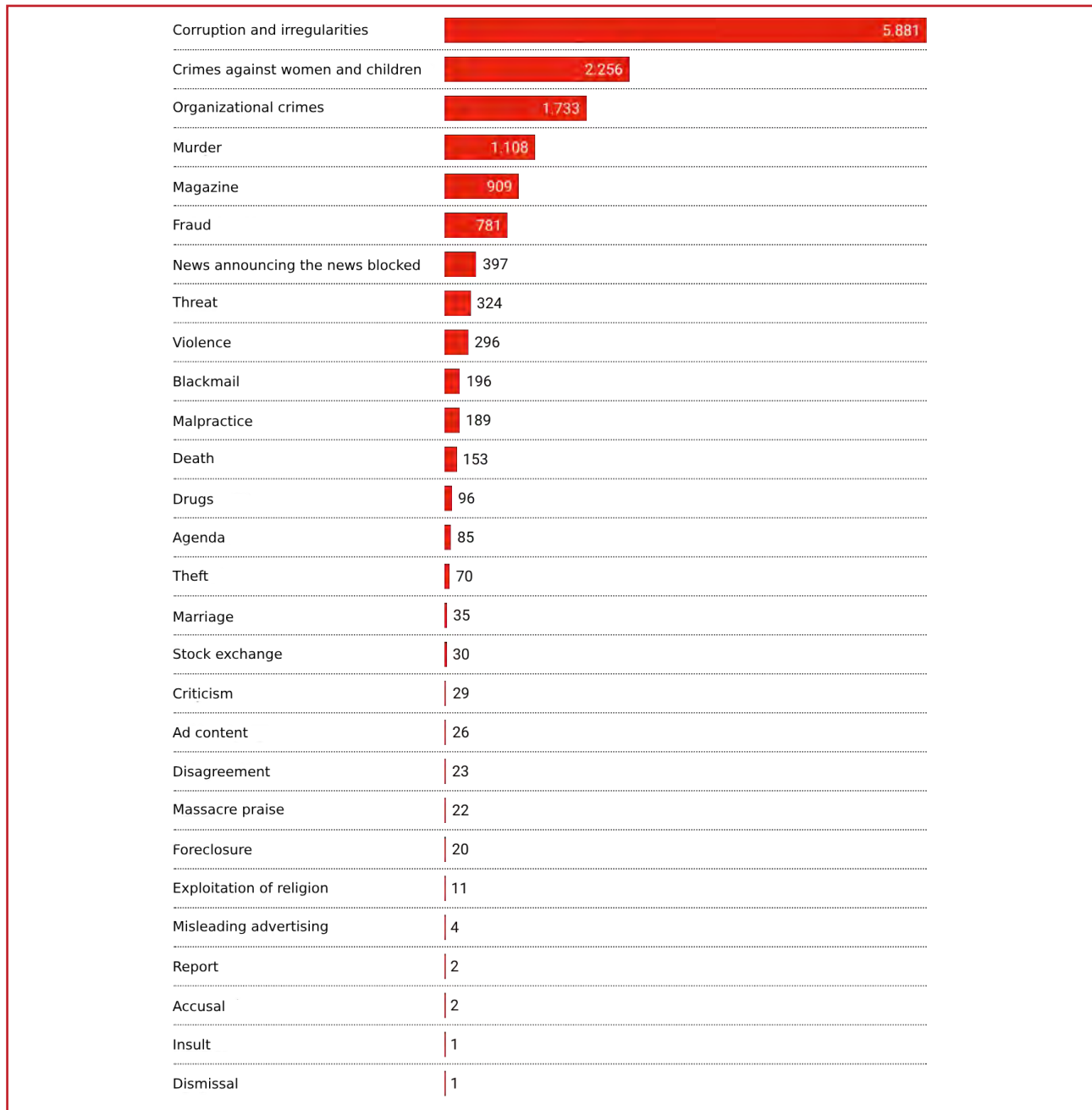
Vercel App, which is used by software developers to design, develop and make available the front-end of websites, was blocked for **phishing**.

Harmful sites

The blocked domain name was jinnews41.xyz, the website of Jin News News Agency, which publishes in Kurdish, Turkish and English. The access blocking decision was issued by Türk Telekom.³⁶

³⁶ Türk Telekom'dan Jinnews'e access block, Free Web Turkey, 19.08.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240402101359/https://www.freeweb-turkey.com/index.php/categories/newsberg/haberler/tuerk-telekomdan-jinnewse-erisim-engeli>

BASIC BREAKDOWN OF NEWS BARRIERS ACCORDING TO THE TOPICS THEY ADDRESS



After domain names, the most access blocking decisions were issued for news articles.

In 2023, 14,680 news articles were blocked by 438 different court orders.

Corruption and irregularities

In terms of the distribution of blocked news articles according to their topics, those on **corruption and irregularities** ranked first. In 2023, access to 5,881 news articles on this subject was blocked with 183 different decisions.

When it comes to the identity of the person(s) alleged to have committed the corruption and irregularities in question, **public officials** ranked first. In 3,192 out of 5,881 news articles that were blocked, the subject was public officials.

It was followed by **people and organizations close to the AKP** (1,133 news items), **President Erdoğan and his family** (646 news items), **companies** (282 news items), **business people** (277 news items), **public institutions** (162 news items), **citizens** (77 news items), **sects** (60 news items) and **political party representatives** (52 news items).

News on corruption and irregularities were followed by news on **crimes against women and children**. In 2023, 2,256 news articles on this subject were blocked with 82 different decisions.

Regarding the identity of the person(s) alleged to have committed the crimes in question, **citizens** ranked first as the subjects of 801 news items.

It was followed by **public officials** (693 news items), **business people** (244 news items), **political party representatives** (219 news items), **sects and communities** (157 news items), **public institutions** (125 news items), **people and organizations close to AKP** (13 news items) and **companies** (4 news items).



T24

T24, Sağlık Bakanlığı'nı karıştıran dosyayı açıyor: İki Bakan Yardımcısı'nı karşı karşıya getiren "e-Nabız" kavgası ve açılan yolsuzluk davası

İki bakan yardımcısının yakın olduğu iddia edilen şirketler ile Bakanlığın da taraf olduğu fikri mülkiyet davası, bir başka krizin kapısını araladı



28 Nisan 2023 00:26

BİR GÜN

TRT'de milyonluk vurgun

GÜNCEL 30.03.2023 06:30



HABER MERKEZİ

AKP iktidarı, TRT üzerinden milyarlarca liralık vurgun yapıyor. CHP İstanbul Milletvekili Özgür Karabat, TRT'deki yapımların yapımını AKP'li Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan'a yakın isimlerin üstlendiğini belirtti.

onedio

Ulaştırma Bakanı Milyarlık İhaleyi Dayısına Vermiş

Ulaştırma Bakanı **Adil Karaismailoğlu**, AK Parti döneminde kendisi gibi **İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Genel Sekreter yardımcılığı** koltuğunda oturan **Muzaffer Hacimustafaoğlu**'na 2.1 milyar TL'lik ihale verdi. Bakan **İsmailoğlu** ile **Hacimustafaoğlu**'nun dayı-yeğen olduğu öğrenildi.



duvar

Mardin'de başhekim yardımcısı hakkında yolsuzluktan suç duyurusu

SES Mardin Şubesi, Nusaybin Devlet Hastanesi Başhekim Yardımcısı Zinar Özmen hakkında "zimmete para geçirmek" ve "evrakta sahtecilik" iddiasıyla suç duyurusunda bulundu.

16 Mart Perşembe 2023 Saat: 16:57
Gözetleme: 18 Mart Cumartesi 2023 Saat: 01:16



DUVAR - Sağlık ve Sosyal Hizmet Emekçileri Sendikası (SES) Mardin Şubesi, Nusaybin Devlet Hastanesi Başhekim Yardımcısı Zinar Özmen hakkında "Görevi kötüye kullanmak", "Zimmete

Sözcü

'Benim kızın okul taksitleri var. Himmetinizi beklerim'

Başbakan Erdoğan'ın danışmanı İbrahim Kalın'ın Abdullah Tivnikli'ye doğudaki kaçak bedellerin tahsilatı konusunda yardımcı olması üzerine kızının okul taksitlerini ödediği ses kaydı dökümleri haramzadeler tarafından yayınlandı.

Yayınlanma: 20:20 - 02 Mart 2014



M.A.

Nusaybin Emniyeti'nde yağma çetesi ortaya çıktı

İZ GÜNCEL 09:09 6 Haziran 2023



MERDİN - Nisēbin'de sokağa çıkma yasağı sırasında İlçe Emniyet Müdürü ve TEM amirinin de aralarında olduğu bir grubun, ev ve iş yerlerini yağmaladıkları ve çaldıkları eşyaları sattıkları ortaya çıktı.

Mardin'in Nisēbin (Nusaybin) ilçesinde 14 Mart 2016'da ilan edilen ve aylar süren sokağa çıkma yasağı sırasında polislerin "yağma çetesi" kurdu. Halkın

ingazete



06 Eylül 2022 21:25

Bu sefer kızı ve damadı için dokunuş yapmış. En yüksek devlet memuru babanın yeni hikayesi. Toygun Atilla ortaya çıkardı

Daha önce Cumhurbaşkanlığı İdari İşler Başkanı Metin Kıratlı'nın yeni evli oğlu ve gelini için yaptıklarını yazan Oda TV Genel Yayın Yönetmeni Toygun Atilla, bu kez de Kıratlı'nın kızı ve damadı için sağladığı olanakları ortaya çıkardı...

evrensel



26 Şubat 2023 10:59

Kızılay depremzedeler için toplanan eşya yardımlarını da satmış

Depremlerin ardından kurumlara parayla çadır satan Kızılay'ın 2019 ve 2020 yıllarında ikinci el eşyaları da sattığı ortaya çıktı.

MILLİGAZETE

06 Ekim 2018 - 09:30 Etkiyeni 3.04 Haziran 2019 - 11:05

TİGEM'de 34 milyon lira kimin cebine gidecekti?

Genç çiftçi projesi kapsamında çiftçilere dağıtılacak olan büyükbaş ve küçükbaş hayvanların satın alınmasına yönelik şaibe iddiaları giderek artıyor.

Sadettin İnan
Tüm Haberleri



Crimes against women and children

News on corruption and irregularities were followed by news on **crimes against women and children**. In 2023, 2,256 news articles on this subject were blocked with 82 different decisions.

Regarding the identity of the person(s) alleged to have committed the crimes in question, **citizens** ranked first as the subjects of 801 news items.

It was followed by **public officials** (693 news items), **business people** (244 news items), **political party representatives** (219 news items), **sects and communities** (157 news items), **public institutions** (125 news items), **people and organizations close to AKP** (13 news items) and **companies** (4 news items).





Organizational crimes

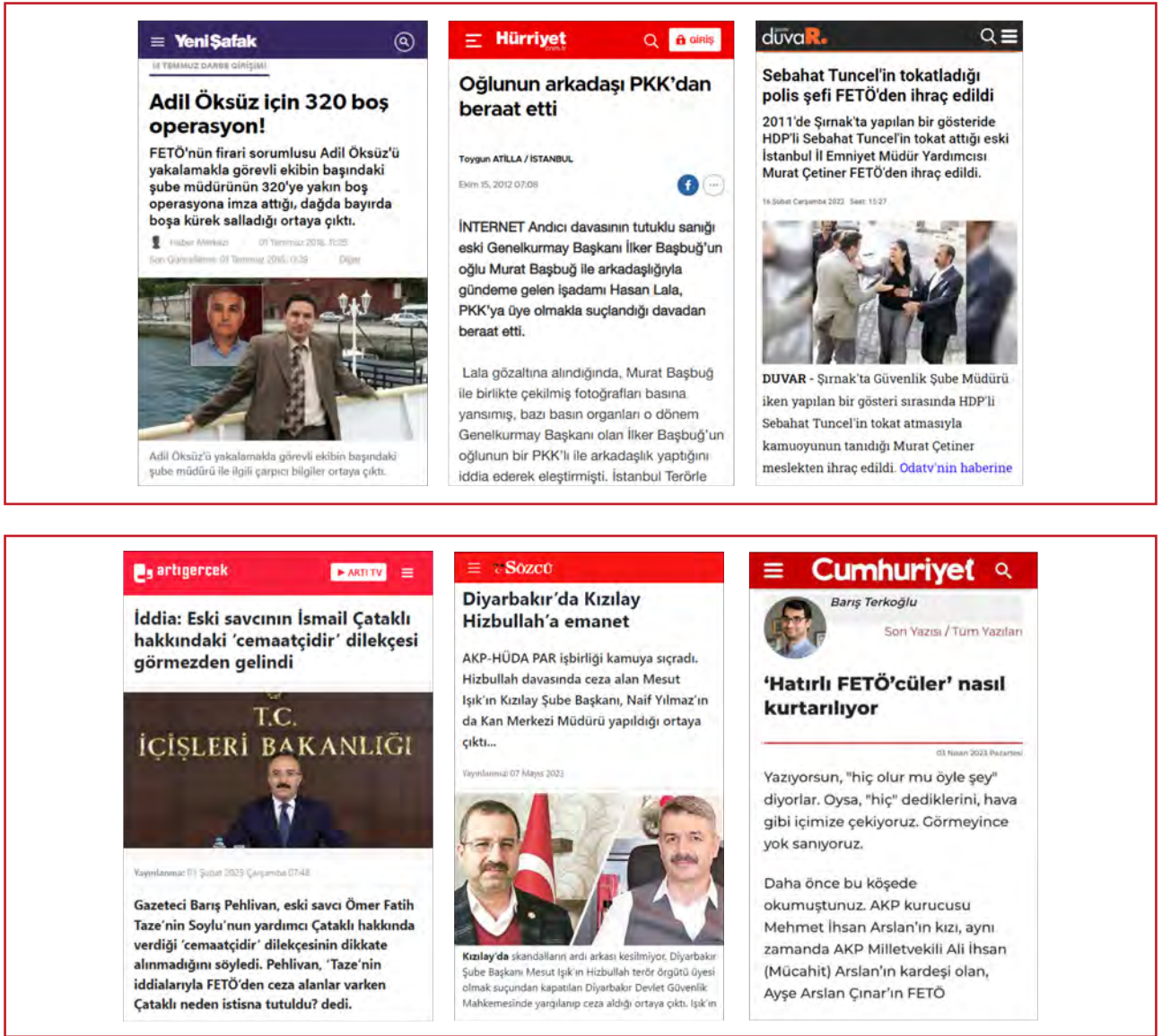
Third place went to **organizational crimes**.

This category included news reports on alleged links between individuals and groups recognized by the state as “terrorist organizations” and groups recognized as “criminal organizations”.

In 2023, 1,733 news items in the category of organizational crimes were blocked with 37 different decisions.

The subjects of the blocked news items related to organizational crimes were **public officials** (713 news items), **political party representatives** (417 news items), **publishers/citizens** (344 news items), **people and organizations close to AKP** (178 news items), **citizens** (55 news items), **public institutions** (25 news items) and **companies** (1 news item).





Murder

Following organizational crimes were news reports on **homicides**. The majority of the news items in this category were about murders among civilians.

In 2023, access to 1,108 news articles on murder were blocked with 21 different decisions.

The distribution of people associated with the crime of murder in the related news reports was as follows

1. Yurttaş: 801 news items
2. People and organizations close to the AKP: 199 news
3. President Erdoğan and his family: 62 news
4. Public servant: 46 news



Magazine

In fifth place was news on **tabloid** issues with 909 news items.

While this number was reached with nine different decisions, six of these decisions were made for the news on the divorce of Sabah newspaper writer and TRT Board Member Hilal Kaplan from Süheyb Ögüt and her marriage to Milat newspaper writer Tefik Emre Sarı.

With the decisions dated April 14, April 28, May 12, July 4, October 17 and October 24, 2023, a total of 688 news articles and social media posts were banned from access.



Fraud

While 781 news reports on **fraud** cases were blocked with 34 different bir decisions, 490 of these news reports named **companies** as the people involved in the fraud.

Citizens (172 news items), **business people** (91 news items), **people and organizations close to AKP** (14 news items), **President Erdoğan and his family** (12 news items) and **public officials** (2 news items) followed.

T24

Son Dakika

Tolga Şardan | Büyüteç

@sardan.tolga
tolgasardan@gmail.com

17 Mart 2023

Trabzon'daki saadet zinciri dosyasından çıkan yeni bulgular

Seçim arefesinde Emniyet'i yine zor günler bekliyor...

Trabzon'da 2021'in ekiminde ortaya çıkan saadet zinciri vurgununu Büyüteç'in takipleri anımsayacaktır.

Daha önce çalıştığı bir kamu bankasından ayrılan ve sonrasında Trabzon merkezli saadet zinciri kuran **Başak Şentürk**'ün, kâr payı dağıtmak karşılığında piyasayı 450 milyon liraya yakın vurgun gerçekleştirdiği ortaya çıktı.

SÖZCÜ

250 milyon lira vurgun yapan avukat tarlada yakayı ele verdi

Ankara'da, icra avukatlığı yapan Osman Gökmen'in boş senetlere imza attığı ve sahte senetlerle icra takibi başlatarak 250 milyon lira vurgun gerçekleştirdiği ortaya çıkmıştı. Kendisini saklandığı yerde bulan polisleri gören Gökmen, duvardan atlayarak tarlaya kaçtı ancak polis ekiplerinin havaya ateş açmasıyla kısıvrak yakalandı.

Yayınlanma: 18:11 - 03 Nisan 2022

Beklenmedik hata

Üzgünüz, bu video şu anda görüntülenmiyor

h

CANLI YAYIN

Cübbeli'nin dünürlerinin kurduğu şirkette dolandırıcılık iddiası

Yayınlanma: 10 Mart 2021 Çarşamba 09:40

Güncellenme: 10 Mart 2021 Çarşamba 18:04

Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan'a yakınlığıyla bilinen iş insanı Muhittin Palazoğlu ve ortağı Veysel Mert'in şirketi yatırımcılarına "Faizsiz helal para" diyerek taahhüt ettiği parayı ödemiyor. Palazoğlu aynı zamanda Cübbeli Ahmet Hoca'nın damadının ağabeyi.

GERÇEK GÜNDEM

450 milyon liralık vurgun: Saadet Zinciri'nde 'Berat Albayrak' detayı

T24 yazarı Tolga Şardan, 2021 yılının Ekim ayında Trabzon'da ortaya çıkan Saadet Zinciri vurgunuyla ilgili yeni bilgiler paylaştı. Elde edilen yeni bilgilere göre olay nedeniyle tutuklu bulunan Başak Şentürk, Berat Albayrak'ın ismini kullanarak güven kazandı.

17 Mart 2023 10:38

OW

Saray'a yakın avukat 'vekalet' aldı, davanın seyri değişti

Alican Uludağ
(08/11/2021)

İstanbul'da paravan şirketle dolandırıcılık iddiasıyla açılan bir davanın seyri, sanıkların avukatlığını Cumhurbaşkanlığı İdari İşler Başkan'ının eşi üstlenince değişti.

MEDYA RADAR

Gündem 03 Nis 2023 15:20

Hacizli otelden hisse satın milyonluk vurgun yaptı, üstün başarı ödülü aldı!

Okan Bayülgen'i reklamlarında oynatarak halkın güvenini kazanan ve olmayan otelden hisse satarak 200 Milyon TL vurgun yapan Bülent Öztürk'e üstün başarı ödülü verildi.

Kısa dalga

Eski vekil, polis, savcı, imam... 'Dost meclisi' kurup malına çoktılar iddiası...

Yayınlanma: 19 Kasım 2023 Pazartesi 13:44

İş insanı Fahmi Öztürk'ün mal varlığına çöküldüğü iddiası mahkemeye kabul edildi. İçerisinde eski AKP milletvekilinden Soylu'nun akrabasına, emniyet müdüründen imama kadar birçok kişinin isminin geçtiği dava sırasında iki tetikçi de öldürüldü.

İş insanı Fahmi Öztürk, mal malvarlığına çöküldüğü gerekçesiyle mahkemeye başvurdu. Bu sırada yaşananlar filmleri aratmadı.

DHA

'Sahte kart' satışı ile 2 milyonluk vurgun yapan çeteye operasyon

Ankara'da pandemi döneminde sokağa çıkma kısıtlamasından muaf olmak isteyen kişilere para karşılığında sahte 'polis araç kartı' satan, liderliğini polis memurluğundan atılan Durmuş K.'nin yaptığı çeteye yönelik operasyonda 14 kişi gözaltına alındı. Çete üyelerinin sahte polis kimlik kartıyla baskın yaptıkları bir evden de para ve telefon aldıkları belirlendi.

14.05.2022 - 17:05 | Güncellenme: 14.05.2022 - 17:05 | Efeş POTRAZI ANKARA, (DHA)-

h

CANLI YAYIN

Halktv.com.tr Gündeme Getirmişti Sahte Doktor ile Başhekim Tutuklandı

Özel haber

Yayınlanma: 02 Eylül 2023 Cumartesi 10:18

Diğer Gökçe

Estetik operasyon için gelen çok sayıda kadını ameliyat eden Suriye asıllı sahte doktor Deniz Nedimoğlu ile, bu kişilere kendisini 'Başhekim' olarak tanıtan sağlık teknikeri Murat Kaynak tutuklandı. Sahte doktor ile birlikte ameliyatlara girdiği belirlenen Dr. Kenan İ. ise adli kontrol şartı ile serbest bırakıldı.



Threat

Then came news of **threats**.

In 2023, access to 324 news articles on this subject was blocked with 4 different decisions, and the distribution of the subjects of these news articles was as follows: **people and organizations close to AKP** (200 news articles), **citizens** (71 news articles) and **business people** (53 news articles).



Violence

In 2023, 296 news articles on **violence** were blocked with 14 different decisions, while the distribution of these news articles according to the perpetrators of violence and news items was as follows:

1. Public servant 199
2. Citizen: 70
3. People and organizations close to the AKP: 20
4. Company: 5
5. Business person: 1
6. Public institution: 1

sol **solTV**

Belediye başkanının abisinden gazeteciye saldırı



Şarköy Belediye Başkanı Alpay Var'ın ağabeyi Alper Var hakkındaki usulsüzlük dosyasını haberleştiren gazeteciye saldırı, babasını tehdit etti.

■ HABER MERKEZİ
04.10.2022

Tekirdağ'da Şarköy Belediye Başkanı Alpay Var'ın ağabeyi Alper Var, İçişleri Bakanlığı'nın soruşturma izni verdiği bir usulsüzlük dosyasını haberleştirdiği için Şarköy'ün Sesi editörü Deniz Önal'a saldırı.

sendika.org

Düzce Üniversitesi'nde soruşturma mobbing uygulayana değil, şikayet edene açıldı

13 Nisan 2023 19:14

Düzce Üniversitesi Akçakoca Bey Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dekan Vekili Ayfer Gedikli'nin akademik ve idari personele mobbing uyguladığı yönünde deliller sunulsa da kendisine herhangi bir soruşturma açılmadı. Ancak konu hakkında Kamu Denetçiliği Kurumu'na başvuran öğretim elemanlarına ise soruşturma açıldı.



Günce **Manşet** **Çalış** **Tüm Haberler**

AKP'li belediye meclis üyesinden sağlık çalışanlarına şiddet

1 Mayıs 2021

Malatya'da sağlık çalışanları şiddete uğradı. CHP'li Kiraz, şiddet uygulayanlar arasında AK Partili bir belediye meclis üyesinin de bulunduğunu söyledi.

Malatya Turgut Özal Üniversitesi Eğitim ve Araştırma Hastanesi'ne kaldırılan 74 yaşındaki Hori Dincer, ilk müdahalenin ardından hastanenin Koroner Yoğun Bakım Servisi'ne yatırıldı. 21 Nisan'da hastaneye kaldırılıp tedavi altına alınan Dincer, sekiz gün sonra vefat etti.

BirGün

Engellilerin ilaçlarını bile çalıp satmışlar

Erzurum'daki bir özel bakım merkezinde kalan engellilerin ilaçları ve içmeleri, merkezin çalışanları tarafından eczanelere satıldı. İstismar skandalıyla da gündem olan merkezde engelliler dolandırıldı, harçlıklarına dahi el kondu.

Günce 12.08.2023 00:00



Bakım merkezinin 320 kişilik kapasitesi bulunuyor. (Fotoğraf: BirGün)

İsmail ARI

İşitme ve konuşma engelli bir erkeğin, bakıcılar tarafından cinsel istismara maruz bırakıldığı Erzurum Özel Güzide Bakım Merkezinde yaşanan yeni skandallar açığa çıktı. Aile ve Sosyal Hizmetler

GAZETE [PENCERE]

"AKP Gençlik Kolları Başkanı'nın polise attığı tokat" haberlerine erişim engeli

(P) Yazan: Gazete Pencere — 9 Mayıs 2023 AA



Karaman'da AKP Gençlik Kolları Başkanı Kemal Toprak'ın Çevik Kuvvet ve Güvenlik Şube Müdürü Alparslan Yanar'ı polis merkezinde çıkan tartışmada darbettiğine yönelik haberlere erişim engeli getirildi.

Cumhuriyet

Skandallar zinciri Bakanlık raporunda... Özel bakım merkezinde engelli yurttaş istismar!

