The absence of a comprehensive legislation on hate crimes provides the basis for the systematic perpetuation of hate crimes.

Special Report on Hate Crimes and Recent Racist Attacks in Turkey
Introduction

Identities that had been designated through religious references in the Ottoman Empire were replaced by a quest for a new political identity when the Turkish Republic was proclaimed in 1923. The content of the nation-state identity formed by the new regime was the identity of “Turkishness” that was based on ethnic and cultural values of the Turks, the largest ethnic group in the country. This categorization found its expression in constitutions beginning with the Constitution of 1924 and Constitutions of 1961 and 1982 while citizenship was defined with reference to Turkish identity. Other ethnic groups that fell outside this definition of identity were attempted to be Turkified through assimilation. They, therefore, have always been subjected to discrimination and targeted by hate speech. Moreover, the perspective of this new Turkish nation-state toward other faiths bears quite similar features. Following the establishment of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, a government agency, a nationalized form of Sunni Islam was recognized as the official faith of the state while other faiths were disregarded and sidelined. Other faiths were subjected to an assimilation policy along the same lines as well. Only non-Muslim faith groups that were granted limited minority rights under the Treaty of Lausanne have been affected less. Yet the population of these groups decreased dramatically having been perpetually subjected to forced migration as per state policy and thus they ceased to be a threat to the Turkish and Islamic nation-state.

The reluctance of the Turkish state to face its past because of genocide and crimes against humanity, notably the Armenian Genocide, also resulted in the perpetuation of discrimination and marginalization policies.

Although Article 10 of the Turkish Constitution\(^1\) lists the bases of discrimination, these are riddled with shortcomings and are quite different than those defined in international conventions. Article 10 does not include such fundamental concepts as “ethnic background, gender identity and sexual orientation, all kinds of faith or lack thereof.” Hate speech in Turkey, therefore, targets these groups intensively.

Although hate speech and hate crimes are directly related, they are at the same time different notions. Hate speech -in spite of the fact that it is defined as a criminal offense in some countries- may not lead to a crime on its own accord but hate crime points to the existence of an offense committed.

There is, however, no universally acknowledged definition of “hate speech” although it is often used. Despite the fact that many states have passed laws that prohibit the use of statements that correspond to “hate speech,” the definitions vary when they prescribe what is prohibited.\(^2\) Council of Europe Committee of Ministers’ recommendation adopted in 1997 states that “the term ‘hate speech’ shall be understood as covering:

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\(^1\) Article 10: “Everyone is equal before the law without distinction as to language, race, color, sex, political opinion, philosophical belief, religion and sect, or any such grounds.” [https://www.anayasa.gov.tr/en/legislation/turkish-](https://www.anayasa.gov.tr/en/legislation/turkish-)

All forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including: intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility against minorities, migrants and people of immigrant origin.\(^3\)

Attacks against persons and property due to bias based on various reasons like ethnic background, different faiths, sexual orientation, and age also constitute hate crimes. It is important to underline the direct relationship between hate speech and hate crimes. Hate speech is the point of origin of the process that leads to hate crimes, in other words, it is the expression of intolerance that paves the way to hate crimes. The message that “there is no place for you in the society” is repeatedly communicated to the targeted groups. Such conduct inevitably wears down the democratic order since it violates the right to life and participation.\(^4\)

Numerous hate crimes have been committed in Turkey with the mentioned motives. And, unfortunately, in contradiction to the above-cited definition, problematic areas in legislation on hate crimes are quite expansive in Turkey. There are, first of all, serious legal loopholes as there are no extensive legal regulations on hate crimes. The current legislation on hate speech, moreover, is not implemented to prevent hate speech. Another important problem pertains to the fact that hate speech and hate crimes have not been prescribed under a single title. For instance Article 122 of the Turkish Penal Code (TPC)\(^5\) regulates “hate and discrimination” as an offense, while Article 125 proscribes “insult,” Article 115 prohibits “prevention of the exercise of freedom of belief, thought and conviction,” Article 153 regulates the offense of “damaging places of worship and cemeteries,” and Article 216 prescribes “inciting the public to hatred, hostility and degrading.”\(^6\) Not all the conditions that should have been listed among the bases of discrimination have been listed under these types of offense, therefore, all these articles embody insufficient provisions.

Ethnic discrimination, racism and gender-based or sexual orientation-based discrimination are not regarded as offenses because hate crimes are defined in quite a narrow way in Turkey. So much so that neither the law that established the Human Rights and Equality Institution of Turkey, which is the human rights institution of Turkey also responsible to act as the national prevention mechanism of the country, nor its governing regulations include sexual orientation-based discrimination. Recent attacks against the graves of Kurdish militants are overt violations of Article 153 of the TPC but the article has not been enforced in spite of a total of 47 attacks\(^7\) against Kurdish militants’ graves within the last five years. Similarly, Kurdish citizens living in Turkey have been subjected to hate crimes with prejudicial motives because they were speaking Kurdish or listening to Kurdish music.\(^8\)\(^9\) In such offenses, perpetrators cannot be brought before courts or

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\(^1\) Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers Recommendation No. R (97) 20 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on “Hate Speech.” 30 October 1997. [https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=0900001680505d5b]


the courts deliver acquittal rulings because Article 122 of the TPC does not define any ethnic discrimination offense. Another instance is the fact that war propaganda has not been prohibited in Turkey. On the contrary, human rights defenders, labor and professional organizations’ executives and politicians who defend the right to peace against war often face charges under Article 216 of the TPC and these individuals face convictions. The fact of the matter is that international conventions Turkey is a party to have already prohibited war propaganda.