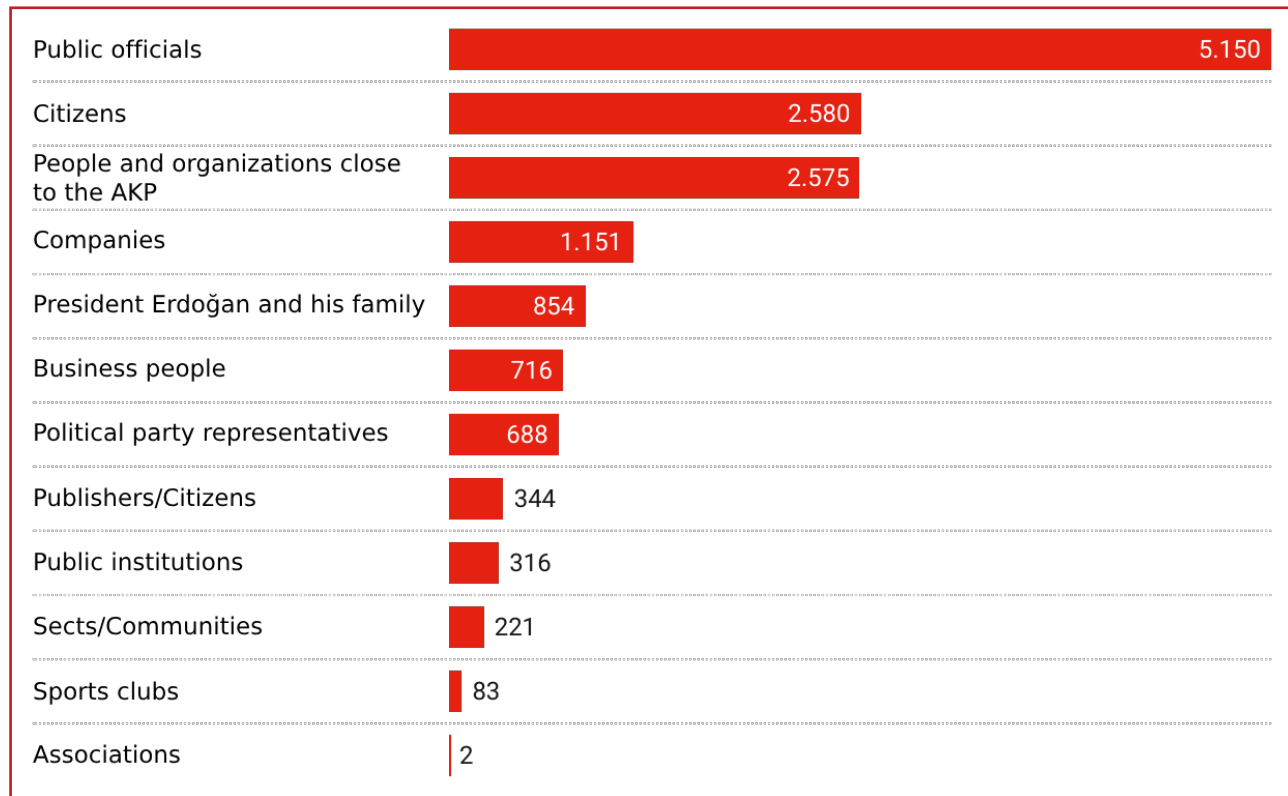


Erzurum'da faaliyet gösteren özel bakım merkezinde, işitme ve konuşma engelli A.K. adlı erkeğin, bakıcılar tarafından cinsel istismara maruz bırakıldığı ortaya çıktı. Merkezdeki diğer çalışanların ise, skandalın üzerini kapatmak istediği ileri sürüldü.

cumhuriyet.com.tr

Yayınlanma: 11.08.2023 - 12:01
Güncelleme: 11.08.2023 - 12:01

BASIC DISTRIBUTION OF NEWS BLOCKINGS ACCORDING TO THEIR SUBJECTS



We also examined the distribution of the 14,680 news articles blocked in 2023 according to their subjects, and we found **individuals and organizations close to the AKP, President Erdoğan and his family, associations, business people, public officials, public institutions, political party representatives, sports clubs, companies, sects/sects, publishers and citizens.**

Accordingly, while public officials ranked first, they were the subjects of almost twice as many news items as citizens in second place.

Public officials

Public officials were the subject of 5,150 of these 14,680 news items, and this number was reached through 145 different decisions.

When the topics of these news items are analyzed, **corruption and irregularities** ranked first with 3,192 news items. This was followed by **organizational crimes** with 713 news i

Cumhuriyet

Reuters: ABD ve İsveç savcılar Bilal Erdoğan'ın adının geçtiği yolsuzluk şikayetini inceliyor! Altun'dan açıklama geldi...



Reuters hazırladığı 'özel dosya'da Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan'ın oğlu Bilal Erdoğan'ın adının geçtiği yolsuzluk şikayeti üzerine İsveçli ve ABD'li savcılarının iddiaları araştırmaya başladığını aktardı. İlgili haberin ardından İletişim Başkanı Fahrettin Altun'dan açıklama geldi.

cumhuriyet.com.tr

h

AKP'li Belediyeye 20 Milyonluk 'Yolsuzluk' Operasyonu: Belediye Başkanının Oğlu Da Gözaltına Alındı



Kaynak: 17 Ekim 2023 Cuma 13:40

Dinçer Gökçe

AKP'li Horasan Belediyesi'ne ikinci kez yolsuzluk operasyonu yapıldı. Operasyon kapsamında gözaltına alınanlar arasında Belediye Başkanı Abdülkadir Aydın'ın oğlu da yer aldı. Gözaltına alınan 7 kişiden belediyede çalışan 3 kişi tutuklandı. Başkanın oğlu ise adli kontrole serbest kaldı. Bundan 3 ay önce de aynı belediyeye operasyon yapılmış belediye başkanının yeğeni tutuklanmıştı.

haber tarımdan

Tarım Kredi'de paravan şirket yolsuzluğunda bir birlerine düştüler! 1 milyar liralık zeytinyağı fabrikasını nasıl aldı?

Tarım Kredi Kooperatiflerinde ortaya çıkan paravan şirketler üzerinden yapılan büyük yolsuzluklarda Fahrettin Poyraz ile en yakınındaki isim olan Davut Arpa'nın bir birine düştüğü ortaya çıktı.



24.07.2023 - 15:27 24.07.2023 - 16:03 558 7

duvaR.

Rektör Kalan'a rüşvet suçlaması: Atama için 50 bin lira istedi

08 Eylül Perşembe 2022 Saat: 09:48
Güncellenme: 11 Eylül Pazar 2022 Saat: 01:04



Alanyalı iş insanı H.B, Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat Üniversitesi (ALKÜ) Rektörü Prof. Dr. Ekrem Kalan'ın kardeşinin ataması için rüşvet istediğini iddia etti.

YENİCAĞ

Bu sefer kızı ve damadı için dokunuş yapmış. En yüksek devlet memuru babanın yeni hikayesi. Toygun Atilla ortaya çıkardı

Daha önce Cumhurbaşkanlığı İdari İşler Başkanı Metin Kıratlı'nın yeni evli oğlu ve gelini için yaptıklarını yazan Oda TV Genel Yayın Yönetmeni Toygun Atilla, bu kez de Kıratlı'nın kızı ve damadı için sağladığı olanakları ortaya çıkardı...

Haber: 08.09.2023 10:57
Son Güncelleme: 8 Eylül 2023 Salı 10:48

Takip Et Google News

En yüksek devlet memuru babanın yeni hikayesi

TOYGUN ATILLA ortaya çıkardı

BU SEFER KIZI VE DAMADI İÇİN DOKUNUŞLAR YAPMIŞ

BirGün

Devleti dolandıran müdür terfi etmiş

Erzurum'da, Aile Bakanlığı bürokratları yoksullara bağlanması gereken maaşı ihtiyaç sahibi olmayan onlarca kişiye bağladı. Evraklarda imzası olan Cemil İlbaş, İl Müdürlüğüne terfi edip soruşturmadan adını sildirmiş.

Güncel 01.09.2023 09:00

Abone Ol Google News



Cemil İlbaş (Fotoğraf: İHA)

İsmail ARI

BirGün

'SS' kitabındaki istismara ilişkin yeni ayrıntı: Aile Bakanlığı tecavüzün yaşandığı yerde ağırlandı

Gazeteci Barış Pehlivan, Aile Bakanı Yardımcısı İsmail Ergüney'in çocuğa cinsel istismarda bulunmakla suçlanan Sadullah Alagöz'ü olayın yaşandığı pastanede ziyaret ettiğini söyledi.

Güncel 13.04.2023 07:05



Cumhuriyet gazetesi yazarı Barış Pehlivan, bugünkü yazısında, meslektaş Barış Terkoğlu ile çıkardıkları "SS" kitabında yer verdikleri "çocuğa tecavüz" skandalıyla ilgili yeni detayları açıkladı.

Cumhuriyet

Bu müdürü kim koruyor? Çağaloğlu Anadolu Lisesi'nde çocuk istismarını savunan Koçyiğit hâlâ görevde!

İsmailağa cemaatine bağlı Hiranur Vakfı kurucusu Yusuf Ziya Gümüşel'in kızı H.K.G'nin 6 yaşındayken tarikat müridi Kadir İstekli'nin (29) yıllarca cinsel istismarına maruz kalmasına ilişkin paylaşımlarıyla tepki çeken Çağaloğlu Anadolu Lisesi (CAL) Müdürü Cafer Koçyiğit, görevden alma kararına karşın hâlâ koltuğunda.

Sena Tufan

Güncellenme: 14.07.2023 - 08:30
Cumartesi: 14.07.2023 - 08:30



duvaR.

Mardin'de başhekim yardımcısı hakkında yolsuzluktan suç duyurusu

SES Mardin Şubesi, Nusaybin Devlet Hastanesi Başhekim Yardımcısı Zinar Özmen hakkında "zimmete para geçirmek" ve "evrakta sahtecilik" iddiasıyla suç duyurusunda bulundu.

16 Mart Perşembe 2023 Saat: 16:57
Güncellenme: 16 Mart Cumartesi 2023 Saat: 01:16



DUVAR - Sağlık ve Sosyal Hizmet Emekçileri Sendikası (SES) Mardin Şubesi, Nusaybin Devlet Hastanesi Başhekim Yardımcısı Zinar Özmen hakkında "Görevi kötüye kullanmak", "Zimmete

Citizens

Citizens were followed by public officials.

Citizens were the subjects of 2,580 of the 14,680 news articles that were blocked from access. This number was reached through 96 different decisions.

In the distribution of these news items according to their subjects, **crimes against women and children** (801 news items) and **homicide** (801 news items) ranked first.

In other words, one out of every two news articles whose subjects were citizens and access to which was blocked was about crimes and/or murders committed against women and children.

The topics of the remaining 978 news items were as follows:

Conflict, Religious exploitation, Fraud, Criticism, Marriage, Agenda, Theft, Magazine, Death, Organized crime, Criminal accusation, Violence, Threat, Drugs.



People and organizations close to the AKP

Of the 14,680 access bans imposed in 2023, 2,575 were on individuals and organizations close to the AKP.

1,133 of the 2,575 news items were on corruption and irregularities. It was followed by **tabloids** with 688 news items, **threats** with 200 news items, **murder** with 199 news items and **organizational crimes** with 178 news items.



Companies

Companies were the subject of 1,151 of the 14,680 news items subject to access ban.

While this number was reached with 33 different decisions, the topics of these news were **fraud** with 490 news reports, **corruption and irregularities** with 282 news reports, **blackmail** with 159 news reports and **malpractice** with 148 news reports.



President Erdoğan and his family

President Erdoğan and his family ranked fifth.

While President Erdoğan and his family were the subjects of 854 out of 14,680 news items blocked in 2023, the subject of these news items was mainly **corruption and irregularities** (646 news items).

It was followed by **the blocking of news announcing the blocked news** (119 news items), **murder** (62 news items), **malpractice** (15 news items) and **fraud** (12 news items).

TAMGA TÜRK

Reuters, Bilal Erdoğan'ın İsveçli Bir Şirketten On Milyonlarca Dolar Rüşvet İstedğini Öne Sürdü

İddiaya göre İsveç'teki şirket Türkiye'de büyük bir pazar payı elde edebilmek için kolaylıklar sağlanması şartıyla Bilal Erdoğan'a on milyonlarca dolar rüşvet ödemeyi kabul etti.

HABERLER 26 Haziran 2023 - 20:06



BirGün

Erdoğan'ın avukatı Ahmet Özel: Rüşveti biliyorum

FETÖ'den yargılanan Fethat Tamince'nin soruşturmasında Erdoğan'ın avukatlarından Köhne ile bir savcı arasındaki rüşvet pazarlığı iddiaları gündemde. Erdoğan'ın kişisel avukatı Ahmet Özel, rüşveti 2017'de öğrendiğini söyledi.

Güncel 29-09-2022 09:30



Ahmet Özel

Haber Merkezi

Zaman gazetesinin eski ortağı, iş insanı Fethat Tamince'nin Antalya'daki soruşturmasında AKP'li Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan'ın avukatı Ahmet Özel ile bir savcı arasındaki rüşvet pazarlığı yapıldığı iddia edildi. Tamince'nin, 'FETÖ borsası' pazarlıklarıyla

sol

Erdoğan 'trafik kazası' diyor ama 'TRT çalışanını ezen oğlunun da kafası kıyak mıydı?'



Başbakan Erdoğan bugünkü grup toplantısında içki yasaklarını dini gerekçe göstererek savundu. Erdoğan konuşmasında yasaklamaların trafik kazalarını da azaltacağını öne sürmesi akıllara, kendi oğlunun yıllar önce "ayık kafa" ile bir kişinin ölümüne yol açmış olduğunu getirdi...

28.05.2013

yeşilgazete

Erdoğan'ın eski avukatına ilişkin 'erişim engeli haberimize erişim engeli' haberimize erişim engeli

Erdoğan'ın eski avukatı Mustafa Doğan İnal'ın talebiyle geçen geçen yıl 178 habere erişim engeli getirilmesini konu olan haberimize getirilen erişim engeline de erişim engeli getirilmişti. Son olarak erişim engellerini konu aldığımız haberimiz de engellendi.

YEŞİL GAZETE 26/04/2023



T24

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28 Mart 2023

Berat Bey'in arkadaşları kazandı, biz kaybettik

Iraktan petrol kaçıran Kürt yönetimi kazanıyor. Barzani familyasının cepleri doluyor. Onların iş yaptığı Türk şirketinin hepsi "gizli" sahipleri kazanıyor. Çuvalla götürüyorlar bile denilebilir. Biz sıradan vatandaşlar ise kaybediyoruz

Paris Uluslararası Tahkim Mahkemesi'nin kararına göre Irak merkezli yönetimine 1 milyar 500 milyon ABD doları tazminat ödeyeceğiz.

Hepsi bu kadar değil, bu tutar için ayrıca faiz de ödememiz gerekecek ancak bunu hesaplayamadım.

KARAR.

Berat Albayrak'ın avukatlarından Karar'ın Irak petrolü haberlerine erişim engeli



30/05/2023 17:28 KAYNAK: KARAR

Irak petrolü hakkında "Birileri götürdü cezası millete" ve "Parayı kazanan niye ödemiyor" başlıklı haberlerimize Anadolu 2. Sulh Ceza Hakimliği tarafından erişim engeli getirildi.

Business people

Then came **the business people**.

In 2023, 716 news articles on business people were blocked with 26 different decisions, while **corruption and irregularities** ranked first among the topics of these news articles with 277 news articles.

It was followed by **crimes against women and children** (244 news items), **fraud** (91 news items) and **threats** (53 news items).



Political party representatives

While 688 news articles with political party representatives as the subject were blocked with 17 different decisions, 417 of these news articles were on **organizational crimes**.

It was followed by **crimes against women and children** with 219 news items and **corruption and irregularities** with 52 news items.



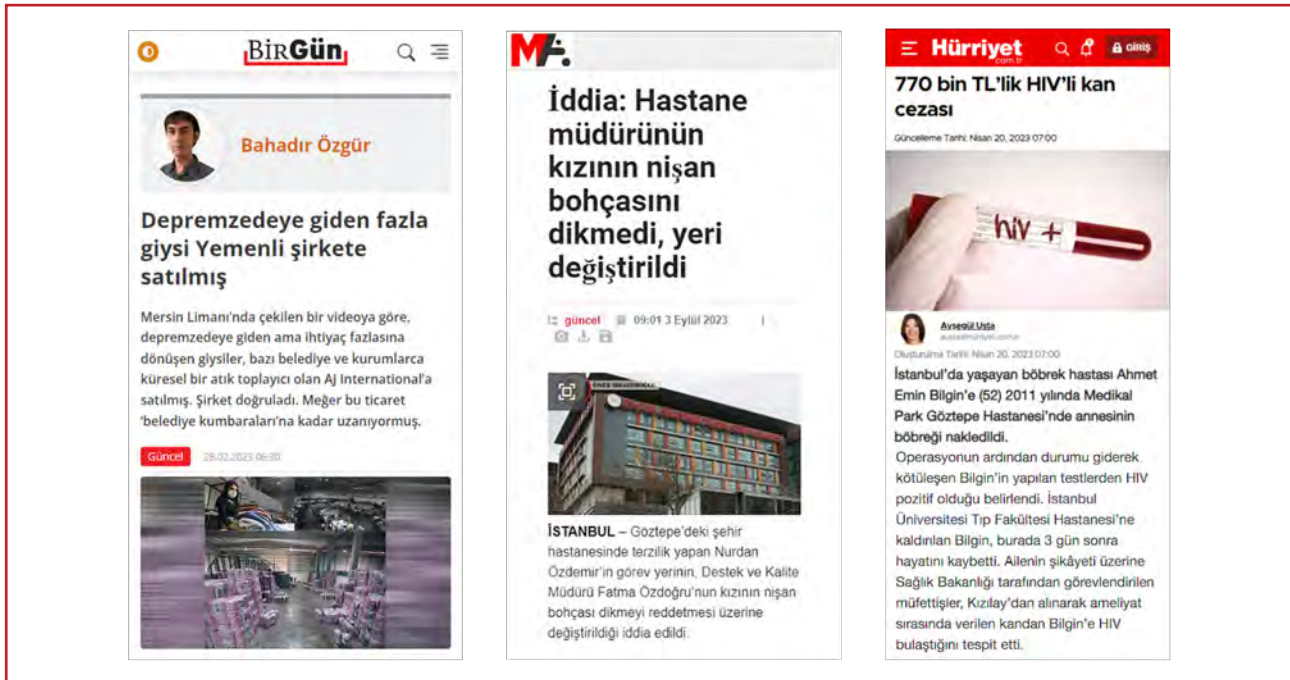
Publishers/Citizens

On February 22, 2023, Ankara 4th Criminal Judgeship of Peace blocked access to 344 URLs, including social media posts, websites, news websites and news articles, including those of Avesta Publishing House, Rudaw, Podcast Kurdi, Botan International and some Kurdish journalists, writers and artists publishing in Kurdish. The decision on the grounds of “making propaganda for the PKK/KCK terrorist organization” was issued upon the request of the General Directorate of Security (EGM).³⁷

Public institutions

In 2023, 316 out of 14,680 news items with blocked access were about public institutions, while 162 were about **corruption and irregularities**.

It was followed by **crimes against women and children** with 125 news items, **organizational crimes** with 25 news items, **theft** with 2 news items, **violence** with 1 news item and **drugs** with 1 news item.



³⁷ “Access to 344 URLs, including Kurdish publications, blocked”, Free Web Turkey, 24.02.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20230328154640/https://www.freewebturkey.com/aralarinda-kurtce-yayimlarin-da-bulundugu-344-url-erisime-engellendi/>



Sects/Communities

While 221 news items involving sects/sects were blocked with 11 different decisions, these news items were about **crimes against women and children (157)**, **corruption and irregularities (60)** and **exploitation of religion (4)**.

When we include social media posts in this number, we found that 301 URLs involving sects were blocked in 2023.

Of the 301 URLs with sects and congregations as the subject of the access block, 198 were blocked in the first month of 2023.³⁸



38 Ali Safa Korkut, "Access blocked to at least 193 news reports on the unlawfulness caused by sects", Free Web Turkey, 22.06.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240108111326/https://www.freewebturkey.com/son-alti-ayda-tarikatlar-aleyhindeki-en-az-193-habere-erisim-engeli-getirildi>



Sports clubs

In 2023, the number of news articles with **sports clubs** as the subject of the access ban was 83.

All of these news items were related to the allegations that Turkish Football Federation (TFF) Vice President Lütfi Arıboğan and Chief Legal Counsel Prof. Dr. İlhan Helvacı told UEFA Chief Inspector Pierre Cornu that Fenerbahçe was 100% involved in match-fixing during the match-fixing investigation.

Upon Helvacı's request, 83 news articles on the subject were blocked from access by the Istanbul 10th Criminal Judgeship of Peace on August 10, 2023.³⁹

Associations

Associations took the last place. In 2023, a total of two publications published by associations, including books, journals, reports, reviews, analyses and the like, were banned from access.

The first of these was the 2015 Human Rights Violations Report published by the **Human Rights Association (IHD)**.

³⁹ Ali Safa Korkut, "Access to news about the July 3 match-fixing investigation blocked: Fenerbahçe also blocked", Free Web Turkey, 18.08.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20231211124658/https://www.freewebsurkey.com/index.php/categories/newsberg/haberler/3-temmuz-sike-sorusturmasiyla-ilgili-haberlere-erisim-engeli-fenerbahce-de-erisime-engellendi>

The Ankara 8th Criminal Judgeship of Peace blocked from access to the report on **April 10, 2023** following a request by Lütfullah Ün, who was the district governor of Tekman district in Erzurum between 2015 and 2016.⁴⁰

The second blocked publication was the EngelliWeb 2021 report **by the Freedom of Expression Association** titled “The Year of Injured Reputation, Honor and Dignity of High-Level Public Personalities”.

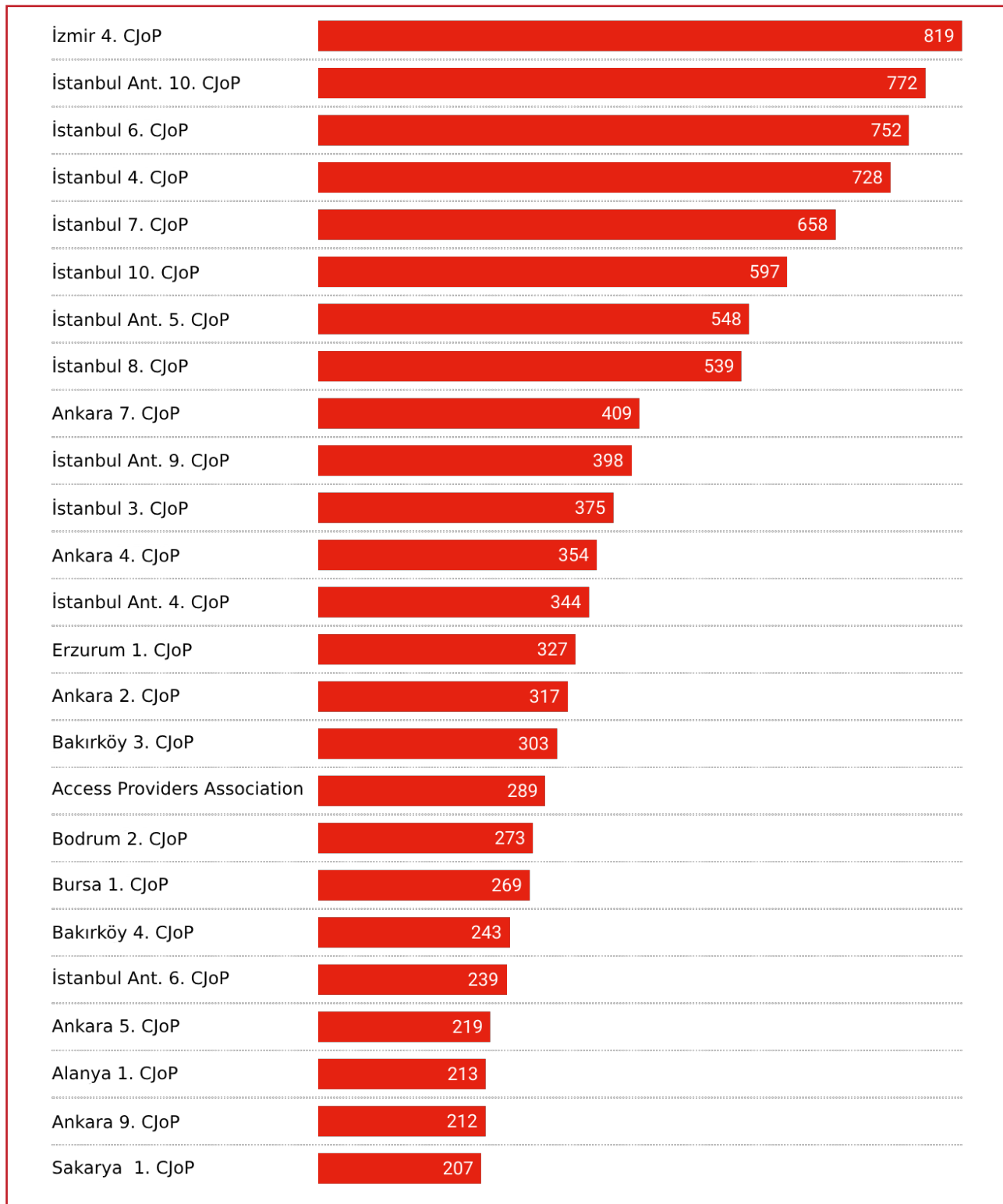
In 2021, the report, which included data on access-blocking cases in Turkey, was blocked by the decision of the Şile Criminal Judgeship of Peace on **May 18, 2023** **upon the** request of yoga instructor Akif Manaf.⁴¹



40 Ali Safa Korkut, “District governor bans speaking a language other than Turkish, blocks access to related news”, Free Web Turkey, 29.04.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20230602112416/https://www.freewebturkey.com/turkce-disinda-bir-dilin-konusulmasini-yasaklayan-kaymakam-ilgili-haberlere-erisimi-engelledi/>

41 “EngelliWeb 2021 Report Access Blocked”, Freedom of Expression Association, 18.05.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20230518135324/https://ifade.org.tr/engelliweb/engelliweb-2021-raporu-erisime-engellendi/>

DISTRIBUTION OF THE NUMBER OF BLOCKED NEWS ITEMS BY BLOCKING AUTHORITIES



*Ant.: Anatolia

*CJoP.: Criminal Judgeships of Peace

We also analyzed 14,680 news articles that were blocked in 2023 in terms of the authorities that issued access ban decisions.

Accordingly, **153 different authorities**, including criminal judgeships of peace, Istanbul 24th Civil Court of First Instance, Bakırköy 1st Criminal Court of Intellectual Property Rights, Silivri 1st Civil Court of First Instance and the Association of Access Providers (ESB), **issued access blocking orders** against the news articles in question.

While **289** of these news items were blocked by the ESB, **three** by the Istanbul 24th Civil Court of First Instance, **two** by the Bakırköy 1st Criminal Court of Intellectual Property Rights and **one** by the Silivri 1st Civil Court of First Instance, the remaining **14,385 posts were blocked by various criminal judgeships of peace.**

The authority that blocked the most news was Izmir's 4th Criminal Judgeship of Peace with 819 news reports, while eight criminal judgeships of peace from Istanbul were among the top 10.

REASONS FOR BLOCKING BLOCKED NEWS ITEMS

Violation of personality rights	14.332
Protection of national security and public order	344
Those for which the justification will be written later	2
Trademark infringement	2

Violation of personality rights

When the grounds for blocking the blocked news items are analyzed, **violation of personal rights** ranked first with 14,332 news items being blocked.

As for the subjects of the news items, the top five were **public officials** with 5,150 news items, **citizens** with 2,580 news items, **people and organizations close to AKP** with 2,575 news items, **companies** with 1,147 news items and **President Erdoğan and his family** with 854 news items.

Protection of national security and public order

The violation of personal rights was followed by the **protection of national security and public order.**

In 2023, the number of news articles blocked for this reason was 344.

Those for which the justification will be written later

This was followed by news (2), the reasons for which will be written later.

These were the news articles titled “Doping Hafiza did ‘doping’ in the advertisement!” about the ads published on social media by the online education platform Doping Hafiza.

Trademark infringement

Two news articles were blocked on the grounds of **trademark infringement**.

These consisted of news reports about a company that imitated the products of P&G, the multinational company that produces personal care and hygiene products.

BREAKDOWN OF BLOCKED SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS BASED ON JUSTIFICATION

Corruption and irregularities	2.948
Crimes against women and children	1.607
Organizational crimes	428
Magazine	289
Murder	188
Theft	65
Access block	46
Fraud	25
Exploitation of religion	23
Agenda	10
Drugs	5
Violence	4
Stock exchange	2
Torture	1

In 2023, access to social media posts was blocked just like domain names and news.

Accordingly, 5,641 social media posts were blocked in 2023.

Corruption and irregularities

While this number was reached through 135 different court decisions, when the blocked posts were analyzed by subject, **corruption and irregularities** ranked first with 2,948 posts.

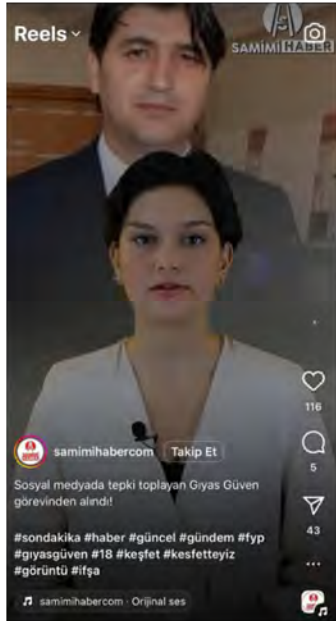
This corresponds to over half of all social media posts blocked in 2023.





Crimes against women and children

Social media posts on corruption and irregularities were followed by social media posts on **crimes against women and children**. In 2023, 1,607 news articles on this subject were blocked with 35 different decisions.





Organizational crimes

Social media posts by individuals who allegedly gathered together to commit acts that are considered “crimes” under the laws of the Republic of Turkey, and social media posts by individuals allegedly related to or part of organizations formed by these individuals and considered as “organizations” were another topic that was blocked the most.

428 tweets on this issue were blocked by five different decisions.



MAIN DISTRIBUTION OF BANNED SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENTS BASED ON SUBJECTS

AKP'ye yakın kişi ve organizasyonlar	2.091
Kamu görevlisi	2.031
Yurttaş	834
Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan ve ailesi	255
İş insanı	241
Şirket	84
Tarikat/Cemaatler	80
Kamu kurumu	20
Siyasi parti temsilcisi	4
Akademisyen	1

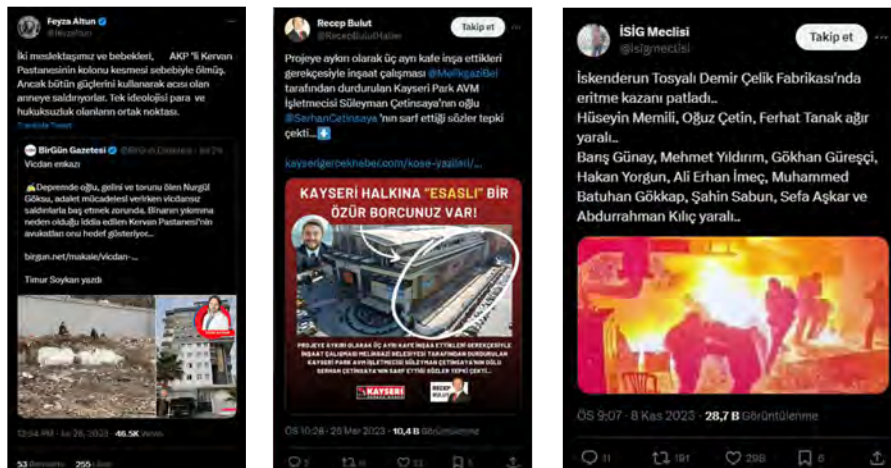
We also examined who the subjects of the blocked social media posts were, i.e. who the posts in question were about.

People and organizations close to the AKP

Accordingly, **individuals and organizations close to the AKP** ranked first.

People and organizations close to the AKP were the subject of 2,091 of the 5,641 blocked social media posts and this number was reached through 20 different decisions.

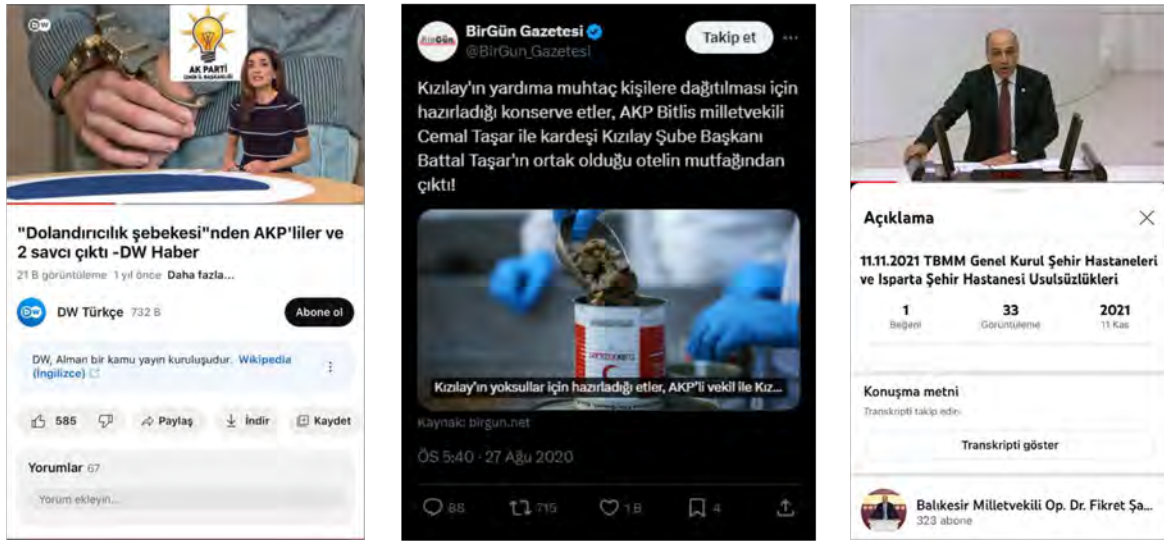
When the topics of these posts were analyzed, **corruption and irregularities** ranked first. In 2023, access to 1,672 social media posts on corruption and irregularities was blocked, where the subjects were people and organizations close to the AKP.



Public officials

Public officials were the subjects of 2,031 out of 5,641 social media posts. This number was reached with 40 decisions.

Among the topics of these posts, **corruption and irregularities** stood out with 1,030 posts. This was followed by **crimes against women and children** with 814 posts, **murder** with 134 posts, **magazine** with 36 posts and **organizational crimes** with 17 posts.

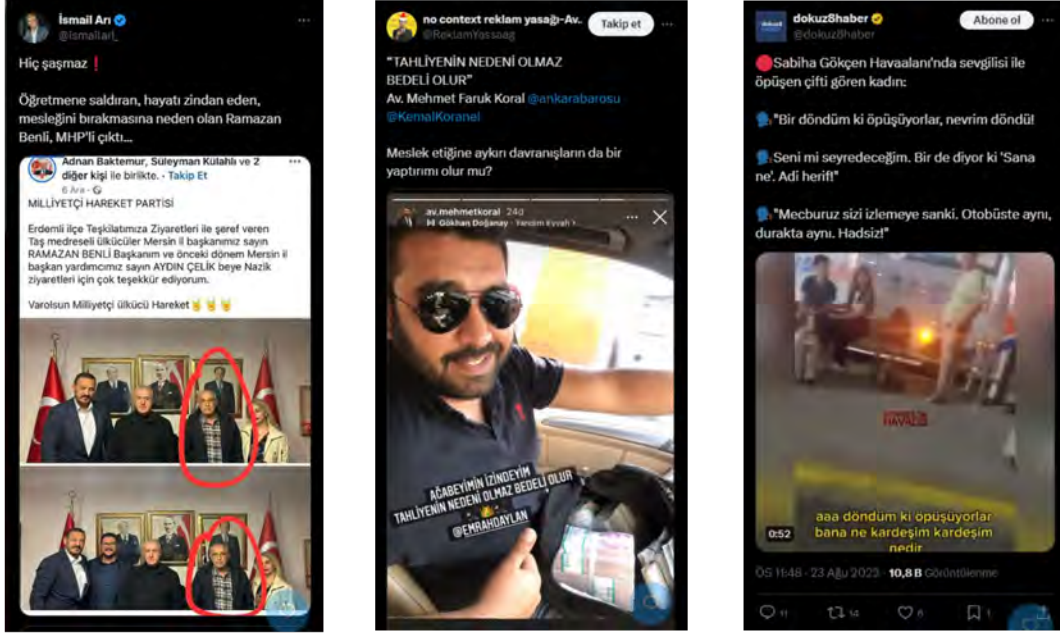


Citizens

Citizens ranked third with 834 posts as the subject of the blocked social media posts.

The distribution of these posts according to their topics is as follows:

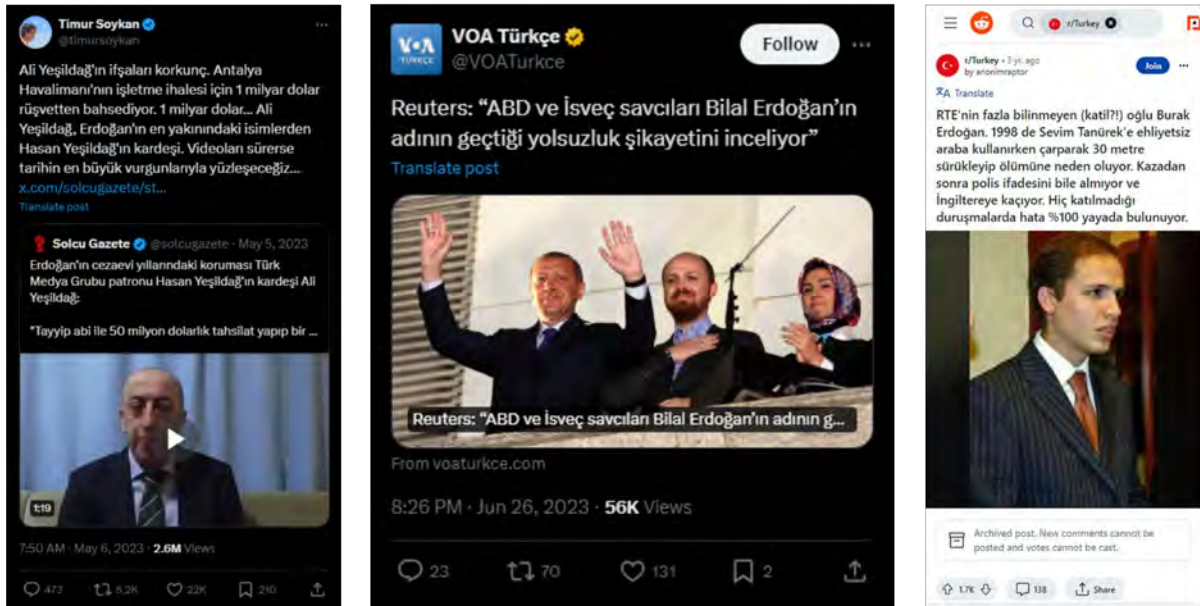
1. Crimes against women and children: 649 shares
2. Organizational crime 103 shares
3. Blocking a post for which access has been blocked: 46
4. Fraud 25
5. Corruption and irregularities: 6
6. Drugs: 5



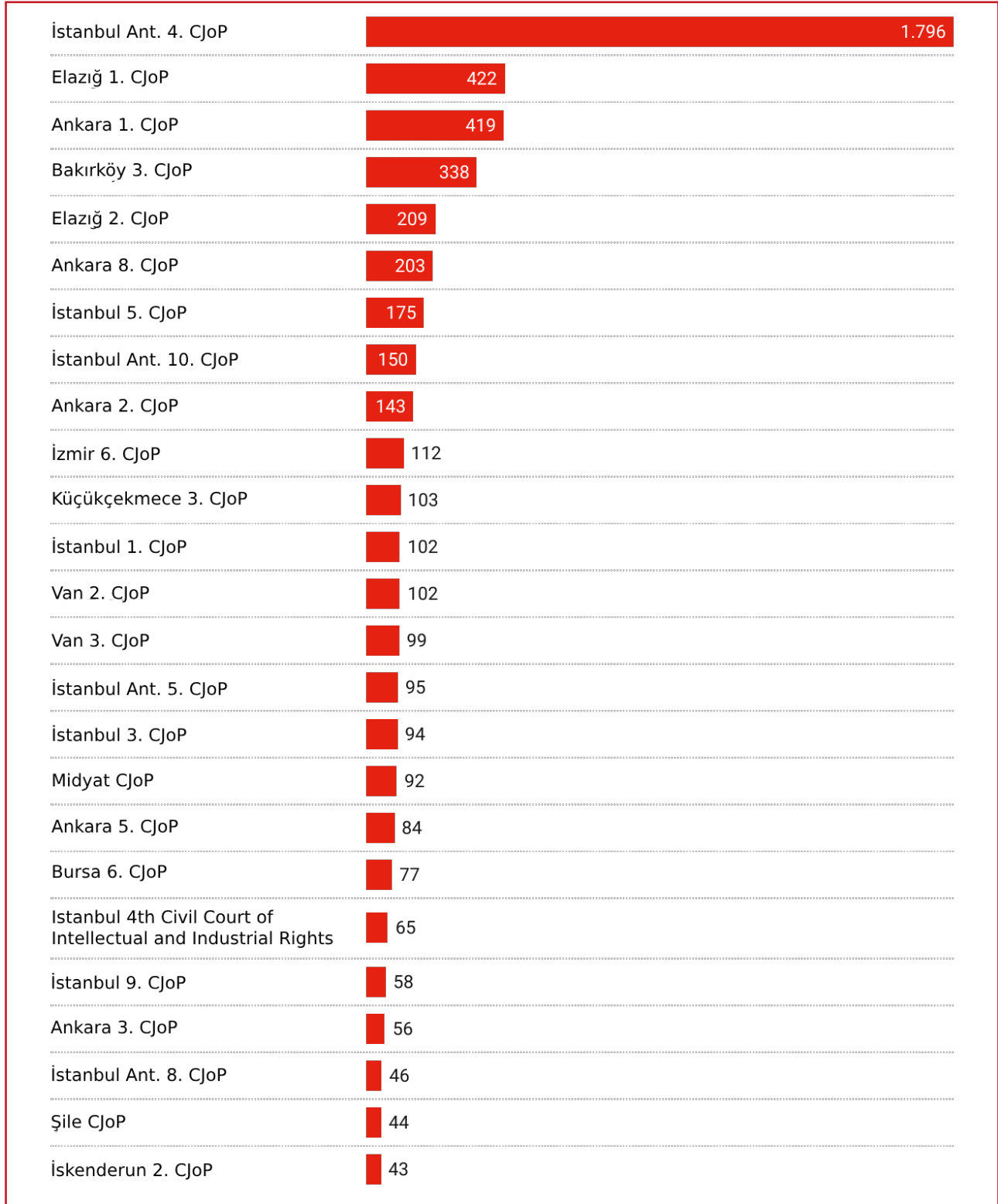
President Erdoğan and his family

Social media posts with **President Erdoğan and his family** as the subject also ranked fourth in terms of the order of blocked posts according to their subjects.

In 2023, 255 tweets about President Erdoğan and his family were blocked, 196 of which were about **corruption and irregularities**, while 59 were about **crimes against women and children**.



DISTRIBUTION OF THE NUMBER OF BLOCKED SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS BY BLOCKING AUTHORITIES



*Ant.: Anatolia

*CJoP.: Criminal Judgeships of Peace

We also analyzed the 5,641 social media posts that were blocked in 2023 in terms of the authorities that issued access ban decisions.

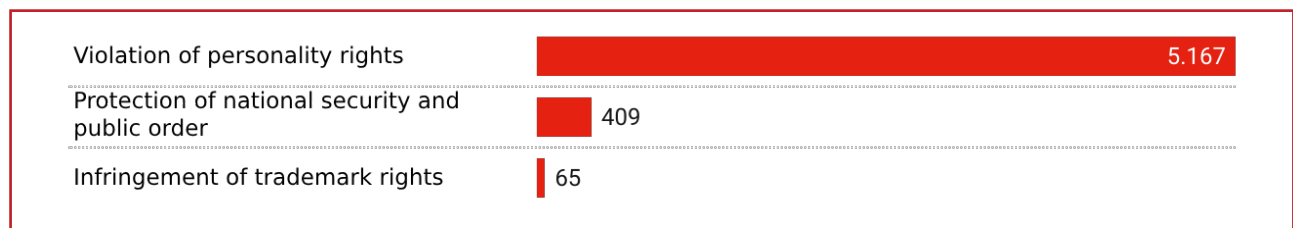
Accordingly, **67 different authorities**, including criminal judgeships of peace, Istanbul 4th Civil Court of Intellectual and Industrial Rights and the Association of Access Providers (ESB), **issued access blocking orders** on the social media posts in question.

Of these, 65 were blocked by the Istanbul 4th Civil Court of Intellectual and Industrial Rights and one by the ESB, while the remaining **5,575 posts were blocked by various criminal judgeships of peace.**

In first place was the Istanbul Anatolian 4th Criminal Judgeship of Peace, where Sıdar Demiroğlu, under investigation for issuing access-blocking orders in exchange for bribes and was dismissed from office, served as a judge.

The relevant judgeship reached this number with 21 decisions, 20 of which were signed by Demiroğlu.

BLOCKED SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS AND REASONS FOR BLOCKING



The reasons for blocking 5,641 social media posts were **violation of personal rights, protection of national security and public order, and infringement of trademark rights.**

Violation of personality rights

When the subjects of the 5,167 social media posts blocked on the grounds of **violation of personal rights** are analyzed, the top five are as follows:

1. **Public officials** 2.031
2. **People and organizations close to the AKP:** 1.785
3. **Citizens** 731
4. **President Erdoğan and his family:** 255
5. **Business people** 241

6. Sects/Communities: 80

Public officials

Of the 2,031 social media posts about public officials that were blocked, 1,030 were about **corruption and irregularities**, 814 were about **crimes against women and children**, 134 were about **murder**, 36 were about **tabloids and** 17 were about **organizational crimes**.

People and organizations close to the AKP

Of the 1,785 blocked social media posts, 1,672 were about people and organizations close to the AKP, and 1,672 of them were about **corruption and irregularities**.

It was followed by **murder** with 53 posts, **magazine** with 47 posts, **agenda** with 9 posts and **violence** with 4 posts.

Citizens

The distribution of the blocked posts related to citizens according to their subject matter revealed the following ranking:

1. **Crimes against women and children:** 649 shares
2. **Posts announcing that a URL has been blocked:** 46
3. **Fraud:** 25
4. **Corruption and irregularities:** 6
5. **Drugs:** 5

President Erdoğan and his family

The topics of the 255 posts about President Erdoğan and his family that were blocked were **corruption and irregularities** (196) and **crimes against women and children** (59).

Business people

The topics of the 241 blocked tweets about business people were **magazine** with 206 posts, **crimes against women and children** with 33 posts and **stock market** with 2 posts.

Sects/Communities

Sects and/or congregations have also chosen to violate personal rights when seeking access blocking orders for tweets about them.

In 2013, 80 tweets about sects/sects were blocked for this reason, with **crimes against women and children** ranking first among their topics with 53 posts.

Protection of national security and public order

Another justification offered for blocked social media posts was the **protection of national security and public order**. In this context, a total of 409 posts were blocked.

Of these 409 posts, 306 were made by **people and organizations close to the AKP**, while 103 were made by **citizens**.

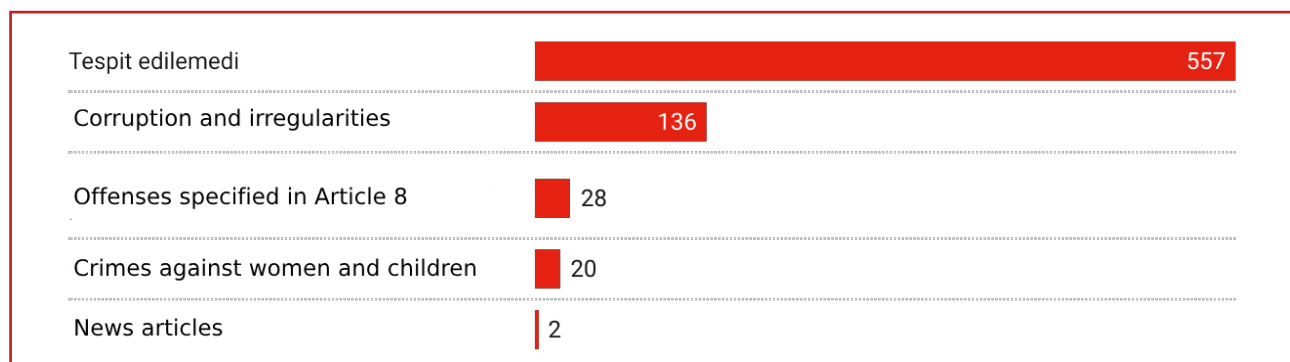
Trademark infringement

The reason for blocking 65 posts was **trademark infringement**.

These 65 posts consisted of social media posts about a company that imitated the products of P&G, a multinational company that produces hygiene products.

While this number was reached with a single decision, the access-blocking decision in question was issued by the Istanbul 4th Intellectual and Industrial Rights Law Court.

BASIC BREAKDOWN OF SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT BLOCKS ACCORDING TO THE TOPICS THEY ADDRESS



In 2023, domain names, news and social media posts and social media accounts were blocked.

The number of social media accounts blocked in 2023 was 743.

Corruption and irregularities

As with many other topics, **corruption and irregularities came to** the forefront regarding what the blocked social media accounts were generally about.

Access-blocking orders have been issued for 136 accounts covering this issue.

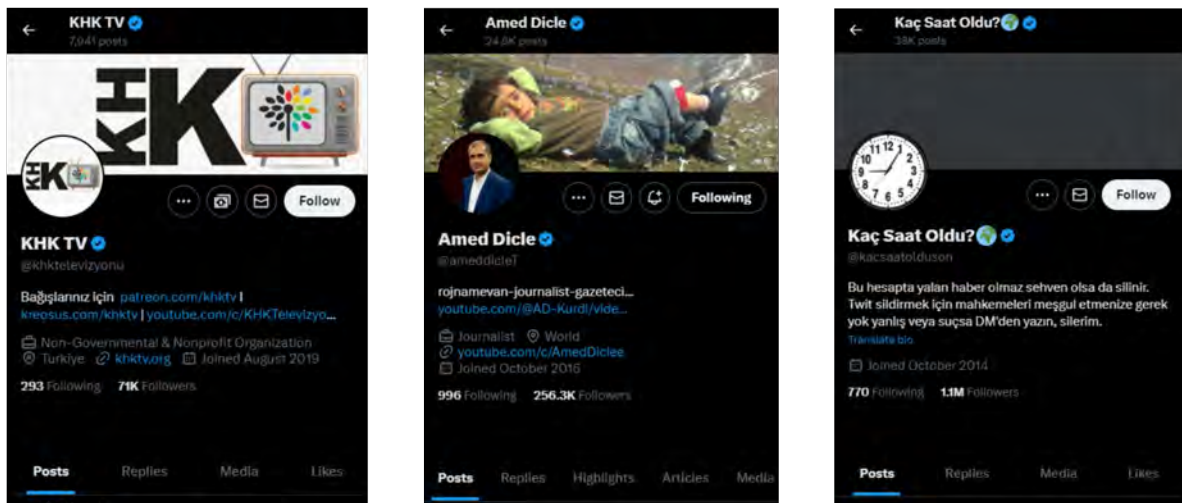
130 of these accounts belonged to individuals and publishers known to be close to the Gülen movement and the Kurdish movement, and even accused and prosecuted by the law of being members of these two movements.

These 130 accounts were blocked by a single decision, the decision of the Ankara 3rd Criminal Judge of Peace No. 2020/3271. although dated May 1, 2020, this decision was sent to Twitter at 21:53 on Thursday, May 11, 2023.⁴² The relevant e-mail sent by the Information and Communication Technologies Authority (ICTA) included four more access-blocking decisions for Twitter to implement.

The decision to block access to the 130 accounts in question was the **protection of national security and public order**.

The other six accounts were the Twitter and YouTube accounts of businessman Muhammed Yakut, who made headlines with videos in which he made allegations against some government officials and business people close to the government.

Yakut's accounts were blocked with three different decisions, all of which were justified as **violations of personal rights**.



⁴² Twitter, Global Government Affairs, 15.05.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20230516031919/https://twitter.com/GlobalAffairs/status/1658208689902215170>



Offenses specified in Article 8

The number of accounts ordered to be blocked for allegedly *providing a place and opportunity for illegal betting and gambling*, one of the crimes specified in Article 8, was 28. All of these 28 accounts were Twitter accounts.

This number was reached with a single decision, the ICTA's decision dated December 11, 2023.

Crimes against women and children

In 2023, the number of accounts that were subject to access-blocking decisions for crimes against women and children was recorded as 20.

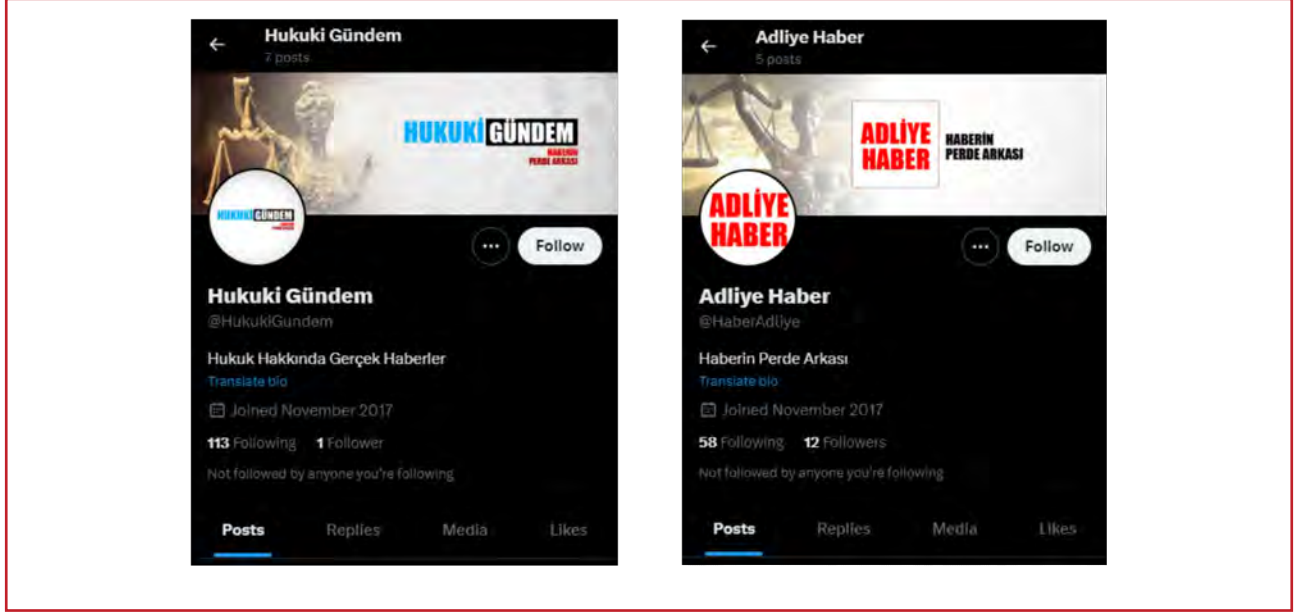
In a decision dated October 5, 2023, a blocking order was issued for 20 accounts opened on various social media platforms on behalf of a female contestant who

became famous on a television program she participated in, upon the request of the contestant.

News

The two blocked social media accounts were sharing news.

The two accounts in question were blocked from access by the decision of the Izmir 4th Criminal Judgeship of Peace dated March 23, 2023.



Undetectable

We were unable to determine what the 557 blocked social media accounts were publishing about, because unlike the part of the report you have read so far, we did not get this number from the court decisions we obtained, but from the data shared by the social media platforms themselves about the blocked accounts.

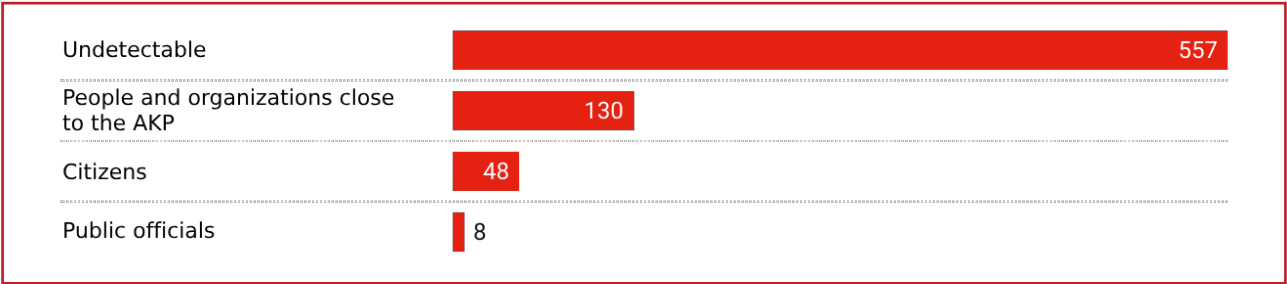
Of the 557 social media accounts blocked, **421 were on Instagram**,⁴³ **113 were on TikTok**,⁴⁴ **23 were on Facebook**⁴⁵

43 Meta, "Content Restrictions Based on Local Law", <https://transparency.meta.com/reports/content-restrictions/country/TR/>

44 TikTok, "Report on Content Removal Requests from Official Authorities", <https://www.tiktok.com/transparency/tr-tr/government-removal-requests-2023-1/>

45 Meta, "Content Restrictions Based on Local Law", <https://transparency.meta.com/reports/content-restrictions/country/TR/>

BASIC DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT BLOCKS ACCORDING TO THEIR SUBJECTS



We also examined who was tweeted about from the social media accounts that were blocked.

People and organizations close to the AKP

Accordingly, **people and organizations close to the AKP** ranked first with 130 accounts.

All of these posts were about **corruption and irregularities**, and the reason for the access block was stated as the **protection of national security and public order**.

Citizens

48 accounts posted about **citizens**.

28 of these accounts were blocked for allegedly committing the offenses specified in Article 8. The other 20 accounts were opened on various social media platforms on behalf of a woman. The reason for this decision dated October 5, 2023 was stated as **violation of personal rights**.

Public officials

The eight accounts that were blocked were posts about public officials.

Six of these were Twitter and YouTube accounts belonging to Muhammad Yakut, with videos in which he made allegations against several government officials and pro-government businesspeople.

Three separate orders, issued by the Adana 8th Criminal Judgeship of Peace on April 17 and 27 and the Ankara 5th Criminal Judgeship of Peace on April 20, blocked the six accounts.

Two accounts shared news about the legal agenda.

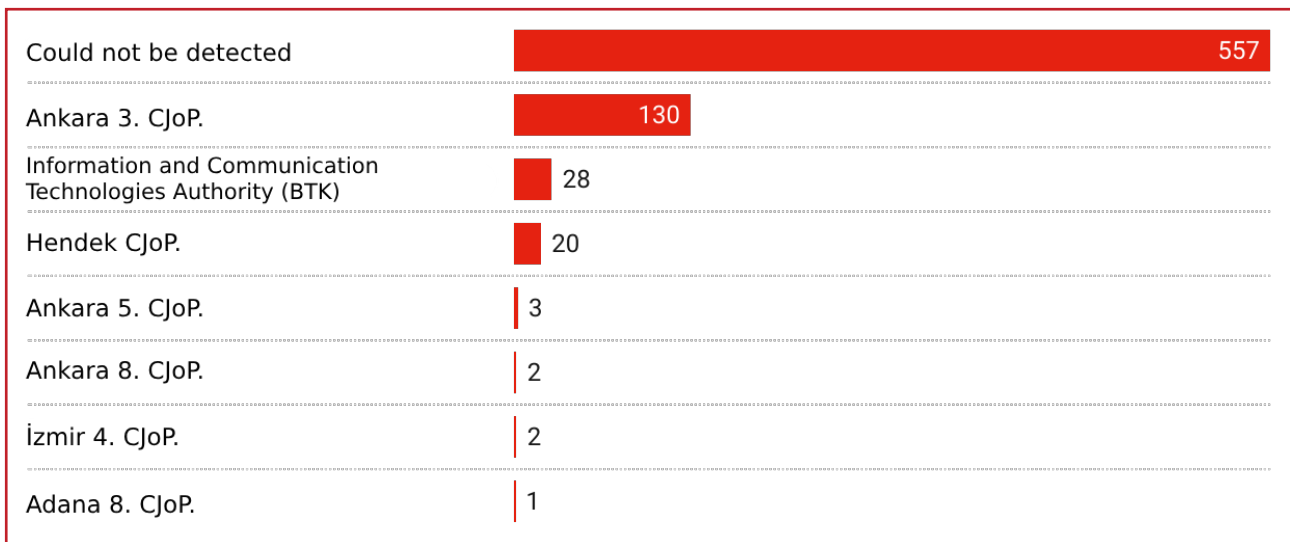
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Of the 557 social media accounts blocked, 421 were on Instagram,⁴⁶ 113 were on TikTok,⁴⁷ 23 were on Facebook⁴⁸.

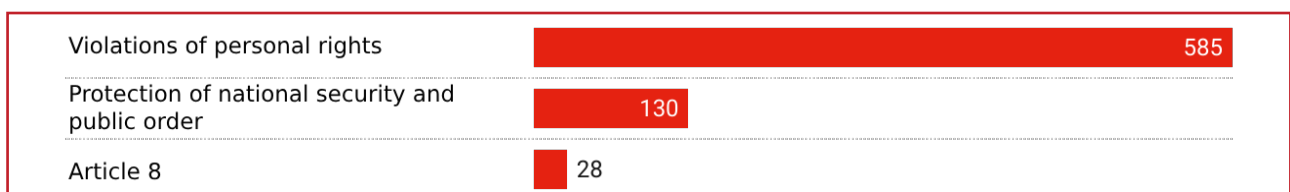
DISTRIBUTION OF BLOCKED SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS ACCORDING TO BLOCKING AUTHORITIES

The distribution of blocked social media accounts according to the blocking authorities revealed the following picture:



REASONS FOR BLOCKING BLOCKED SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

The reasons for blocking the blocked social media accounts were listed as follows:



⁴⁶ Content Restrictions Based on Local Law, Meta, <https://transparency.meta.com/reports/content-restrictions/country/TR/>

⁴⁷ Report on Content Removal Requests from Official Authorities, TikTok, <https://www.tiktok.com/transparency/tr-tr/government-removal-requests-2023-1/>

⁴⁸ Content Restrictions Based on Local Law, Meta, <https://transparency.meta.com/reports/content-restrictions/country/TR/>

Blocked Google comments

In 2023, access to domain names, news, social media posts and social media accounts, as well as **comments on businesses' profiles registered on Google, including location information**, were blocked.

All of the 38 blocked comments consisted of complaints and negative experiences about the real and/or legal persons in question.

All of the access blocking decisions were justified as **violations of personal rights**.

Here is a table showing the real and/or legal persons about whom negative comments were made and how many comments were blocked:

Operator Doctor Ali Cemal Yilmaz	17
SK Project and Investment Consultancy	4
Çözüm Food Livestock and Industry Trade	4
TekDavet Organisation	4
Gaziantep Epilation Centre	1
Korkut Law Consultancy	1
Ilyas Genç - RKC Private Veterinary Services	1
Lawyer Mediator Ayşegül Yirmibeşler Korkut	1
Rasha Ibharim Mohamed Ibrahim Badawi	1
Alia Agency	1
Lawyer Nazan Akca Subasi Law Office	1
A massage parlour	1
Selin Pharmacy - Selin Hancı	1

Blocked Google search engine results

The URL of the screen that appears as a result of a Google search on a subject was also among those blocked.

While 33 Google search engine results were blocked in 2023, the reason for blocking them was **violating personal rights**.

The topics of the blocked search engine results were **corruption and irregularities** (17 results), **crimes against women and children** (7 results) and **marriage** (6 results), while the topics of three results could not be determined

Blocked mail addresses

In 2023, access-blocking orders were also issued on e-mail addresses.

It is not technically possible to block access to e-mail addresses, but judges evaluating access block requests have ordered access blocking for e-mail addresses.

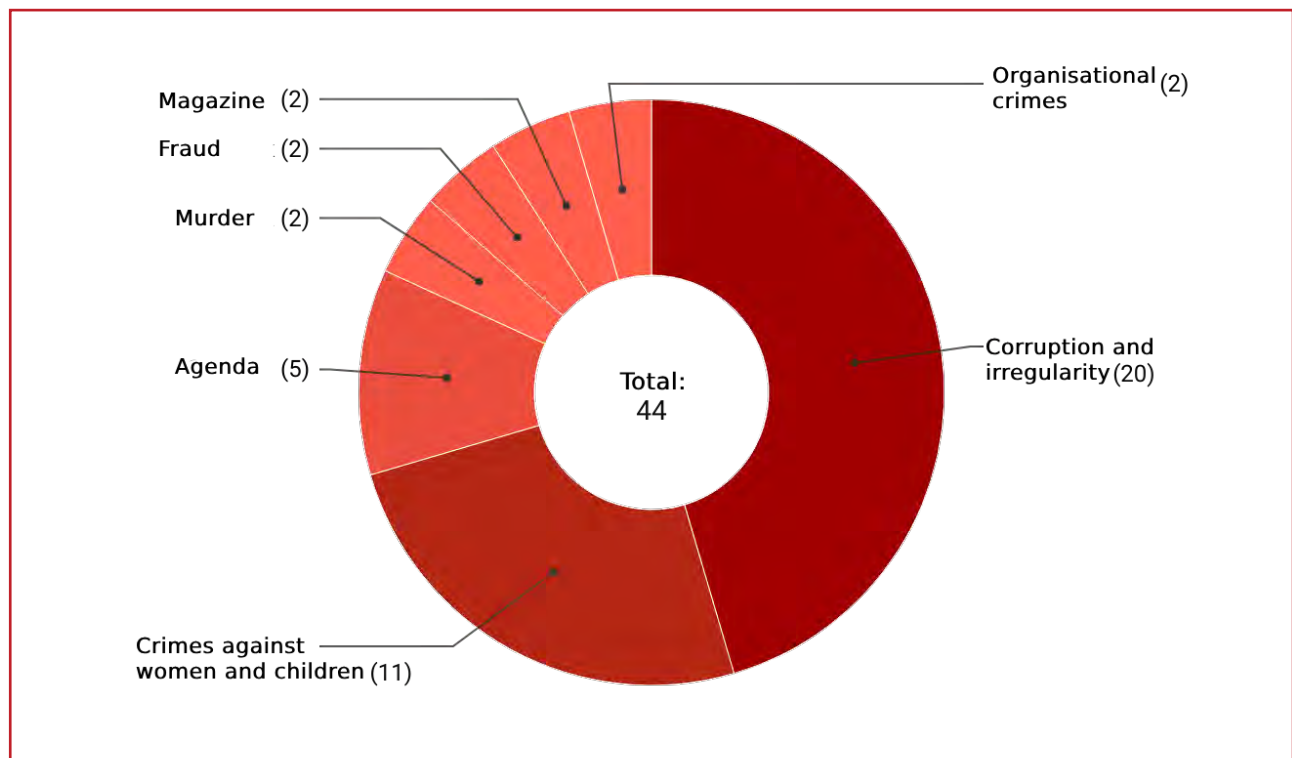
Of these, the access ban decision on **exporto1.muhtarogluholding@gmail.com** was issued by the Ankara 3rd Criminal Judgeship of Peace on February 10, 2023, while the decision on **erenksnki@gmail.com** was issued by the Gaziosmanpaşa 1st Criminal Judgeship of Peace on August 22, 2023.

BLOCKED FREE WEB NEWS ARTICLES

Free Web Turkey was also affected by the access blocking decisions.

In 2023, a total of **44 articles of Free Web Turkey**, 37 news articles and seven social media posts, were blocked.

This number was reached through a total of 25 court decisions



SUBJECTS OF BLOCKED NEWS ITEMS

Corruption and irregularities

When the topics of the blocked content are analyzed, **corruption and irregularities** were again in the first place.

20 out of 44 news items were on corruption and irregularities, the first of which was the censorship agenda published on August 15, 2022, which showed the censorship cases between August 8-14, 2022.

The content in question was blocked from access upon the request of Muhittin Palazoğlu, the brother of Ahmet Mahmut Ünlü's son-in-law Muhittin Palazoğlu, publicly known as "**Cübbeli Ahmet Hoca**", by the decision of Istanbul Anatolia 5th Criminal Judgeship of Peace dated **June 23, 2023**.

In the related censorship agenda, 23 news articles about Palazoğlu being awarded the tender for the mansion project to be built on the land of İller Bank of the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization were blocked from access with the decision of the Association of Access Providers dated August 5, 2022.

Other Free Web Turkey posts that were blocked were Reuters' exclusive report on Swedish and US prosecutors investigating allegations in an international corruption complaint involving **Bilal Erdoğan**, and news reports and tweets by Censür Gündemi (June 26-July 2) and Reuters that Reuters objected to the decision to block access to news and posts about Bilal Erdoğan.

FREE WEB TURKEY

SANSÜR GÜNDEMİ

Sansür Gündemi (8 - 14 Ağustos)

15 Ağustos 2022

Bakanlık arazisindeki yalı projesinin Cübbeli Ahmet'in dünürüne verilmesiyle ilgili haberlere sansür

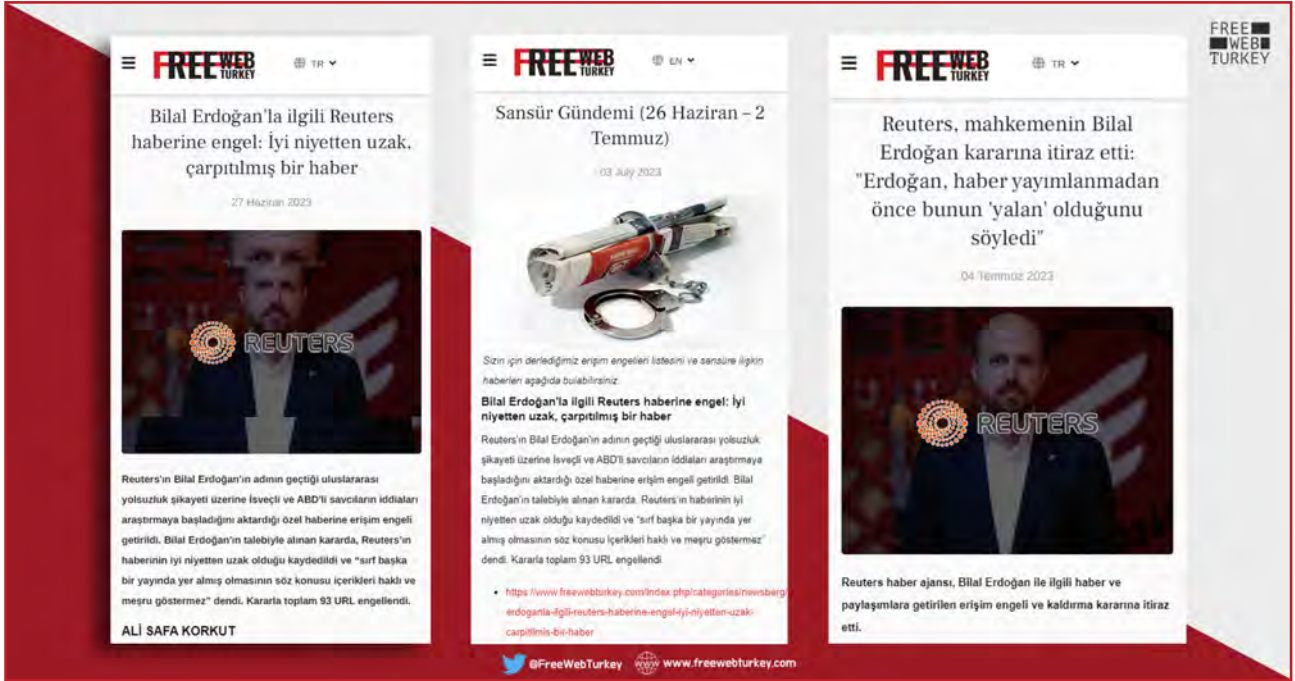
Tuzla'da mahkemenin imar planlarını iptal ettiği denize sıfır, ağaçlarla kaplı ve Çevre ve Şehircilik Bakanlığı'na bağlı İller Bankası arazisinde yalı projesinin kamuoyunda "Cübbeli Ahmet Hoca" olarak bilinen Ahmet Mahmut Ünlü'nün damadının ağabeyi Muhittin Palazoğlu'na verildiğiyle ilgili 23 haber, Erişim Sağlayıcıları Birliği'nin 5 Ağustos 2022 tarihli kararıyla erişime engellendi.

Karara gerekçe olarak, ilgili içeriklerin İstanbul 6. Sulh Ceza Hakimliği'nin 4 Temmuz 2022 tarihli kararındaki içeriklerle aynı oluşu gösterildi.

▪ <https://www.siyasetcafe.com/cubbelinin-dunuru-hakkindaki-haberimize-erisim-engeli-91455n.htm>

Sizin için derlediğimiz erişim engelleri listesini ve sansüre ilişkin haberleri aşağıda bulabilirsiniz.

@FreeWebTurkey **www.freewebturkey.com**



Upon Bilal Erdoğan's request, the Istanbul Anatolian 10th Criminal Judicature of Peace issued an order on **July 20, 2023**, blocking access to six Free Web Turkey posts, four news articles and two tweets.

BirGün columnist Timur Soykan wrote in his article titled **“Chief Prosecutor’s cry of bribery: We are rotting”**, he wrote about the bribery allegations at the Istanbul Anatolian Courthouse. Soykan quoted the allegations in a letter sent by Istanbul Anatolian Chief Public Prosecutor İsmail Uçar to the Council of Judges and Prosecutors. In his letter, Uçar revealed that criminals were released with bribes and that decisions to block access to news articles were also given in exchange for money.

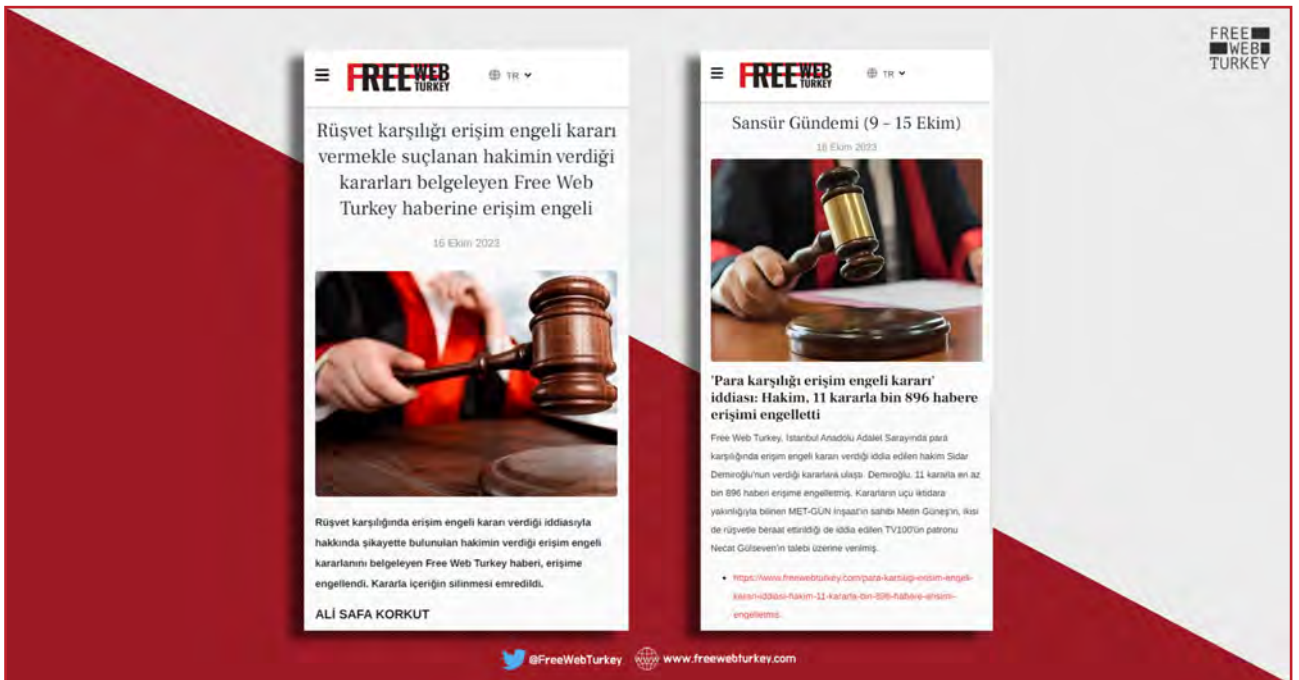




Uçar focused his allegations on Bekir Altun, the head of the Anatolian Justice Commission, and Sidar Demiroğlu, the Anatolian 4th Criminal Judge of Peace.

In response, Free Web Turkey Project Coordinator and journalist Ali Safa Korkut accessed the decisions signed by Sidar Demiroğlu, the judge at the Istanbul Anatolian Palace of Justice who allegedly issued access blocking decisions in exchange for money, and reported this on October 13, 2023 with the headline **“Access blocking decision for money’ allegation: Judge blocked access to 1,896 news with 11 decisions”**.

Korkut’s related news article was blocked from access by the Istanbul 5th Criminal Judgeship of Peace on **October 16, 2023 upon the request of Bekir Altun**, the name at the center of the allegations.



We also reported the blocking of access to the related news with the headline **“Access block on Free Web Turkey news documenting the decisions of the judge accused of issuing access blocking orders in exchange for bribes”**.

On October 19, 2023, Bekir Altun, the head of the Anatolian Justice Commission, applied to the Istanbul 4th Criminal Judge of Peace and obtained an access blocking order for this news article and for Sansür Gündemi (October 9-15), published on October 16, 2023.

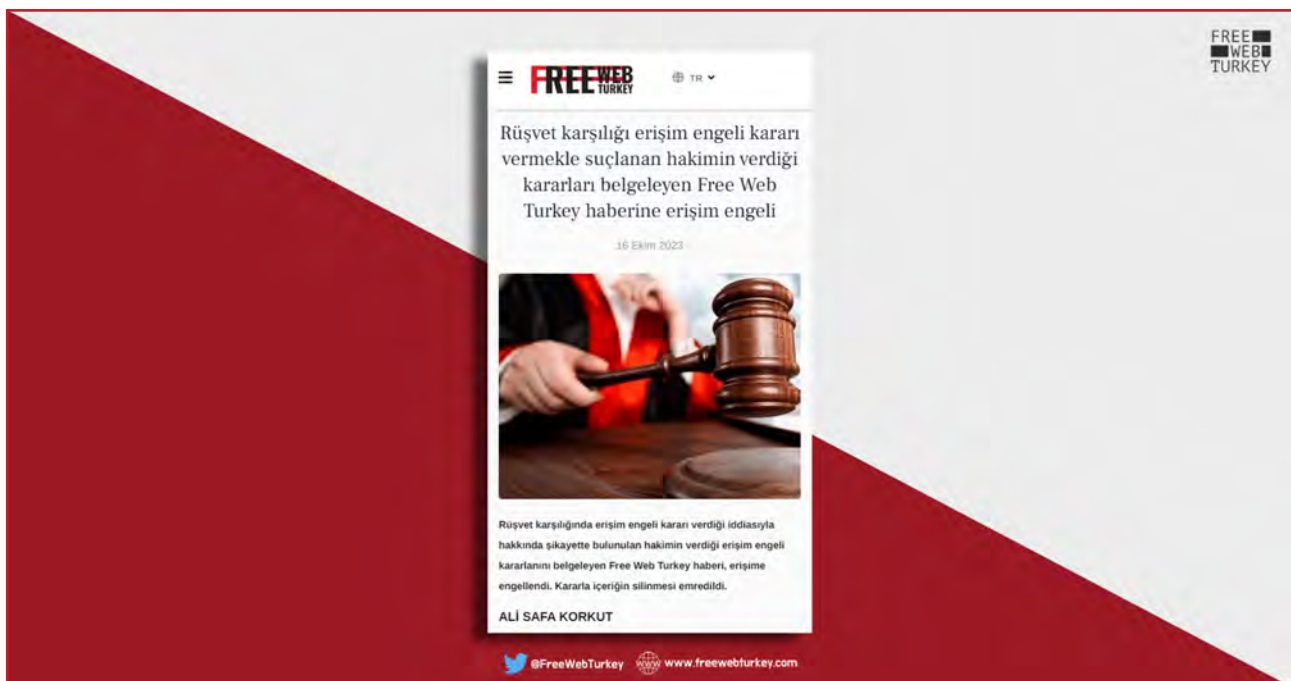
Bekir Altun’s decision to block access to related news articles was not limited to this.

Altun had access blocking orders issued for 162 more news reports on the allegations, including that the chief prosecutor’s office had launched an investigation into the allegations, that the Istanbul Bar Association had objected to the access blocking orders issued for news reports on the allegations, and that news reports on Kılıçdaroğlu’s statement on the allegations had been blocked.

With the decision of the Istanbul 3rd Criminal Judgeship of Peace dated **November 1, 2023**, Free Web Turkey’s news article titled **“Access ban on Free Web Turkey news documenting the decisions of the judge accused of issuing access ban decisions in exchange for bribes”** was once again* banned from access.

*The news was already blocked by the Istanbul 4th Criminal Judgeship of Peace on October 19, 2023, again upon Altun’s request.

Free Web Turkey also blocked access to a news article about **Aysun Bay Karabulut**, the former rector of Malatya Turgut Özal University (MTU).





Published on September 12, 2023, with the signature of Ali Safa Korkut, the news article titled **“Former rector took an eraser to the news: He blocked all news about the corruption and irregularity allegations against him”** was blocked from access upon Karabulut’s request with the decision of Malatya 1st Criminal Judicature of Peace dated **November 10, 2023**.

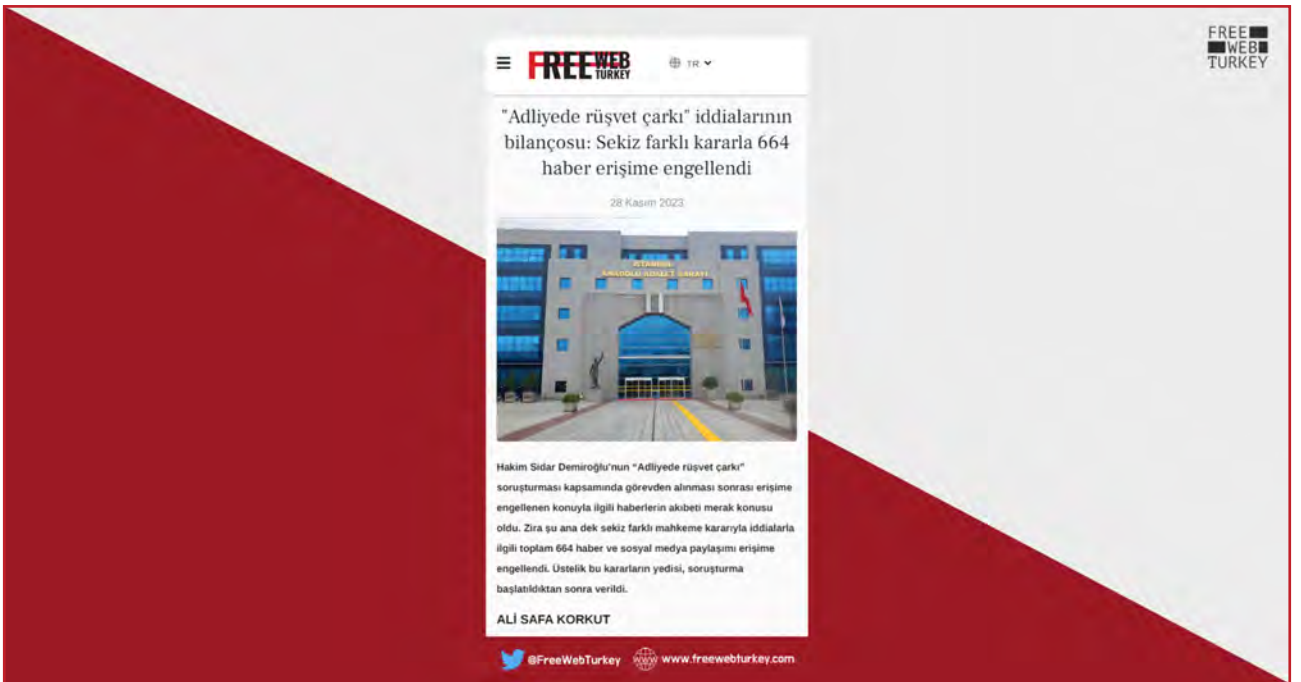
According to the news report, Karabulut had three different decisions to block access to a total of 91 news articles that pointed to allegations of corruption and irregularities against him.

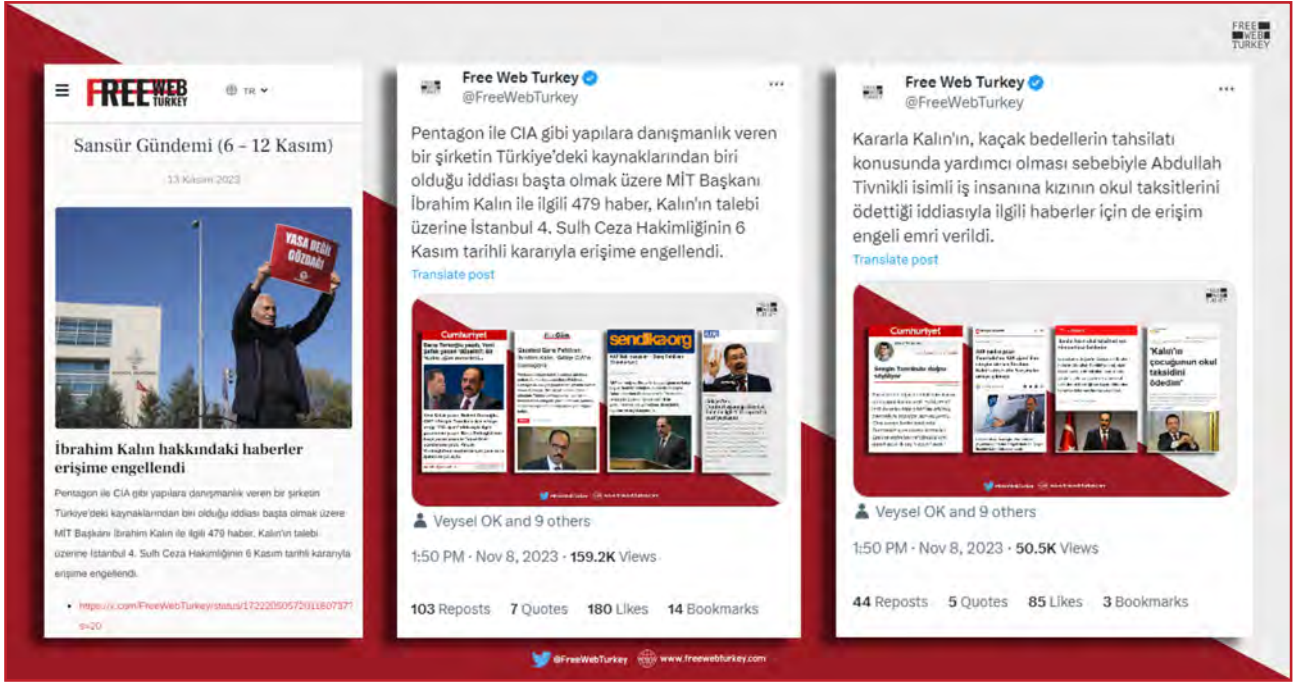




Two weeks after his last access blocking order for Free Web Turkey (November 1, 2023), **Bekir Altun** issued another one.

Altun, who agreed with an online reputation company to remove the news about him being accused of “making transactions in exchange for bribes” from the internet, had an access blocking order issued for this news after this situation was also reported in the press, and the tweet of Free Web Turkey, which reported this, was blocked from access by the Istanbul 4th Criminal Judgeship of Peace on **November 15, 2023**.





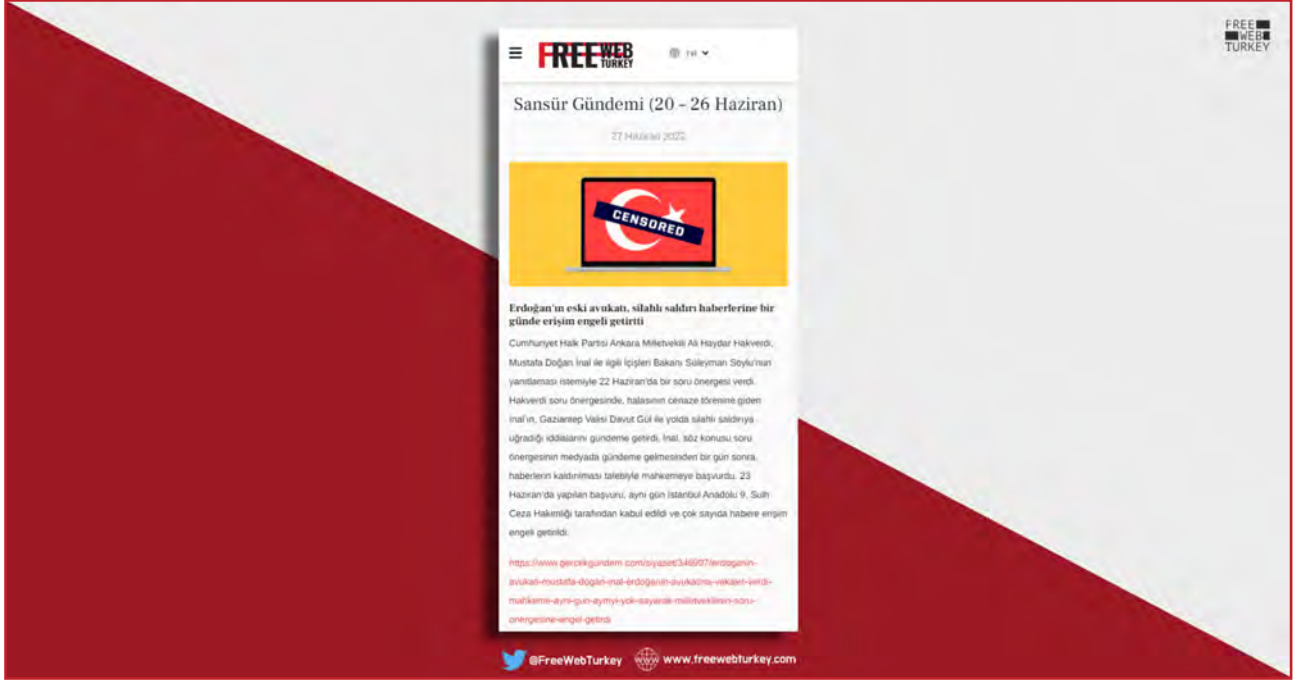
Censür Gündemi (September 20-26), reported that news reports on **former Under-secretary of the Ministry of Health Eyyüp Gümüş** receiving a “healthy” report for his father diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease and transferring his father’s house to his own name, were blocked from access on September 2023, 2021, was also blocked from access upon Gümüş’s request by the Istanbul 10th Criminal Judgeship of Peace on **November 21, 2023**.

On November 23, 2023, Istanbul Anatolian 4th Criminal Judge of Peace Sidar Demiroğlu, who allegedly issued an access blocking order in exchange for bribes while the controversy over the allegations of a “bribery ring in the courthouse” continued, was dismissed.

Upon this, Ali Safa Korkut published a news article titled “**The balance sheet of the allegations of a bribery ring in the courthouse: 664 news articles blocked from access with eight different decisions**”, Ali Safa Korkut’s news article was blocked from access with the decision of Istanbul 6th Criminal Judgeship of Peace dated **December 4, 2023**, following Altun’s request.

Free Web Turkey’s posts announcing the blocking of news about the alleged bribery of İbrahim Kalın, the head of the National Intelligence Organization (MIT), and his alleged role as one of the sources in Turkey for a company that provides consultancy services to the Pentagon and the CIA, were also blocked upon Kalın’s request.

With the decision dated **December 21, 2023**, Istanbul 5th Criminal Judicature of Peace banned access to Sansür Gündemi (twice with the same decision) and two Free Web Turkey tweets.



Another Free Web Turkey news item that was blocked was the Censorship Agenda (June 20-26), which included an access ban order for news about President Erdoğan's former lawyer **Mustafa Doğan İnal**.

The December 22, 2023 decision was issued by the Istanbul 3rd Criminal Judgeship of Peace upon İnal's request.

Crimes against women and children

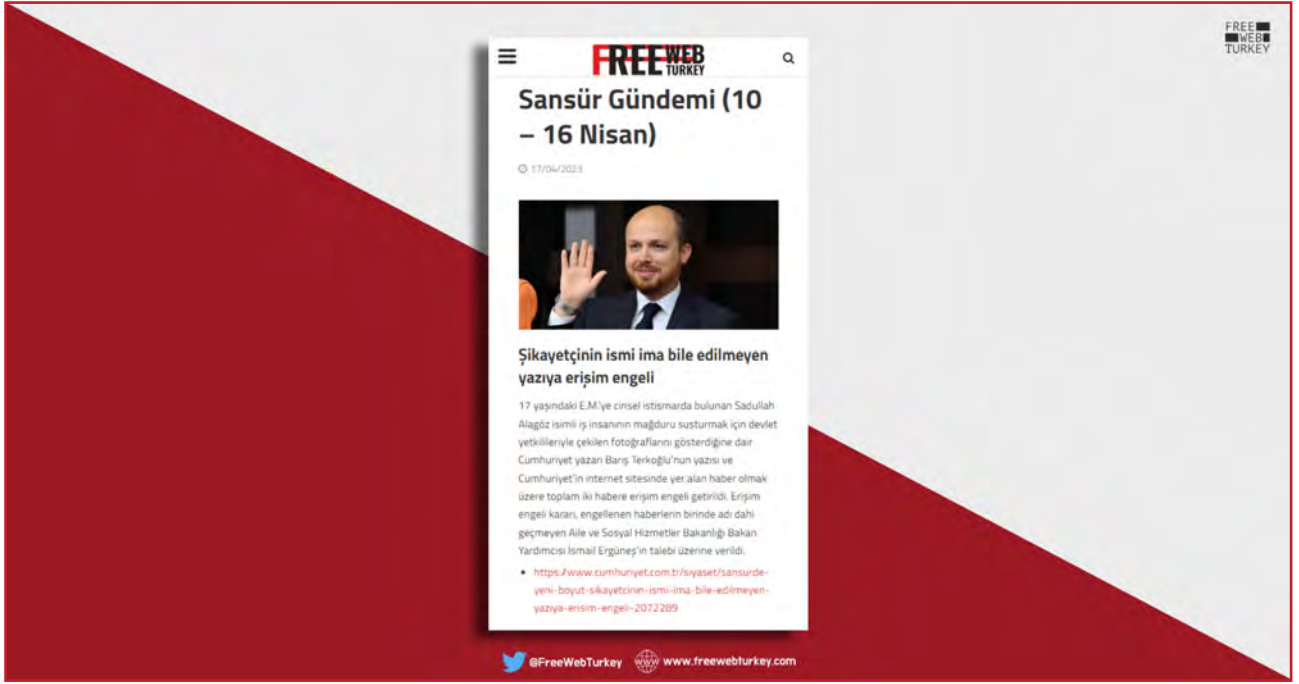
In 2023, the number of Free Web Turkey posts about **crimes against women and children** that were blocked from access was 11.

This number was reached through five different court decisions, all of which were issued upon the request of public officials allegedly accused of **crimes against women and children**.

The first of these decisions was issued on April 20, 2023, at the request of businessman **Sadullah Alagöz**.

News reports and tweets about Derya Yanık, the Minister of Family and Social Services, hosting Alagöz, a businessman accused of sexually abusing a 17-year-old child, at the ministry while the investigation was ongoing, and her deputy İsmail Ergüneş visiting Alagöz at the scene of the abuse, also while the investigation was ongoing, were blocked from access.

Upon the request of the Ministry of Family and Social Services, the Ankara 5th Criminal Judicature of Peace issued a decision on **April 20, 2023**, blocking access

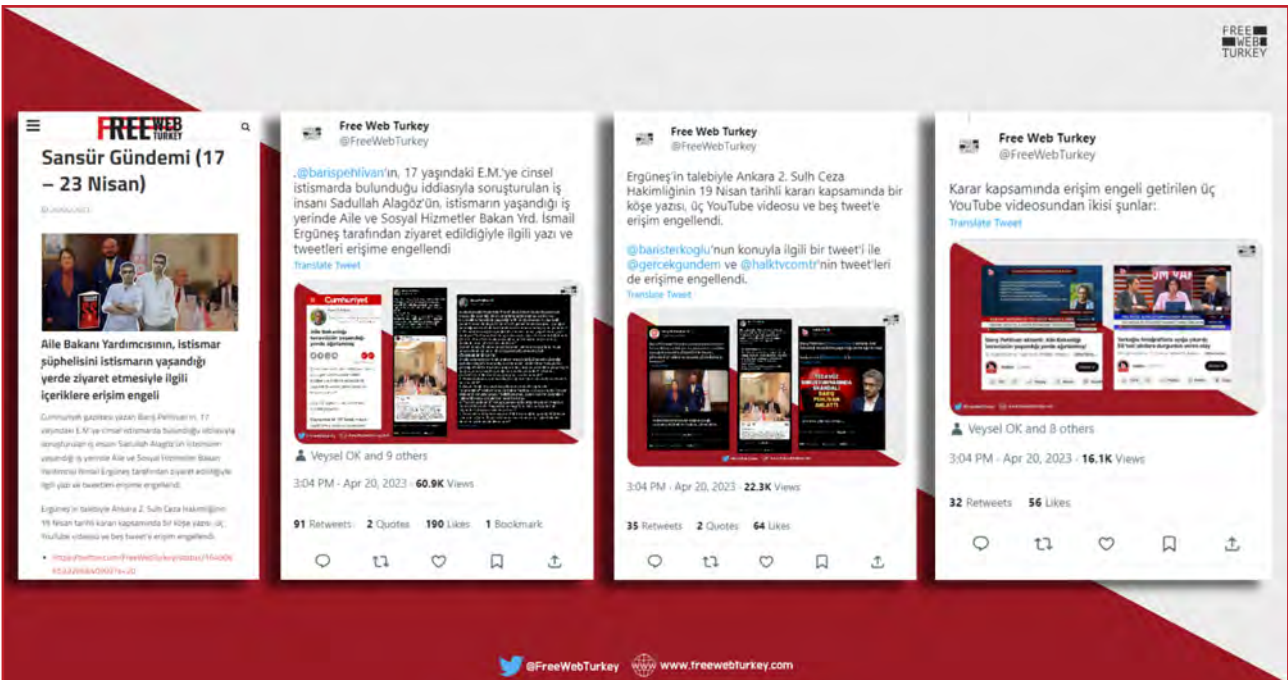


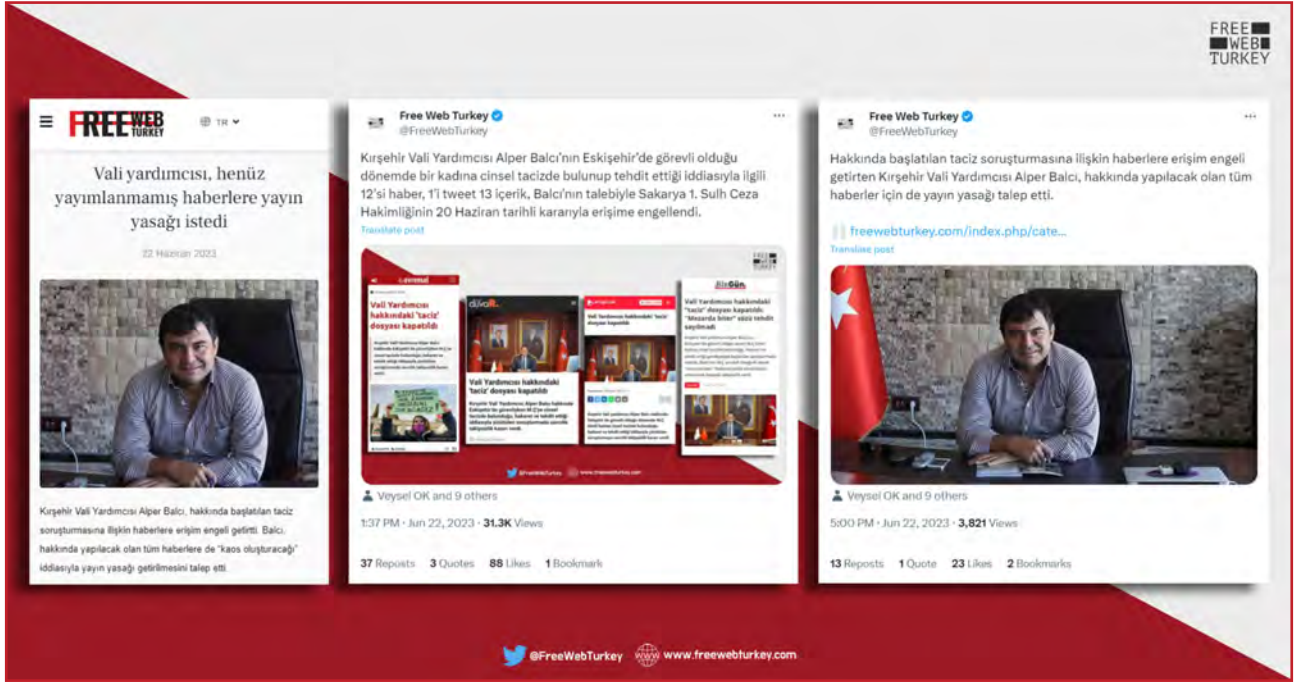
to the Sansür Gündemi (April 10-16), which Free Web Turkey had published on the access ban decision.

The access blocking decision was then announced on Free Web Turkey's Twitter account and included in the censorship agenda, which shared censorship cases that took place between April 17 and 23, 2023.

However, upon the **request** of Deputy Minister İsmail Ergüneş, three tweets on the related censorship agenda were blocked from access by the Ankara 2nd Criminal Judgeship of Peace on **May 10, 2023**.

On June 20, 2023, Kırşehir Deputy Governor **Alper Balcı** blocked access to three





Free Web Turkey posts, one of which was a news article about the investigation launched against him for allegedly sexually harassing a woman.

The decision dated **July 26, 2023** was issued by Sakarya 2nd Criminal Judgeship of Peace.

The news article titled “Access to the allegations that İŞKUR Provincial Director had sexual intercourse with the promise of a job blocked: Access to 422 contents blocked” and the tweet in which the news article was shared were also blocked from access upon Güven’s request with the decision of Elazığ 2nd Criminal Judgeship of Peace dated **September 7, 2023**.





Free Web Turkey news about Kırşehir Deputy Governor **Alper** Balcı blocking access to news about a sexual harassment investigation against him was also blocked upon Balcı's request.

On November 30, 2023, Sakarya 2nd Criminal Judicature of Peace issued an access ban on the news article published on July 27 with the signature of Ali Safa Korkut.

Agenda

Among the issues on the agenda in 2023, the number of blocked Free Web Turkey news was five, and this number was reached with two decisions. Both decisions were made upon the request of the same person.

Free Web Turkey's tweet stating that Twitter has started country-based content blocking for Turkish media outlets was blocked on the request of a citizen named Samet Kurt, whose name was not even mentioned in the tweet and the news article linked in the tweet.

The decision dated **June 14, 2023** was issued by Samsun 3rd Criminal Judgeship of Peace.

It was subsequently reported on Free Web Turkey on June 20, 2023, that the tweet in question had been blocked.

However, this news item, along with the tweet containing the news and the URLs of the Turkish and English pages of the "Haberler" category on Free Web Turkey's



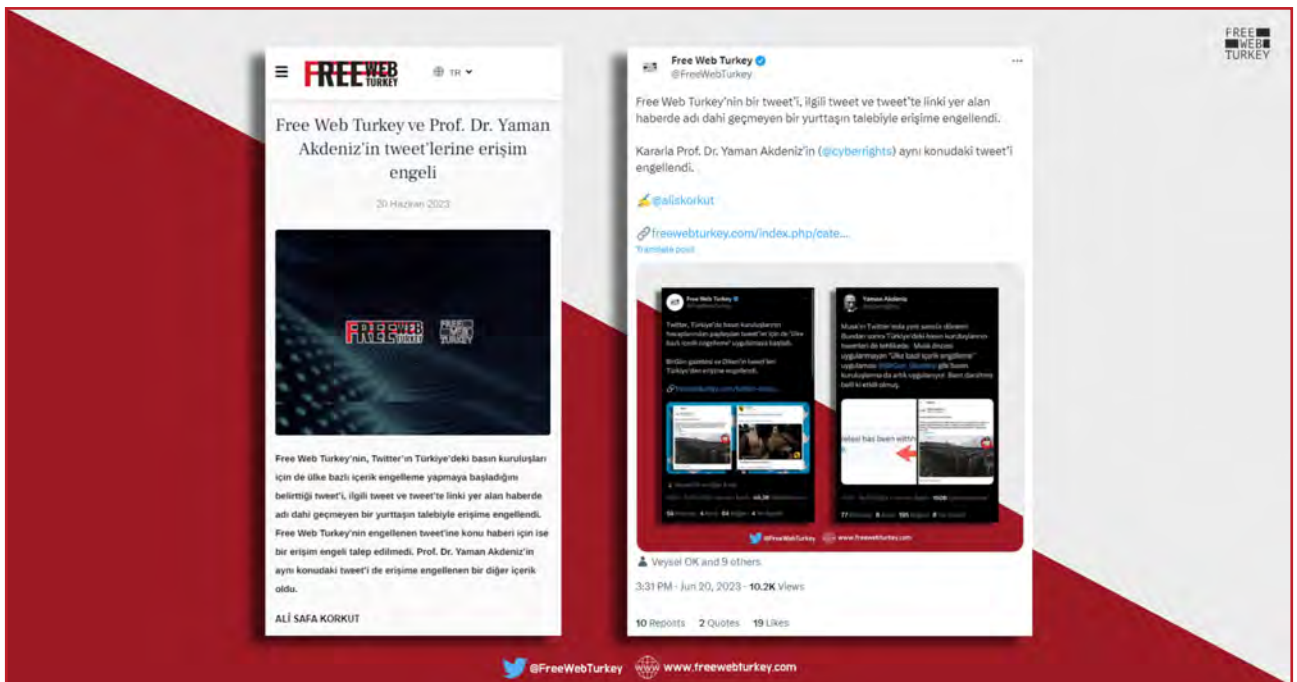
website, were also blocked upon Kurt's request.

This decision dated **August 25, 2023**, was also issued by Samsun 3rd Criminal Judgeship of Peace.

Murder

Two news articles of Free Web Turkey in this category were blocked by two different decisions.

A Free Web Turkey tweet announcing the blocking of 63 news articles about a mur-

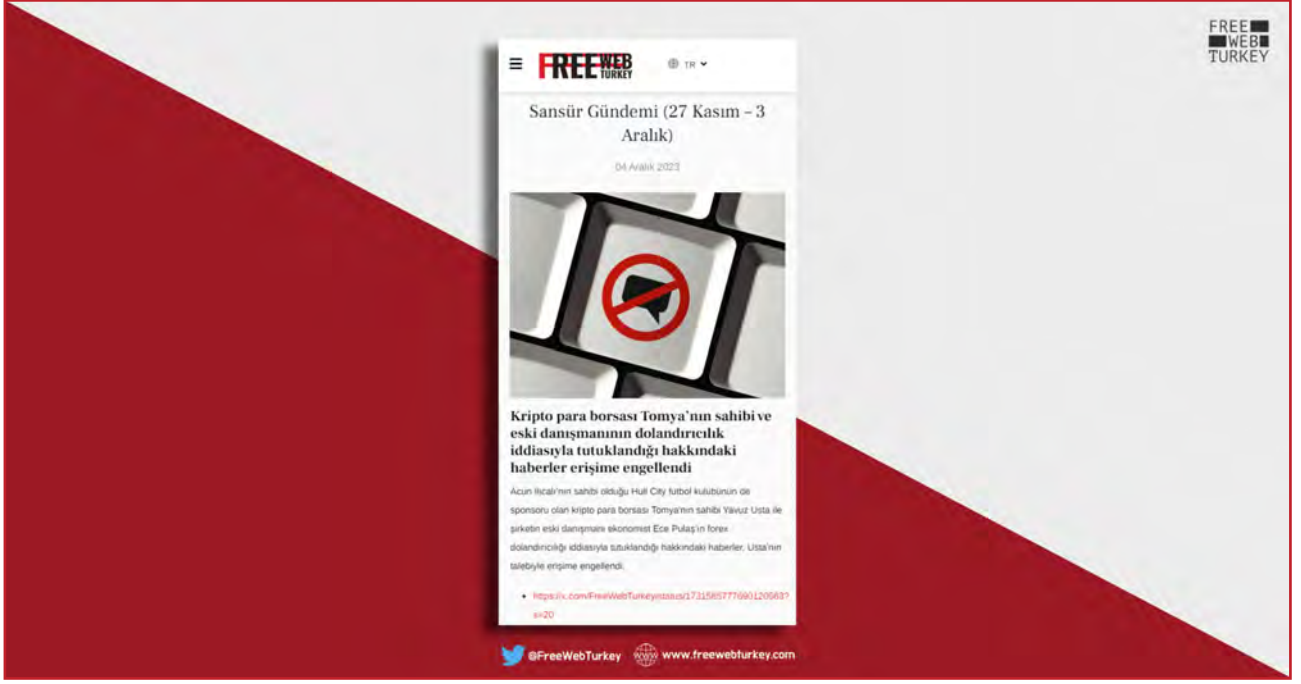




der committed at a table where Ankara Haymana District Governor **Muhammed Gürbüz** was present was blocked from access by the Haymana Criminal Judgeship of Peace on **June 22, 2023** upon Gürbüz's request.

The news article by Ali Safa Korkut about President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's children, **Bilal and Burak Erdoğan**, obtaining three different access blocking orders from the Istanbul Anatolian 10th Criminal Judicature of Peace on July 20, 2023, was blocked from access by the Istanbul Anatolian 9th Criminal Judicature of Peace on **December 29, 2023**, upon Bilal Erdoğan's application.

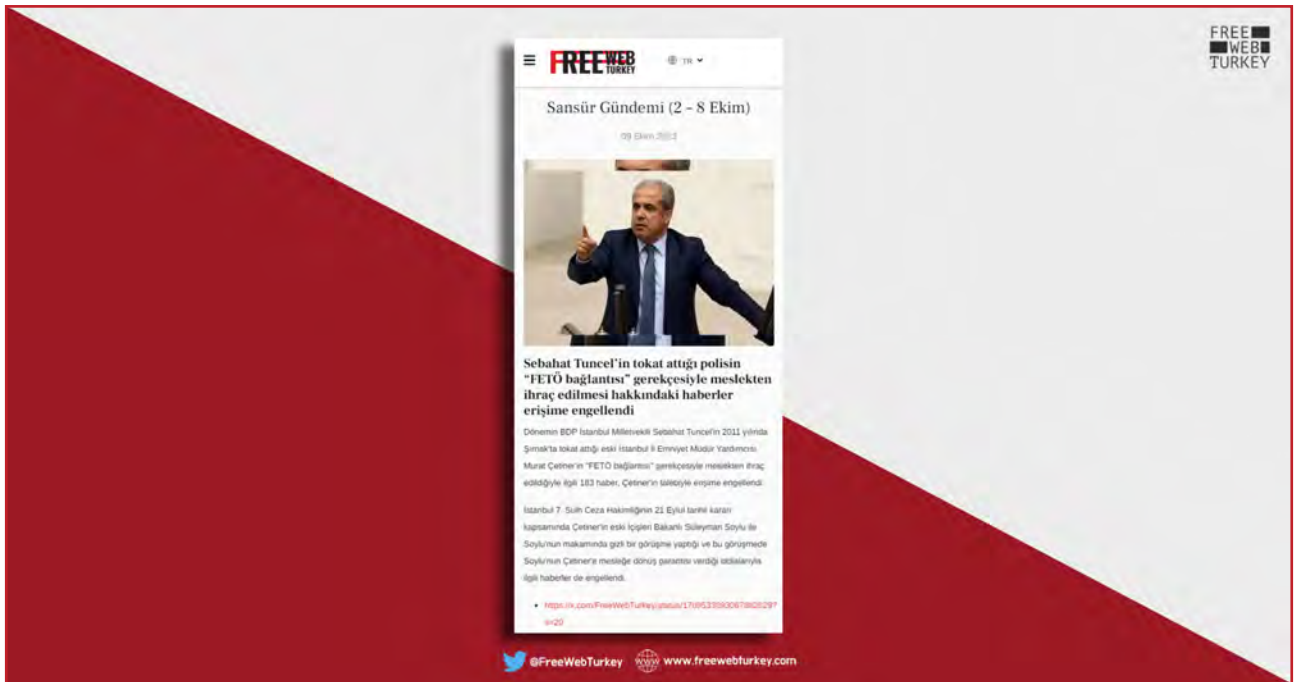


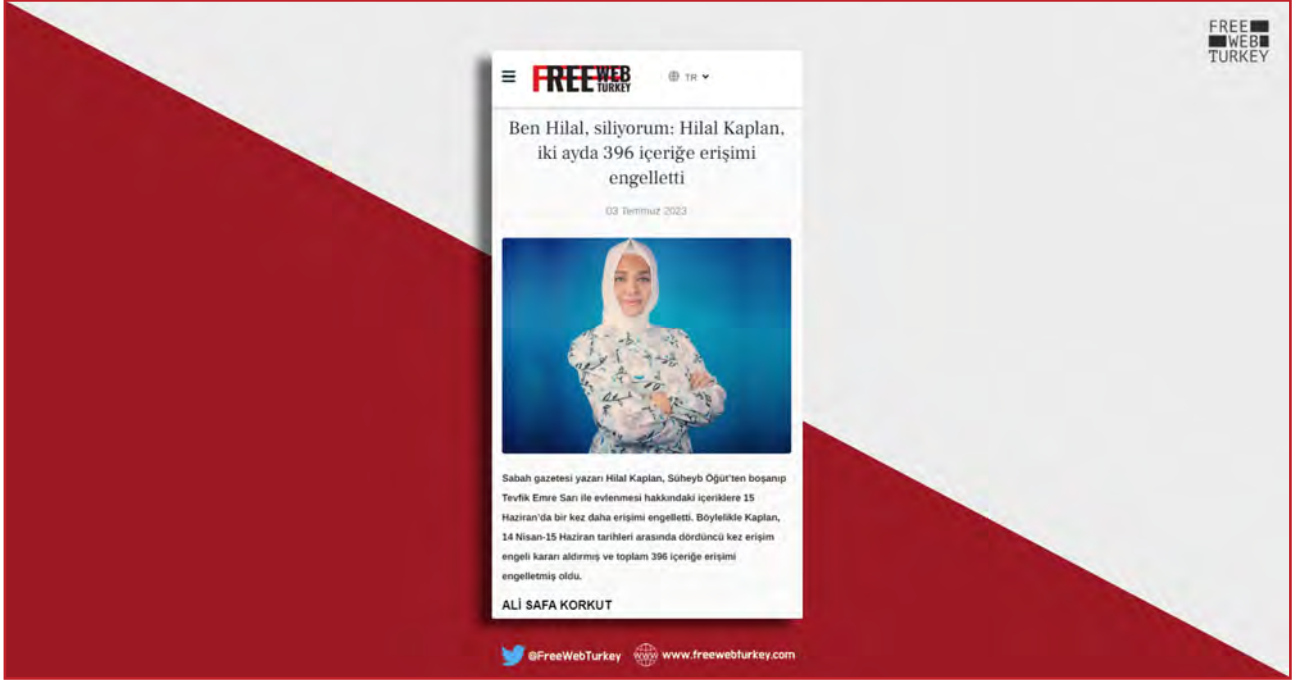


Fraud

There were two blocked posts of Free Web Turkey in this category.

Censür Gündemi (November 27-December 3), which reported that news about the arrest of **Yavuz Usta**, the owner of the cryptocurrency exchange Tomya, and the company's former consultant for alleged fraud, was blocked from access with two decisions dated **December 22 and 26, 2023**, issued upon Usta's request.





Organizational crimes

Censorship Agenda (October 2 - 8), which included 183 news articles on the dismissal of former Istanbul Deputy Provincial Police Chief **Murat Çetiner** due to “FETÖ connections”, and a tweet, was blocked from access by the Istanbul 7th Criminal Judgeship of Peace on **December 5, 2023** upon Çetiner’s request.

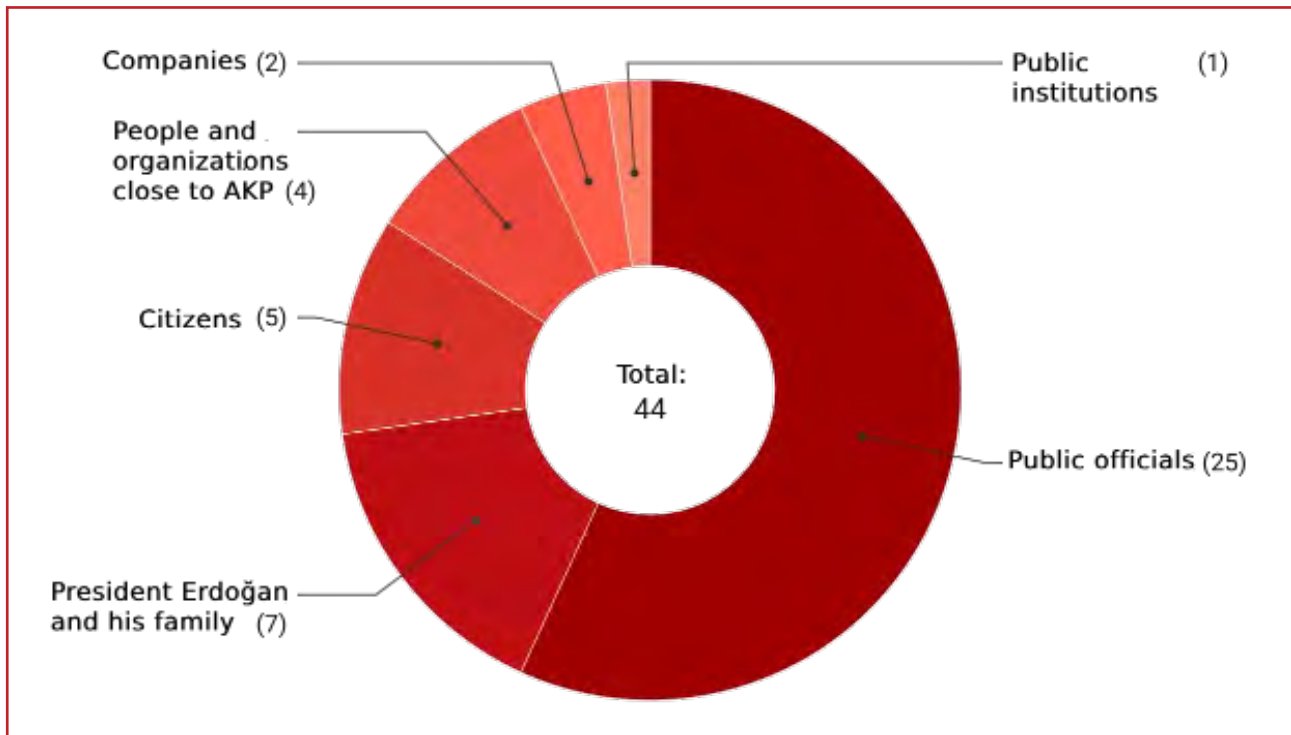
Magazine

There were two blocked posts of Free Web Turkey in this category.

The tweet announcing that the news about Sabah Newspaper writer **Hilal Kaplan**’s divorce from Süheyb Öğüt and her marriage to Tevfik Emre Sarı was blocked from access was blocked from access by the Istanbul Anatolian 10th Criminal Judgeship of Peace on **June 15, 2023**, upon the request of Kaplan and Sarı.

The news article titled “**I Hilal, I delete: Hilal Kaplan blocked access to 396 content in two months**”, published on July 3, 2023, by Ali Safa Korkut, was also blocked from access upon Hilal Kaplan’s request by the Istanbul Anadolu 10th Criminal Judgeship of Peace on **October 24, 2023**.

Subjects of blocked news



When the subjects of Free Web Turkey's 44 blocked posts were ranked, public officials ranked first.

The 25 blocked posts were about **public officials**, followed by **President Erdoğan and his family** (7), **citizens** (5), **people and organizations close to AKP** (4), **companies** (2) and **public institutions** (1).

All of these decisions were based on **violations of personal rights**.

PROMINENT ACCESS BLOCKING DECISIONS

Bribery at the courthouse

Published on October 13, 2023, in BirGün Newspaper with Timur Soykan's signature, the news article titled "**Chief Prosecutor's cry of bribery: We are rotting**", created an earthquake effect both in the judiciary and in public opinion.

In a news article that remained on the agenda for a long time, Istanbul Anatolian Chief Public Prosecutor İsmail Uçar was said to have sent a letter to the Council of Judges and Prosecutors, revealing the bribery ring in the courthouse.



According to the report, Uçar revealed in his article how drug traffickers, illegal bookmakers and thieves who extorted millions of Turkish Liras were released and stated that decisions to block access to news articles were made in exchange for money.

In the letter sent by Chief Prosecutor Uçar to the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors, he stated, “It has been heard that behind closed doors, through collegial conversations, decisions to block access to criminal judgements of peace were made in exchange for money in the Istanbul Anatolian Courthouse, and irregular evictions were made.”

Uçar focused his allegations on Bekir Altun, the head of the Anatolian Justice Commission, and Sidar Demiroğlu, the Anatolian 4th Criminal Judge of Peace.

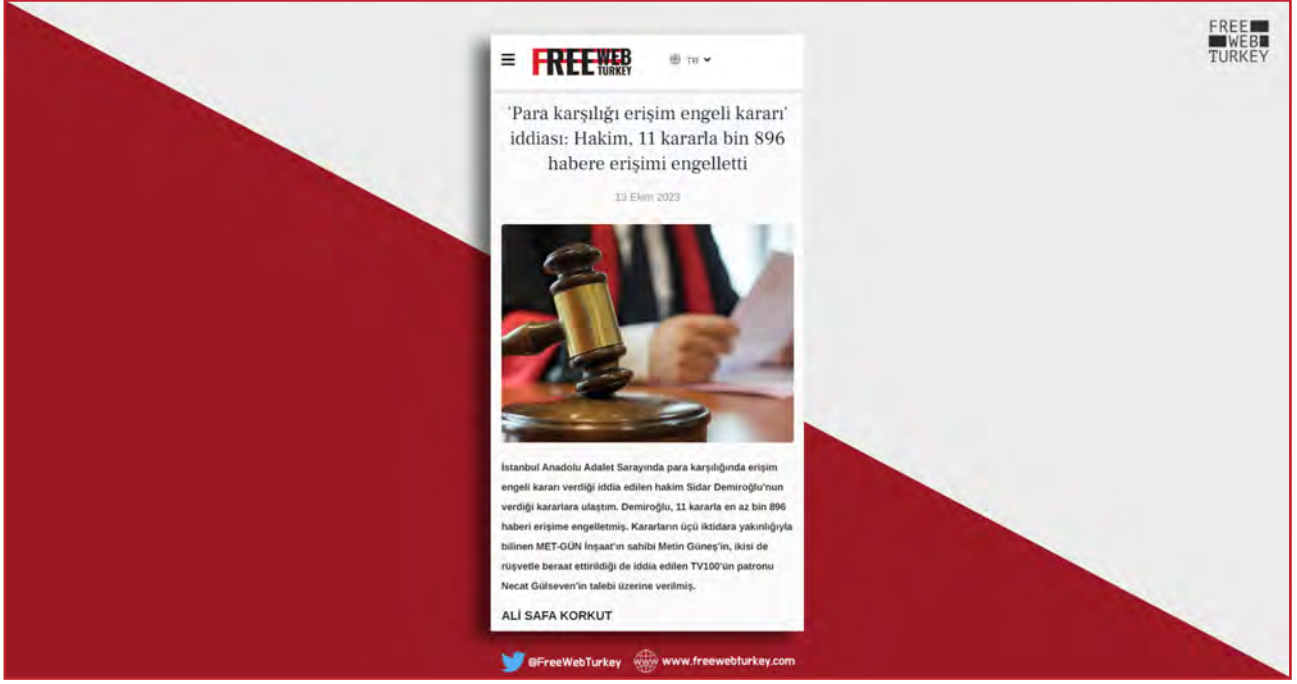
The allegations, which continue to be discussed even today and about which Minister of Justice Yılmaz Tunç made statements, were subject to **10 different access blocking decisions**.

First decision: Soykan's news was blocked on the same day

The first decision on the issue was made on October 13, 2023, the same day Soykan's article was published.

77 news articles, including “Chief prosecutor's cry of bribery: We are rotting”, 77 news articles on the subject were blocked by the Istanbul 1st Criminal Judicature of Peace.

Second ruling Free Web Turkey's news article ordered to be deleted



Following Soykan's report, Free Web Turkey Project Coordinator and journalist Ali Safa Korkut accessed and reported on the decisions of Sidar Demiroğlu, a judge at the Istanbul Anatolian Palace of Justice who allegedly issued access blocking orders in exchange for money.

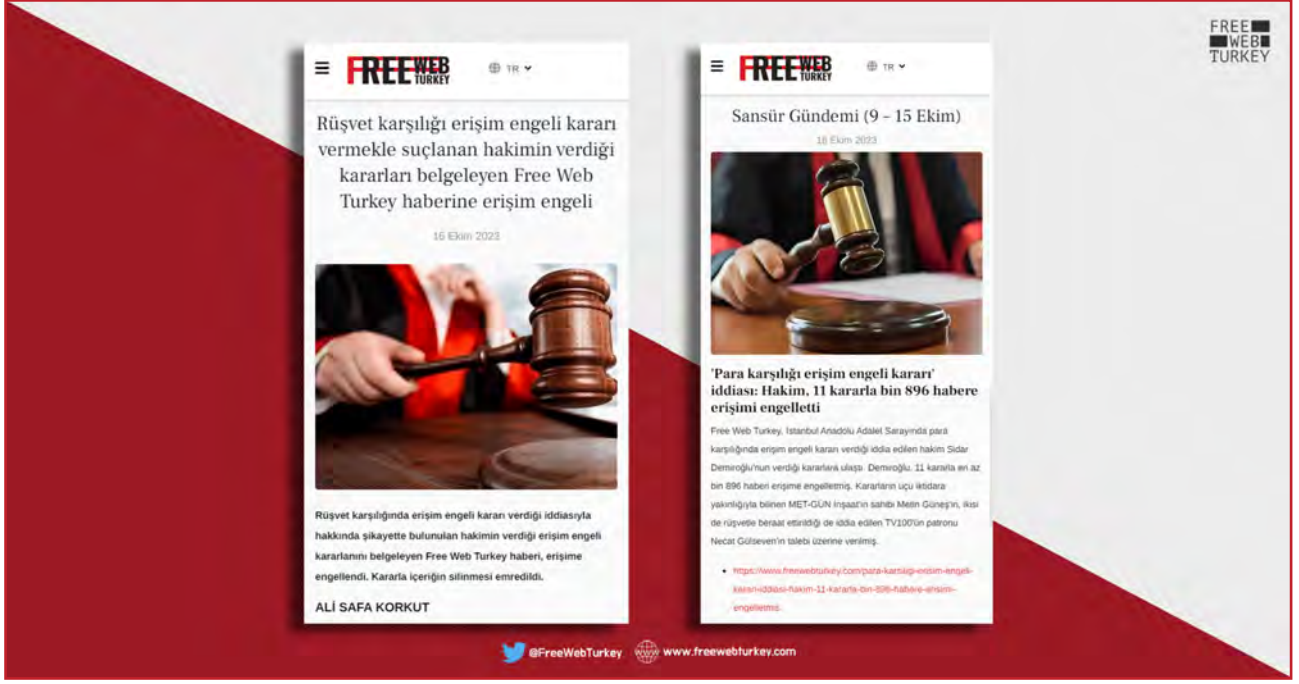
On October 13, 2023, the news article titled **“Allegation of ‘access blocking decision for money’: Judge blocked access to 1,896 news articles with 11 different decisions”**, it was stated that Demiroğlu blocked access to a total of 896 news articles with 11 different decisions.

Three days after Soykan's article (October 16, 2023), Minister of Justice Yılmaz Tunç announced that an investigation had been launched into allegations of a bribery ring at the courthouse. However, despite this, between then and December 31, 2023, nine more access blocking/removal/exclusion orders were issued for news articles related to the allegations.

In fact, the second decision was made on October 16, 2023, the day Tunç made this statement.

With this decision, a total of 59 content was ordered to be deleted, including Free Web Turkey news, which documented all the decisions made by Istanbul Anadolu 4th Criminal Judge of Peace Demiroğlu, who allegedly issued access blocking orders in exchange for bribes. The decision was issued by the Istanbul 5th Criminal Judgeship of Peace.

Third decision Blocking of Free Web Turkey news announcing the blocking of Free Web Turkey news



The third decision was made three days later, on October 19, 2023.

The Istanbul 4th Criminal Judgeship of Peace ordered the removal and deletion of a total of 171 content, including the news announcing the blocking of access to Free Web Turkey news, which documented the access blocking orders issued by the judge who allegedly issued access blocking orders in exchange for bribes, and Free Web Turkey's censorship bulletin.

Fourth decision: This time it was not Altun but his reputation company that blocked access

The first three decisions were made at the request of Bekir Altun, the Chairman of the Istanbul Anatolian Justice Commission, who was named in the petition filed by Istanbul Anatolian Chief Public Prosecutor İsmail Uçar. The fourth decision was issued on October 26, 2023 at the request of a company named “CS Digital Bureau Services”.

After the third access blocking order, Altun started working with the online reputation company “Clean Sheet” to have the damaging news about him removed.

This was reported in the press and CS Digital Bureau Services obtained the first access blocking order on Altun's behalf. With the decision issued by the Istanbul 5th Criminal Judicature of Peace, 22 more news articles about Altun's work with the company Clean Sheet were blocked.

Fifth decision: Access blocking order for a news story that was already blocked

The fifth decision was also made upon Altun's request.

On November 1, 2023, Istanbul 3rd Criminal Judgeship of Peace blocked access to 162 more news articles on the allegations, including the launch of an investigation by the chief prosecutor's office, the Istanbul Bar Association's objection to the access blocking orders issued for the news reports on the allegations, and the blocking of news reports on Kılıçdaroğlu's statement on the allegations.

Sixth decision: Second access blocking order issued on the same day

Altun obtained a second access blocking order on November 1, 2023, for the related posts.

With the decision, access to 95 news articles related to the allegations, mostly social media posts, was blocked.

Seventh decision: Tolga Şardan detained, access to his news article banned

In his article titled “**What's in the ‘judicial report’ submitted by MIT to the Presidency?**” published on October 31, 2023, T24 columnist Tolga Şardan stated that MIT had also launched a special investigation into the allegations raised by Soykan.

The day after the article, Şardan was first detained and then arrested on charges of “publicly disseminating misleading information”.

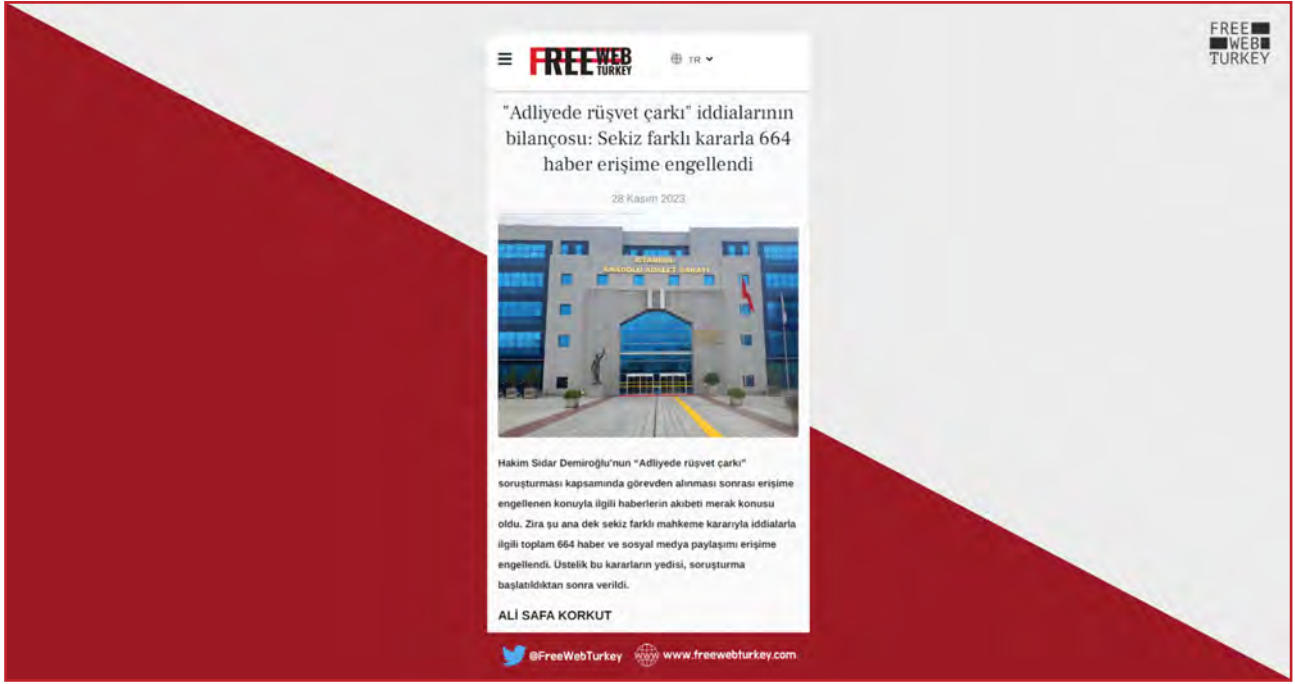
Upon these developments, Şardan's article was also blocked from access upon the request of the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office with the decision of the Istanbul 1st Criminal Judgeship of Peace dated November 2, 2023. Şardan was released on November 6, 2023.

Eighth decision Engellendiğini duyuran haberlerin engellendiğini duyuran haberlerin engellendiğini duyuran haberler...

The eighth decision on the allegations of a “bribery ring in the courthouse” was issued on November 15, 2023, again upon Altun's request.

İstanbul 4. Sulh Ceza Hakimliği tarafından verilen kararla konuyla ilgili haberlerin daha önce engellendiğini, konuyla ilgili haberlerin daha önce engellendiğini duyuran haberlerin engellendiğini, konuyla ilgili haberlerin daha önce engellendiğini duyuran haberlerin engellendiğini duyuran haberlerin engellendiğini duyuran haberlerin de silinmelerine hükmedildi.

Ninth decision: The news item reporting how many news items on the topic were blocked was also blocked



Eight days after the eighth decision, on November 23, 2023, Sidar Demiroğlu was temporarily suspended for allegedly issuing access-blocking orders in exchange for bribes.⁴⁹

Following this development, Ali Safa Korkut revealed the **balance sheet of the allegations of a “bribery ring in the courthouse”**: Access to 664 news articles blocked with eight different decisions”, Ali Safa Korkut revealed the balance sheet of the news articles that were blocked.

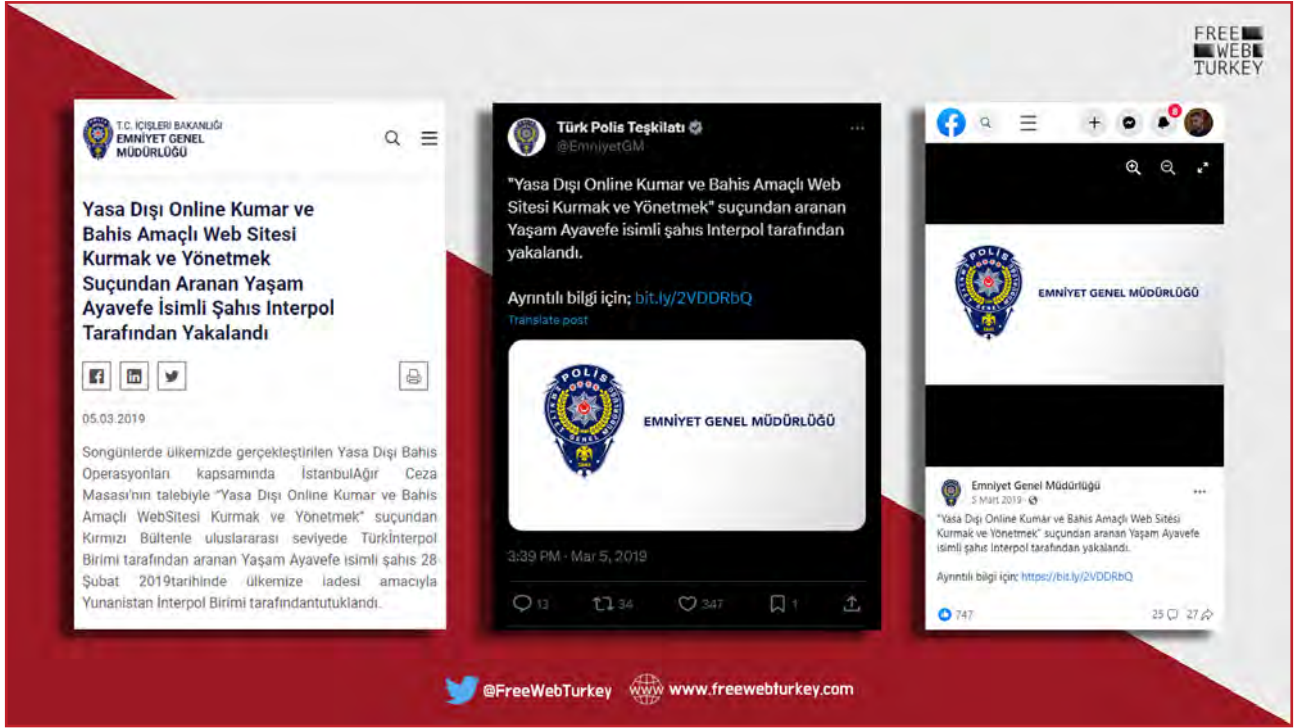
The news article, dated November 28, 2023, sheds light on how many access-blocking decisions were issued for news articles related to the allegations and how many were blocked due to these decisions.

Then, Bekir Altun once again appeared on the scene and blocked access to the relevant news article with an order dated December 4, 2023, obtained from the Istanbul 6th Criminal Judge of Peace.

Latest decision: Access ban on news about Altun’s appointment as Istanbul High Criminal Court President

As part of the tenth and final decision - issued in 2023 - news about the investigation into the “bribery ring in the courthouse” and news that mentioned the name of Istanbul Justice Commission Chairman Bekir Altun was blocked from access upon Altun’s request.

⁴⁹ “Judge Sidar Demiroğlu suspended over bribery allegations”, Evrensel, 23.11.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20231204094752/https://www.evrensel.net/haber/504181/rusvet-iddialariyla-anilan-hakim-sidar-demiroglu-aciga-alindi>



With the decision of Istanbul's 5th Criminal Judgeship of Peace dated December 29, 2023, news reports on the reassignment of 506 judges and prosecutors and Altun's appointment as the Presiding Judge of Istanbul High Criminal Court were also among those blocked from access.

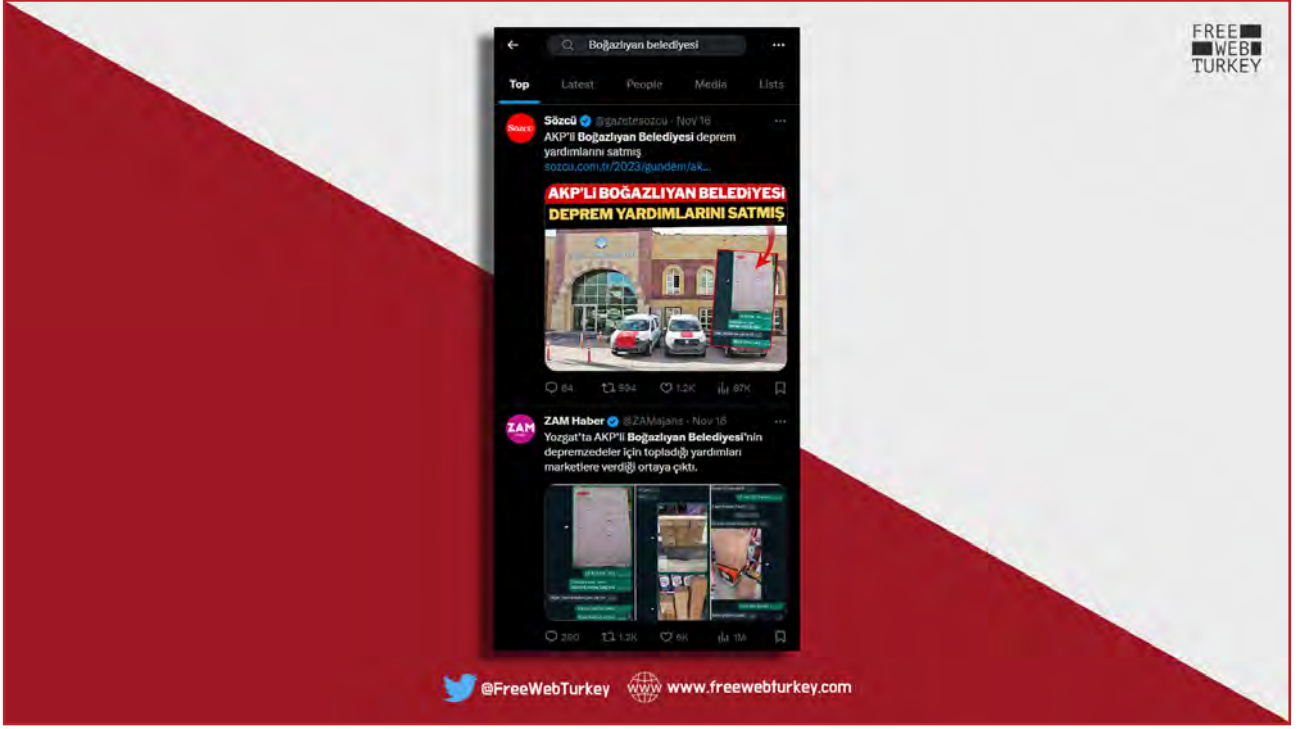
With 10 different access blocking orders issued for the news claiming "Bribery wheel in the courthouse", the number of blocked news articles reached 741.

Turkey issued a red notice against him and blocked the EGM

Yaşam Ayavefe, for whom Turkish Interpol has issued a red notice, has blocked news reports on the Turkish National Police's website and social media accounts, including posts about his arrest.⁵⁰

On April 25, Ayavefe blocked 50 news articles about the allegations against him with an order from Ankara 7th Criminal Judge of Peace, on July 4, he blocked 64 news articles with an order from Bakırköy 3rd Criminal Judge of Peace, and on August 17, he again blocked 87 news articles with an order from Bakırköy 3rd Criminal Judge of Peace.

⁵⁰ Ali Safa Korkut, "The man Turkey issued a red notice against blocked access to EGM: He offered to advertise in the newspaper for the news he could not remove", Free Web Turkey, 13.09.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240131095323/https://www.freewebturkey.com/tuerk-interpolue-nuen-hakinda-kirmizi-bueltlen-cikardigi-sahis-egmyi-erisime-engelletti-kaldirtamadigi-haberler-icin-gazeteye-reklam-teklif-etti>



Bogazlıyan Municipality banned searches about it on the internet

After the February 6 earthquakes, Yozgat Boğazlıyan Municipality allegedly sold the aid collected for earthquake victims to grocery stores in the district in exchange for distributing aid on behalf of the AKP during the elections; the municipality obtained an access ban order for searches on Twitter using the phrases “Boğazlıyan Municipality” and “Boğazlıyan municipality earthquake aid”.⁵¹

The November 17, 2023, decision was issued by the Boğazlıyan Criminal Judgeship of Peace.

Red Crescent President Kerem Kınık blocks access to tweets about him

Kerem Kınık, then head of the Red Crescent, who was found to have sold tents and food supplies in the earthquake zone, blocked access to eight tweets about him.⁵²

The decision dated March 16, 2023, was issued by the Ankara 7th Criminal Judgeship of Peace.

51 Ali Safa Korkut, “Boğazlıyan Municipality banned searches about it on the Internet”, Free Web Turkey, 29.11.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240418144940/https://www.freewebturkey.com/bogazliyan-belediyesi-internette-hakinda-arama-yapilmasini-yasaklatti>

52 Ali Safa Korkut, “Kızılay President Kerem Kınık blocked access to tweets about him”, Free Web Turkey, 13.04.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20230420132814/https://www.freewebturkey.com/kizilay-baskani-kerem-kinik-hakindaki-tweetlere-erisimi-engelledi>



@FreeWebTurkey www.freewebturkey.com

Access ban on news reports about the Minister of Family Affairs hosting a businessman suspected of abuse at the ministry

News reports and tweets about İsmail Ergüneş, an aide to Derya Yanık, Minister of Family and Social Services, visiting Sadullah Alagöz, a businessman accused of sexually abusing a child, at the scene of the abuse while the investigation was ongoing, were blocked from access upon the request of the ministry.⁵³

Among the news articles blocked by the Ankara 5th Criminal Judgeship of Peace on April 20 were the news about the photo of Minister Yanık's meeting with Alagöz at the ministry and Free Web Turkey's April 10-16 Censorship Agenda.

District governor blocks the news about his convoy being stopped by a herd and fines a shepherd

The news reports on⁵⁴ about Erzurum Karayazı District Governor and trustee Mayor Muammer Sarıdoğan fining sheep shepherd Reis Karataş, who got in the way of his convoy, were banned from access with the decision of Karayazı Criminal Judicature of Peace on September 6.⁵⁵

53 Ali Safa Korkut, "Access ban on news reports about the Minister of Family hosting the abuse suspect businessman at the ministry", Free Web Turkey, 24.04.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20230602121429/https://www.freewebturkey.com/aile-bakaninin-istismar-suphelisi-is-insa-nini-bakanlikta-agirlamasıyla-ilgili-haberlere-erisim-engeli/>

54 Emrullah Bayrak, "District governor fines shepherd for herd in front of his convoy: 'AKP-type form of governance'", Artı Gerçek, 17.08.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20231023013657/https://artigercek.com/guncel/konvoyunun-onune-suru-cikan-kaymakam-cobana-ceza-kesti-akp-ti-pi-yonetme-bicimi-262048h>

55 Free Web Turkey, Twitter, 23.10.2023, <https://twitter.com/FreeWebTurkey/status/1716437248109932772>



Turgay Ciner blocks access to Susurluk Report

Businessman Turgay Ciner, Habertürk's owner, has obtained an access blocking order for the Susurluk Report written by Kutlu Savaş and published on Wikipedia.⁵⁶

The December 18 decision was issued by the Istanbul 7th Criminal Judgeship of Peace, and Ciner's name was mentioned in the section of the report that included accusations of drug trafficking.

You will no longer receive news from Çankırı: Access to news about Çankırı blocked

Çankırı July 15 Martyrs Anatolian High School Principal Abdullah Cengiz forced a 17-year-old female student to change her clothes in the office room where there is a security camera, claiming that her clothes were old. The student had a nervous breakdown when she realized the camera. Cengiz blocked access to the "Çankırı Gündemi" page of Sözcü18 newspaper after the issue became news.⁵⁷

The June 15 ruling was issued by the Çankırı Criminal Judgeship of Peace.

⁵⁶ Ali Safa Korkut, "Turgay Ciner blocked the Susurluk Report", Free Web Turkey, 20.12.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240407032933/https://www.freewebturkey.com/turgay-ciner-susurluk-raporunu-erisime-engelletti>

⁵⁷ Ali Safa Korkut, "You will no longer be able to get news from Çankırı: Access to news about Çankırı has been blocked", Free Web Turkey, 19.06.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20230623001257/https://www.freewebturkey.com/index.php/categories/newsberg/haberler/artik-cankiri-dan-haber-alamayacaksiniz-cankiriyila-ilgili-haberlere-erisim-engellendi>



24-hour Instagram story blocked

Lawyer Feyza Altun's Instagram story in which she announced that her tweet about BirGün newspaper writer Timur Soykan's column titled "Wreckage of Conscience" about Ezgi Apartment, which collapsed in the February 6 earthquake in Kahramanmaraş, was blocked, was blocked.⁵⁸

Deputy minister denies he wrote an article to get it taken down

Deputy Minister of Health Dr. Şuayip Birinci applied to Google with a court order to have his article revealing that Covid-19 was hidden from the public for a month removed from Google Scholar.

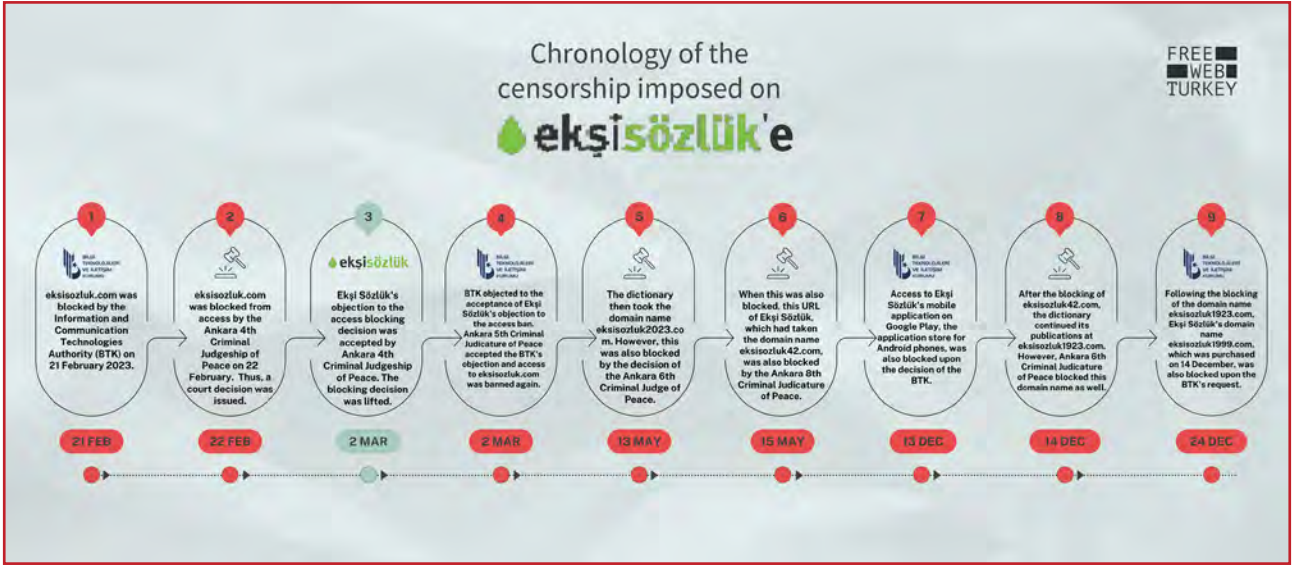
In his application,⁵⁹ Birinci denied the article he co-authored, stating that "my name was put in the article without my permission", and on June 2, 2023, Ankara 2nd Criminal Judge of Peace blocked his article from access.

Istanbul Anatolian 10th Criminal Judgeship of Peace tried the Erdoğan brothers

On July 24, 2023, Ali Safa Korkut reported on July 24, 2023, that brothers Bilal and

⁵⁸ Ali Safa Korkut, "This happened too: 24-hour Instagram story blocked", Free Web Turkey, 09.08.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240428165101/https://www.freewebturkey.com/index.php/categories/newsberg/haberler/bu-da-oldu-24-saatlik-instagram-storysi-erisime-engellendi>

⁵⁹ Ali Safa Korkut, "Deputy minister surprised: He denied the article he wrote to get it taken down", Free Web Turkey, 27.10.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240221140657/https://www.freewebturkey.com/bakan-yardimcisi-sasirdi-yayimdan-kaldirilmasi-icin-kendi-yazdigi-makale-yi-yanladi>



Burak Erdoğan obtained three different access blocking orders from the Istanbul Anatolian 10th Criminal Judge of Peace on July 20, 2023.

The news article in question was also blocked from access upon the request of Burak Erdoğan with the decision of Istanbul Anatolian 9th Criminal Judgeship of Peace dated December 29, 2023.

Ekşi Sözlük censorship

Ekşi Sözlük, one of Turkey's most popular participatory dictionaries, was among the platforms whose domain name was blocked in 2023.

Ekşi Sözlük, whose main domain name ekisozluk.com was blocked on February 21, 2023, by the decision of the Information and Communication Technologies Authority (BTK), switched to the domain names ekisozluk2023.com, ekisozluk42.com, ekisozluk1923.com and ekisozluk1999.com respectively.

However, each time the microblog switched to a new domain name because the previous domain name was blocked, access to all domain names was blocked. Together with the main domain, a total of five different domains of the microblog were blocked.

FEBRUARY 6 EARTHQUAKE AND GOVERNMENT CENSORSHIP

Government officials did not neglect to censor even the two major earthquakes centered in Kahramanmaraş and Gaziantep on February 6, 2023.

On the morning of the⁶⁰ earthquake, in which 53,537 people lost their lives according to official figures, many people who were trapped under the rubble were asking for help with posts on their social media accounts via their cell phones, sharing their location in the form of an open address in these posts and waiting to be rescued.

People who did not live in the cities affected by the earthquake, but who had relatives in the earthquake zone, took to social media when they did not hear from them and posted the location of their relatives and asked for help. While many people trapped under the rubble were rescued in this way, and this method quickly caught on among those under the rubble, those who were in the area to rescue them, and those who were not in the area but spread related posts on their social media accounts requesting help, access to Twitter and TikTok was restricted.

The restriction imposed on this platform, which has been so useful in reaching people under the rubble thanks to citizens, caused a crisis in that environment of devastation.

While no one understood why, here is what happened that day in chronological order:

MLSA filed a criminal complaint against GSM operators and ICTA officials

On February 10, 2023, Lawyer Veysel Ok, Co-Director of the Media and Law Studies Association, filed a criminal complaint against GSM operators, whose services were disrupted in the regions affected by the earthquakes on February 6, 2023, and the Information and Communication Technologies Authority (BTK) officials who restricted access to social media.⁶¹

MLSA to Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office: Investigate why the DroneCell ad was deleted from everywhere

On February 15, 2023, MLSA lawyers submitted an additional statement to the prosecutor's office within the scope of the criminal complaint filed on February 10, 2023. The lawyers demanded an investigation into why the advertisement about DroneCell, which Turkcell advertised by saying that it could be used in times of disaster, was deleted from everywhere, and demanded that the witnesses they presented be heard and control measures be applied against the suspects to be identified.⁶²

60 "Minister Yerlikaya: We lost 53,537 lives in earthquakes", NTV, 02.02.2024, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240202080528/https://www.ntv.com.tr/turkiye/bakan-yerlikaya-depremlerde-53-bin-537-canimizi-kaybettik,g4ChtXUWkeWoxJm7M2p3g>

61 "Criminal complaint against GSM operators and BTK officials", Medya ve Hukuk Çalışmaları Derneği, <https://web.archive.org/web/20230314215636/https://www.mlsaturkey.com/tr/gsm-operatorleri-ve-btk-yetkilileri-hakkinda-suc-duyurusu/>

62 "To Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office: It should be investigated why the DroneCell ad was deleted from everywhere", Free Web Turkey, 15.02.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20230315092342/https://www.freewebturkey.com/istanbul-bassavciligina-dronecell-reklaminin-neden-her-yerden-silindigi-arastirilmali>

6 FEBRUARY EARTHQUAKE AND GOVERNMENT CENSORSHIP

8 February

16.29

As of 16.06, access to Twitter and TikTok was blocked. Data from international internet watchdogs such as NetBlocks confirmed this. The platform could only be accessed via VPN.

8 February

17.47

Cüneyt Özdemir: "I was informed by the Presidential Communications Office that the BTK had imposed the restriction based on the provisions of Law No. 5651 on the Regulation of Publications on the Internet and Combating Crimes Committed through These Publications."

8 February

23.27

Eksi Sözlük said, "We have noticed that there are problems in accessing the Dictionary, our teams are working to understand the cause and find a solution. Thank you for your understanding."

9 February

01.51

Deputy Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Ömer Fatih Sayan made a statement and said that they held a meeting with Twitter officials. Sayan stated that they reminded Twitter executives of their obligations regarding disinformation.

9 February

01.53

Approximately two minutes after Sayan's statement, the problem on Twitter was fixed and the platform returned to normal.

9 February

02.00

The access restriction imposed on Twitter in Turkey has ended.

9 February

19.00

The Alternative Informatics Association applied to the ICTA and the Constitutional Court to stop the band throttling applied to various social media platforms after the earthquake and to prevent it from being applied again.

10 February

10.00

MISA

Media and Law Studies Association Co-Director Lawyer Veyisel Ok filed a criminal complaint against GSM operators and BTK officials for "abuse of office", "obstruction of communication", "intentional killing committed by negligent behaviour" and "conscious negligent injury".

10 February

14.00

The Republican People's Party filed a criminal complaint against the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, the Information and Communication Technologies Authority and the Presidential Communications Directorate for 'obstruction of communication', 'obstruction of the right to benefit from public services' and 'abuse of office'.

OBSTACLE TO NEWS, JOURNALIST IN HANDCUFFS

In 2023, not only news but also journalists were made inaccessible simply because of their reporting.

So much so that first, the journalist was detained - because of his news - and then his news, which was used as a justification for his detention and arrest, was blocked.

T24 journalist Tolga Şardan and journalist Furkan Karabay, who was working for Gerçek Gündem then, were two journalists who experienced this situation.

Tolga Şardan

BirGün columnist Timur Soykan's article "The bribery wheel in the courthouse", published on October 13, 2023, describing the rot in the judiciary, remained on the agenda of both the public and the Ministry of Justice for a long time.

Because every day there have been new developments regarding the allegations. Journalists who went into the matter shed light on the allegations and what happened afterwards. One of these journalists was Tolga Şardan.

On October 31, 2023, Şardan wrote an article titled "What is in the 'judicial report' submitted by MİT to the Presidency?". "The Presidency has asked MİT to investigate members of the judiciary," the article reads, adding that MİT has launched a special investigation into the matter.

In response, the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office launched an ex officio investigation because the article "contained words and statements that would constitute the elements of the crime of publicly disseminating misleading information" and Şardan was detained at his home on November 1, 2023, one day after the article was published.⁶³

Şardan was arrested on November 2, 2023, by Istanbul's 1st Criminal Judgeship of Peace on charges of "publicly disseminating misleading information" under the Disinformation Law (217/A) of the Turkish Penal Code (TCK).⁶⁴

63 "Journalist Tolga Şardan detained", Dünya Newspaper, 01.11.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20231102020946/https://www.dunya.com/gundem/gazeteci-tolga-sardan-gozaltina-alindi-haberi-709627>

64 "Journalist Tolga Şardan, who wrote MİT's 'judicial report', arrested", Euronews, 02.11.2023, <https://tr.euronews.com/2023/11/02/mitin-yargi-raporunu-yazan-gazeteci-tolda-sardan-tutuklandi>



The news article “What’s in the ‘judicial report’ submitted by MİT to the Presidency?”, which was used as a justification for Şardan’s arrest, was also blocked from access by the Istanbul 1st Criminal Judicature of Peace upon the request of the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor’s Office on the same day Şardan was arrested.⁶⁵

Şardan was released on November 6, 2023.

Furkan Karabay

Journalist Furkan Karabay also experienced what Şardan went through.

On December 27, 2023, with the signature of Furkan Karabay, Gerçek Gündem published an article titled “Bribery fight in the Mafia case is in the minutes: ‘The police took it from wherever they left it, if I talk about it, the bazaar will get involved’” was published.

In the news article, Karabay reported on the trial of Barış Saral from the Sarallar group and the accusations against a prosecutor.

Karabay was detained on December 28, 2023, one day after the news was published, at the police station in Istanbul where he had gone to receive a notification.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ T.C. Istanbul 1st Criminal Judgeship of Peace, D. İş. No: 2023/8230, 02.11.2023

⁶⁶ BirGün, “Journalist Furkan Karabay detained”, 28.12.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240119205640/https://www.birgun.net/haber/gazeteci-furkan-karabay-gozaltina-alindi-494191>

Here, Karabay was charged with “targeting a person who took part in the fight against terrorism” and “slander” for writing the name of the trial prosecutor in a news article based on the minutes of the hearing, which was not confidential.

As the repercussions of Karabay’s detention continue, the Istanbul 7th Criminal Judgeship of Peace also blocked access to the news article on December 28.⁶⁷

Karabay, who was referred to Istanbul 7th Criminal Judgeship of Peace, was arrested one day later, on December 29, 2023, and sent to prison.⁶⁸

Karabay was released on January 8, 2024.⁶⁹

NEWS AND WEBSITES WRONGLY BLOCKED

In 2023, news articles and websites that had nothing to do with those who requested access and whose names were not even mentioned were blocked by mistake. The most striking example is that Metin Kıratlı, the Presidential Chief of Administrative Affairs, wanted to block news about the “torpil” allegations against him. However he also had a news article about the decline in Netflix’s subscriber numbers blocked. However, the examples are not limited to this.⁷⁰

Presidential Chief of Staff blocks news on Netflix’s subscriber numbers

Presidential Chief of Administrative Affairs Metin Kıratlı applied to Ankara 3rd Criminal Judgeship of Peace and obtained an order dated January 11, 2023, blocking access to 28 news articles about himself, his wife, daughter, son, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, son-in-law, relative and Fettah Tamince, alleging various kinds of torpil and irregularities.

However, among these news that were blocked upon Kıratlı’s request, there was a news item that was not related to her and her family and did not even mention her name in the news text: “Netflix announced: For the first time in 10 years, the number of subscribers fell”

67 T.C. Istanbul 7th Criminal Judgeship of Peace, D. İş. No: 2023/10955, 28.12.2023

68 “Journalist Furkan Karabay arrested”, NTV, 29.12.2023, https://web.archive.org/web/20231229155433/https://www.ntv.com.tr/turkiye/gazete-ci-furkan-karabay-tutuklandi,EufszRfYTk-_wK3463VKoA

69 “Journalist Furkan Karabay tahliyeildi”, BBC Türkçe, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240125132045/https://www.bbc.com/turkce/articles/cy-r31pzexpno>

70 Ali Safa Korkut, “Lawyer was careless, judge missed it: News and websites blocked by mistake”, Free Web Turkey, 12.01.2024, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240119092428/https://www.freewebturkey.com/cumhurbaskanligi-idari-isler-danismani-istedi-hakim-kabul-etti-netflix-in-abo-ne-sayisiyla-ilgili-habere-erisim-engeli>



İŞKUR director accused of sexual abuse wants Indonesia-based news website blocked, judge agrees

Ağrı İŞKUR Provincial Director Gıyas Güven, who was dismissed over allegations that he had sexual intercourse with women by tricking them with the promise of finding a job, blocked 422 URLs on the subject with a decision taken from Elazığ 1st Criminal Judge of Peace.

Among the URLs blocked by Güven with the decision dated June 22, 2023 was the website of OperatorKita, an Indonesia-based technology journalism website.

He blocked an illegal betting site while trying to block news about the demolition of his buildings

On March 14, 2023, Silahtaroglu İnşaat, the company that built the Tarsus-Adana-Gaziantep Highway, which was ruptured in the February 6, 2022 earthquakes, blocked access to news that it also built the AFAD building that was damaged in the storm in Ankara in August 2022.

In the decision issued by the Istanbul Anatolia 4th Criminal Judgeship of Peace, among the blocked URLs was a URL directing to the advertisement of the illegal betting site called Bettilt.

Strangely, these erroneous URLs, which were added to the access blocking petitions by the lawyers of the petitioners, were unknowingly blocked by the relevant judges. This raises the question: “Don’t judges check the content for which access is blocked?”

<https://youcontrol.com.ua/en/catalog/gb-card/13450681/>

<https://www.onlinefilings.co.uk/company/profile/13450681-legion-bell-ltd/>

<https://qcg.sodaclean.pl/266f25b062>

<https://shpielrattzen.de/3zl7kj2g/>

WHAT DID MLSA & FREE WEB TURKEY DO AGAINST CENSORSHIP IN 2023?

The Media and Law Studies Association (MLSA) also objected to the access blocking orders issued in 2023 for Free Web Turkey news and other publishers and their content.

In this context, the MLSA Legal Unit filed 15 different appeals.

MLSA & Free Web Turkey also tried to raise international awareness against censorship in the country.

These included taking the blocking decisions to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) and notifying the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

One of MLSA's awareness-raising efforts is a submission to the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers about Turkey's use of wholesale domain name blocking to silence opposition websites and Kurdish media.

MLSA and Free Web Turkey notify the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers against internet censorship in Turkey

MLSA and Free Web Turkey filed a 9.2. notice on the Ahmet Yıldırım group of cases to be discussed by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, which is responsible for the implementing judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).⁷¹

⁷¹ "MLSA and Free Web Turkey notify the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers against internet censorship in Turkey", Free Web Turkey,

The notice emphasized that Turkey is using wholesale blocking of domain names to silence opposition websites and Kurdish media.

In the Ahmet Yıldırım Group cases, instead of blocking URLs or content, domain names are blocked wholesale, violating freedoms of expression and freedom of information.

9.2. What is the notification?

While countries that are parties to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) commit to implementing the judgments of the ECtHR, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe oversees the implementation of the judgments. The process known as Rule 9.2. the notification also allows civil society organizations and national human rights institutions and organizations to be involved in this process by submitting their views.

Turkey's response to MLSA and Free Web Turkey: 'Ekşi Sözlük is publishing under a new domain name, therefore there is no block on access'

The Permanent Representation of Turkey to the Council of Europe has responded to Communication 9.2 from MLSA and Free Web Turkey to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on internet censorship in Turkey in the context of the Ahmet Yıldırım group cases.⁷²

In a defense specific to Ekşi Sözlük, Turkey said that the microblog was blocked on the grounds that some posts made during the February 6 earthquakes "could negatively affect search and rescue activities and relief efforts."

However, Turkey stated that despite the blocking of eksisozluk.com, Ekşi Sözlük continues to publish under the domain name eksisozluk1923.com, meaning that it is still accessible and therefore there is no obstacle to accessing the dictionary.

Council of Europe's decision on Turkey: 'Share all information on access blocks to websites'

At a meeting of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers' deputy ministers tasked with implementing ECtHR judgments, the case of the Ahmet Yıldırım group, to which the MLSA also reported on internet bans, was discussed.

29.10.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240118182128/https://www.freewebturkey.com/mlsa-ve-free-web-turkey-turkiyedeki-internet-sansurune-karsi-avrupa-konseyi-bakanlar-komitesine-bildirimde-bulundu>

72 Ali Safa Korkut, "Turkey's response to MLSA and Free Web Turkey: 'Ekşi Sözlük is publishing under a new domain name, so there is no obstacle to access'", 08.11.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20231222235703/https://www.freewebturkey.com/turkiye-den-mlsa-ya-yanit-eksi-soz-luk-yeni-bir-alan-adiyla-yayim-yapiyor-bu-nedenle-erisiminde-bir-engel-yok>

The committee requested information from Turkey about the blocked domain names, reminding that the case concerns the violation of the right to freedom of expression.⁷³

The Committee requested that the Turkish authorities provide statistical and detailed information on all access-blocking decisions taken in the last three years for domain names based on Article 8 of Law No. 5651.⁷⁴

National and international objections to access blocking decisions

The MLSA Legal Unit first challenged the 15 access blocking orders before the relevant judgeships, and when they rejected them, before the Constitutional Court (AYM). When they failed to get a result, they took the case to the ECHR.

Blocking access to a tweet by Podcast Kurdî

The tweet sharing the program Îro Çî Bû (What Happened Today?) by Kurdish podcast Podcast Kurdî was blocked from access by the Ankara 4th Criminal Judicature of Peace on February 22.

The MLSA has appealed this decision.

ECHR application on the blocking of Pirha's website

Pir News Agency's (PIRHA) website pirha.net was blocked from access by the decision of Hatay 1st Criminal Judgeship of Peace dated March 8, 2022, and numbered 2022/1028.

When the appeals to the Hatay 1st Criminal Judgeship of Peace and the Constitutional Court were rejected, MLSA took the case to the ECHR on March 20, 2023.

Free Web Turkey - News Agency - Family Minister hosts businessman suspected of abuse at the ministry

News reports and tweets about Deputy Minister of Family and Social Services İsmail Ergüneş's visit to Sadullah Alagöz, a businessman accused of child abuse, at the scene of the abuse while the investigation was ongoing were blocked from access upon the request of the ministry.

73 "H46-39 Ahmet Yıldırım group v. Turkey (Application No. 3111/10)", Council of Europe, 07.12.2023, https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=0900001680ad8317

74 Ali Safa Korkut, "Council of Europe's decision on Turkey: 'Share all information on access bans on websites'", 12.12.2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240407032937/https://www.freewebturkey.com/avrupa-konseyinden-turkiye-karari-internet-sitelerine-uygulanan-erisim-engellerine-dair-tum-bilgileri-paylasin>

With the decision dated April 20, 2023, by the Ankara 5th Criminal Judicature of Peace, the Free Web Turkey censorship agenda for April 10-16, 2023 was also blocked.

The MLSA appealed this decision on May 2, 2023 through the Ankara 6th Criminal Judgeship of Peace.

MLSA - Bülent Mumay

Journalist Bülent Mumay was sentenced to 1 year and 8 months in prison in a lawsuit filed by the same company against journalist Bülent Mumay, who did not implement the access ban imposed on his tweet about Met-Gün Construction's seizure of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality's (IBB) bank accounts.

This news article published by MLSA with the title "Journalist Mumay, who resisted Met-Gün censorship, sentenced to prison in another case" was blocked from access by the Istanbul 9th Criminal Judicature of Peace on May 8, 2023.

On May 11, 2023, the MLSA appealed this decision to the Istanbul 10th Criminal Judgeship of Peace. The objection was rejected.

Free Web Turkey - News Agency - Deputy Family Minister visits abuse suspect businessman at his workplace during investigation

Journalist Barış Pehlivan's articles and tweets about Sadullah Alagöz, a businessman being investigated for child abuse, being visited by İsmail Ergüneş, Deputy Minister of Family and Social Services, at the workplace where the abuse took place, were blocked from access.

The April 19 ruling was issued by the Ankara 2nd Criminal Judgeship of Peace upon Ergüneş's request.

Free Web Turkey shared this decision in three tweets on April 20, 2023. It also included it in its *Censorship Agenda (April 17-23)* published on April 26, 2023.

The relevant posts were blocked from access by the Ankara 2nd Criminal Judgeship of Peace on May 10, 2023.

On May 15, 2023, the MLSA appealed the decision to the Ankara 3rd Criminal Judgeship of Peace. The judge rejected the appeal.

MLSA - Bülent Mumay, Constitutional Court

On June 22, 2023, MLSA appealed to the Constitutional Court against the rejection of the appeal against the blocking of Bülent Mumay's tweet.

Free Web Turkey - News about the blocking of news about Hilal Kaplan

Journalist Hilal Kaplan's Free Web Turkey tweet, which announced that the news about her divorce from her husband Süheyb Ögüt and marriage to Milat Newspaper Writer Tefik Emre Sarı was blocked from access, was blocked from access with the decision of Istanbul Anadolu 10th Criminal Judgeship of Peace on June 15.

Free Web Turkey appealed the decision on June 21, 2023 through the Istanbul Anadolu 1st Criminal Judgeship of Peace.

Free Web Turkey - News on blocking access to news about "Cübbeli Ahmet Hoca's son-in-law"

Free Web Turkey Censorship Agenda (August 8-14), which reported on the blocking of news about the mansion project on the land of the Ministry of Environment and Urban Planning being given to the brother-in-law of Ahmet Mahmut Ünlü, popularly known as "Cübbeli Ahmet Hoca", was blocked from access by the Istanbul Anadolu 5th Criminal Judgeship of Peace on June 23, 2023.

Free Web Turkey appealed the decision on July 4, 2023, through the Istanbul Anadolu 6th Criminal Judgeship of Peace.

Free Web Turkey - News about the murder at the table where Haymana District Governor was sitting

Free Web Turkey's tweet that news about the murder committed at a table where Ankara Haymana District Governor **Muhammed** Gürbüz was present was blocked by the Ankara 9th Criminal Judgeship of Peace, was blocked from access by the Haymana Criminal Judgeship of Peace on June 22, 2023.

Free Web Turkey appealed this decision on July 17, 2023, through the Haymana Criminal Judgeship of Peace.

Free Web Turkey - Bilal Erdoğan

Six Free Web Turkey news outlets announced that Reuters' news article titled "US and Swedish prosecutors investigating corruption complaint involving Bilal Erdoğan" was blocked from access by the Istanbul Anadolu 10th Criminal Judicature of Peace on July 20, 2023.

Free Web Turkey appealed the decision on July 24, 2023, through the Istanbul Anadolu 10th Criminal Judgeship of Peace.

Free Web Turkey - Bilal Erdoğan, Constitutional Court

However, the Istanbul Anatolian 10th Criminal Judgeship of Peace rejected the objection. Free Web Turkey then took the case to the Constitutional Court on August 29, 2023.

Free Web Turkey - “Bribery in the courthouse”

The news article titled “Access blocking decision in exchange for money’ allegation published in Free Web Turkey on October 13, 2023 by Ali Safa Korkut: Judge blocks access to 1,896 news with 11 decisions” was blocked from access with the decision of Istanbul 5th Criminal Judgeship of Peace dated October 16, 2023.

Free Web Turkey appealed the decision on October 20, 2023 through the Istanbul 6th Criminal Judgeship of Peace.

Free Web Turkey - “Bribery in the courthouse”

The news article titled “Access ban on Free Web Turkey news documenting the decisions of the judge accused of issuing access ban decisions in exchange for bribes” and the October 19-15 Censorship Agenda were ordered to be deleted by the Istanbul 4th Criminal Judge of Peace on October 19, 2023.

Free Web Turkey appealed the decision on October 25, 2023, through the Istanbul 5th Criminal Judgeship of Peace.

Free Web Turkey - Hilal Kaplan

The news article titled “I Hilal, I delete: Hilal Kaplan blocked access to 396 content in two months”, published on July 3, 2023 by Ali Safa Korkut, was blocked from access with the decision of Istanbul Anadolu 10th Criminal Judicature of Peace dated October 24, 2023.

Free Web Turkey appealed the decision on October 25, 2023, through the Istanbul Anadolu 1st Criminal Judgeship of Peace.

Free Web Turkey - Bribery in the courthouse

Published on November 28, 2023, by Ali Safa Korkut, the news article titled “Balance sheet of the allegations of a ‘bribery ring in the courthouse’: 664 news articles

blocked from access with eight different decisions” was blocked from access with the decision of Istanbul 6th Criminal Judgeship of Peace dated December 4, 2023.

Free Web Turkey appealed the decision on December 5, 2023, through the Istanbul 6th Criminal Judgeship of Peace.

GOING INTO 2024: AYM ANNULS ARTICLES ENABLING ACCESS-BLOCKING ORDERS

In 2023, the Constitutional Court (AYM) made two critical decisions on access blocking decisions, while access blocking decisions continue to be issued for hundreds or even thousands of URLs such as domain names, domain names, news, social media posts, social media accounts and similar URLs with dozens of decisions every day.

In its first decision announced in January 2024, the Constitutional Court annulled Article 9 of Law No. 5651, which allows for the issuance of access blocking orders on the grounds of “violation of personal rights”. In the same decision, the Supreme Court also ruled that the ICTA President’s decision to block access and/or remove content was unconstitutional and ordered the annulment of the relevant articles of the law.

The Constitutional Court second decision was related to access-blocking decisions issued on the grounds of “protection of national security and public order”. The Supreme Court ruled that the access blocking/removal of content decisions based on this article violate various Constitutional rights, especially freedom of expression.

Article allowing access blocking on the grounds of ‘violation of personal rights’ annulled

On January 10, 2024, he issued a decree.

On October 11, 2023, the Constitutional Court ruled on the annulment application for some articles of Law No. 5651, which allows access blocking and/or removal of content.

Combining the annulment applications filed by the Republican People’s Party in 2020 and by the Tavşanlı Criminal Judge of Peace in 2022, the Constitutional Court ruled that the decision to block access/remove content on the grounds of “violation of personal rights” and the decision of the President of the Information and Communication Technologies and Communications Authority (BTK) to block access

and/or remove content are generally unconstitutional and ruled for the annulment of the relevant articles of law.⁷⁵

‘The access ban constitutes a severe interference with freedom of the press and freedom of expression’

the Constitutional Court stated that the decision to block access and/or remove content restricts freedom of expression and freedom of the press. The court it also noted that the scope and limits of Article 9 of Law No. 5651 are not clear. Stating that this creates a wide margin of appreciation for the judicial authorities, the Supreme Court stated that they realized that it was difficult to obtain results from the appeals against the access blocking and/or content removal decisions.

Noting that issuing an access ban and/or content removal order against “violation of personal rights” does not provide a gradual method of intervention, the Constitutional Court stated that “it is understood that this prevents access to the relevant content within the borders of a certain country indefinitely from the date of the decision”.

In this respect, the Supreme Court stated that the relevant article constitutes a severe interference with the freedoms of expression and the press, and that it does not contain the guarantees that will ensure a proportionate decision in accordance with the requirements of the democratic social order.

‘ICTA President decides before the crime has been committed’

The Constitutional Court ruled that one of the amendments made to Law No. 5651 through Law No. 7253, ‘the decision to block access and/or remove content based on the determination of the President of the ICTA, violates the presumption of innocence and decided to annul this article as well.

In its reasoning, the Supreme Court stated that various judicial and administrative measures can be taken against a person under suspicion of a crime, but the measure envisaged must be a temporary measure carried out in connection with the criminal proceedings. The Constitutional Court stated that the President of the ICTA made the decision to block access and/or remove content in a manner disconnected from the criminal proceedings and that even if the criminal proceedings resulted in a verdict other than a conviction, the decision to block access and/or remove content continued to be implemented.

⁷⁵ AYM, E.2020/76, K.2023/172, 11/10/2023,

The Constitutional Court ruled that the decision will enter into force nine months after its publication in the Official Gazette (10.10.2024).

Constitutional Court emphasized the pilot decision

In the aforementioned decision, the Constitutional Court also reminded the pilot decision it issued on October 27, 2021.

In its decision dated October 27, 2021, the Supreme Court ruled that the decisions of criminal judgeships of peace to block access to news articles on websites based on Article 9 of Law No. 5651 were “violations of freedom of expression and press freedom” and should be amended.⁷⁶

“Access blocking orders issued on the grounds of ‘protecting national security’ violate the right to freedom of expression”

The Constitutional Court announced another critical decision on access blocking decisions in January 2024.

The Supreme Court upheld the application for “violation of the right to freedom of expression” filed by publishers whose websites and/or content on these websites were blocked on the grounds of “protection of national security and public order” pursuant to Article 8/A of Law No. 5651.

In its decision dated November 21, 2023, the Constitutional Court, which consolidated 62 applications, ruled that the access blocking/removal of content decisions based on Article 8/A of Law No. 5651 violated various Constitutional rights, especially freedom of expression.⁷⁷

The decision also ordered the payment of non-pecuniary damages to the applicants.

Jin News, Yeni Yaşam, Cumhuriyet, Diken, Ekşi Sözlük, Twitter...

Among the applicants whose rights were violated by the Constitutional Court were Etkin News Agency (ETHA), Diken, Cumhuriyet Newspaper, Mezopotamya Agency, Artı Tv, Dicle News Agency (DİHA), which was shut down by a decree in 2016, Yeni Yaşam Newspaper, Jin News, KHK Tv, Haber Erciş, Podcast Kurdî, Independent Turkish and Oda TV, as well as social media platforms such as Twitter, Wikipedia and Ekşi Sözlük.

⁷⁶ Keskin Kalem Yayıncılık ve Ticaret A.Ş. and others, B. No: 2018/14884, 27/10/2021

⁷⁷ Ahmet Alphan Sabancı and others, B. No: 2015/13667, 21/11/2023,

The applicants, whose freedom of expression and other constitutional rights were violated, included internet publishers as well as individual applicants. The majority of individual applicants were journalists.

These were journalists Reyhan Çapan, Ziya Çiçekçi, Erkan Çapraz, Rabia Çetin on behalf of Podcast Kurdî, Ferhat Parlak, Ali Ergin Demirhan, Vural Nasuhbeyoğlu, Mehmet Göcekli, Evren Dede, Erhan Akbaş and Sercan Akbaş on behalf of Haber Erciş. Lawyers Mehdi Özdemir and Levent Mazılıgüney and technologist Ahmet Alphan Sabancı were also among the applicants whose rights were found violated by the Constitutional Court.

Kurdish media in the majority

The majority of the publishers whose freedom of expression and various other constitutional rights were violated by the Constitutional Court came from the Kurdish press.

Among these, Jin News was the first among the applicants against whom the Constitutional Court found a violation of rights. The Supreme Court accepted 12 applications filed by Jin News against access bans.

Mezopotamya Agency, Dicle News Agency (DÎHA), Yeni Yaşam Newspaper, Jin News and Podcast Kurdî (Podcast Kurdî), whose application was made by Rabia Çetin, were among the publications that the Constitutional Court stated were subjected to rights violations. Some of the journalists among the individual applicants whose violation applications were accepted were also active in the Kurdish press.

MLSA's Podcast Kurdî and Haber Erciş applications also accepted

The application of Podcast Kurdî and Haber Erciş, whose access ban was ruled a violation of rights by the Constitutional Court, was filed by lawyer Veysel Ok, Co-Director of the Media and Law Studies Association (MLSA).

Haber Erciş's website haberercis.com, which covers social events in Turkey, especially in Van, was banned to access on April 9, 2019.

The Erciş Criminal Judgeship of Peace rejected the appeal against the decision and MLSA appealed the access ban to the Constitutional Court on July 1, 2019, on the grounds that it violated the right to access information.

The tweet sharing the news program "İro çi bu - what happened today" by Podcast Kurdî, a Kurdish podcast publisher, was blocked from access by the Ankara 4th Criminal Judicature of Peace on February 22.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PUBLISHERS AND CITIZENS WHOSE POSTS HAVE BEEN BLOCKED

Don't normalize censorship, announce when your content is blocked

The fact that those who request it can do so so easily, and that the courts can so easily issue a blocking order, is due to the fact that censoring a post is now considered normal by publishers and readers.

In fact, some publishers whose news stories are blocked and social media users whose social media posts are blocked do not announce the access blocking decision, considering it is not newsworthy. However, this not only prevents readers from understanding how severe the climate of censorship is in the country, but also deprives future research on censorship of a great deal of data to understand what is happening today.

Therefore, announcing the blocking of your blocked content in a separate news article can serve as an important record for the protection of freedom of thought, expression and the press, both today and in the future.

Back up your content before implementing a blocking order

Make sure to back up your post before you apply the access blocking order and take it down. You can use various archive platforms for this.

Appeal

Appeal access blocking orders that order you to take down your content. During the monitoring we conducted throughout the year to prepare this report, we have also seen that appeals have occasionally resulted in positive outcomes and access blocking orders have been lifted. Appealing even if there is no positive outcome is a sign that you do not cower in the face of censorship.

Raise awareness among your readers

The majority of internet users in Turkey do not have sufficient information about the reasons and causes of access restrictions. Raising users' awareness on this issue stands out as one of the important steps in the fight against censorship. One of the simplest and most effective steps that can be taken to combat censorship is for publishers to raise awareness among their readers about what censorship is, how

it is implemented and what causes it. This can help users protect their rights and freedoms and provide a stronger voice in the fight against censorship.

Seek support from the international community

The international community's support is also crucial in the fight against internet censorship in Turkey. International human rights and civil society organizations can play an important role in the fight against internet censorship in Turkey. Their encouragement to the Turkish government to take appropriate action can contribute to ending censorship and protecting freedom of expression.

Develop technological solutions

Users and publishers should develop technological solutions to circumvent internet censorship. For example, users can use simple and effective tools such as a VPN to bypass a direct block on a domain name. However, it is important to ensure that the VPN service provider used is reliable.

Publishers can continue their publications with new domain names as an alternative to the blocked domain names. Deutsche Welle's continued publication of dwturkce.com as an alternative to dw.com and dwturkce1.com as an alternative to dw.com, blocked in Turkey, is just one example.

Another example is Ekşi Sözlük's continued publication from the domain names eksisozluk2023.com, eksisozluk42.com, eksisozluk1923.com, eksisozluk1999.com and eksisozlukIII.com as an alternative to the blocked eksisozluk.com.