Moreover, Alevi’s places of worship called cem houses or cemevis have also been the target of attacks but Article 153 of the TPC is not enforced for such attacks either because Alevism11 is not recognized as a sect, a faith or a religion and prosecutors do not initiate investigations due to this perspective. The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in its judgement of 16 September 2014 in the case of Mansur Yalçın and Others v. Turkey (App. No. 21163/11)12 held that cemevis should be recognized as houses of worship while the Court of Cassation ruled that cemevis were houses of worship in 2015. These judgments, however, have not been enforced in a blatant violation of Article 153 of the TPC. Moreover, houses of Alevi citizens are being marked to maintain fear. No effective and preventive measures have been taken on this issue.


11 Alevis make up 20% of the Muslim population in the country and comprise Turkey’s largest religious minority community.

12 ECtHR. Case of Mansur Yalçın and Others v. Turkey (Application no. 21163/11). 16 September 2014. <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/tur#{%22itemid%22:[%222001-146487%22]}>
Hate Crimes in Turkey

The cases presented in the introduction reveal the fact that hate crimes are perpetuated in Turkey while hate speech and hate crimes are not being effectively investigated. İHD’s data on murders and injuries sustained within the scope of hate crimes will shed more light on the state of affairs in Turkey as they present the fact that hate crimes are indeed one of the most significant human rights problems in the country.

According to İHD’s “2019 Human Rights Violations Report,”13 one individual lost their life because of a racist attack and five individuals lost their lives in attacks against the LGBTI+ while 27 individuals were injured because of hate crimes. However accurate data for hate crimes are seen to be way beyond what İHD was able to collect. For instance, according to a recent report on homophobic and transphobic hate crimes14 drafted by the Kaos Gay and Lesbian Cultural Research and Solidarity Association (KAOS GL), the real figures are much higher. The report indicates that 150 cases of hate crime have been committed only in 2019. Most of these crimes were committed at schools, in public transport, streets or other public spaces. The legal and policy situation of LGBTI+ in Turkey is alarming as has been revealed by the Rainbow Map 201915 of ILGA Europe where Turkey’s score (5%) has been decreasing since 2015 because of the government’s failure to uphold fundamental civil and political rights such as freedoms of assembly and association and protection of human rights defenders.16

According to the “Hate Speech and Discriminatory Discourse in Media: 2018 Report,”17 published by the Hrant Dink Foundation in 2019, an average of 18 cases of hate speech was produced by the media daily. The report stated that the Jews, Armenians and Syrians were the groups targeted by hate speech the most. The media watch undertaken by the foundation reviews all national newspapers and about 500 local newspapers published during the weekdays. The latest report published by the foundation, “Hate Speech and Discriminatory Discourse in Media: 2019 Report,”18 an average of 17 cases of hate speech was produced by the print media in news reports and columns daily while these texts targeted a total of 80 different ethnic, religious and national identities over the year which in turn consolidated bias against these identities. Uğur Mumcu Investigative Journalism Foundation, too, issued a report entitled “Discriminatory Discourse in the

16 Turkey has gone down to 4% in 2020 according to ILGA Europe making it the second most unsafe country in Europe for LGBTI+.
Media During the 2019 Local Elections Process" which revealed that discriminatory discourse in the media ranged from xenophobia to misogyny, from hatred of refugees to ethnic discrimination.

![Hate Crimes (2012-2019)](http://www.umag.org.tr/tr/ana-sayfa)

*Figure 1. İHD Documentation Center data on hate crimes in Turkey.*

All these reports by İHD and other organizations show that hate speech and hate crimes have become a part of everyday life in Turkey. One of the reasons why hate speech and subsequent hate crimes have become prevalent in the country is the common utilization of hate speech by politicians and bureaucrats. For instance, the head of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, Ali Erbaş, claimed in his *khutbah* (Islamic sermon) address on the very first Friday of Ramadan on 24 April 2020 that “all evil and epidemic diseases stem from homosexuality,” adding that adultery was one of the greatest *harams* in Islam.²⁰

Islam sees adultery as one of the greatest *harams*. It curses Lutism and homosexuality. What is the reason behind this? The reason is that it brings along diseases and corrupts the generation. Each year hundreds of thousands of people are subjected to the HIV virus caused by this great *haram*, this illegitimate life out of wedlock, which is called adultery in Islamic literature. Let us fight together to protect people from such evil.

Erbaş’s statements supported by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan resulted in an escalation of serious hate speech against the LGBTI+ in both the media and social media platforms. Therefore such discourse inflicts pecuniary and non-pecuniary damages on certain groups by marginalizing them while threatening all the members of these groups.

In another instance cited by the “İHD 2019 Report on Human Rights Violations in Turkey,” an Armenian woman was subjected to hate crime because of her ethnic background.²¹ The woman was stabbed by unidentified perpetrators acting on motives of hate and the case resulted, yet

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again, in impunity as is the case with numerous acts of hate crimes. Another incident took place in Sakarya and a 19-year-old young man was lynched and killed by a mob of six on the grounds that he was speaking Kurdish. The perpetrators were then arrested but no action was taken in terms of hate crimes. According to news reports four people were killed and more than 10 people were injured because of racist attacks against the Kurds within the last seven years. Because perpetrators of hate crimes and their victims live in the same living space, disadvantaged individuals and groups become even more vulnerable to hate speech. Ever perpetual revival of hate speech against Syrian refugees also renders all refugees in Turkey, notably the Syrians, more vulnerable and helpless against outside factors. Hrant Dink Foundation’s above-mentioned study indicates that the route of discrimination has been reverted on to refugees within the last five years.

According to KAOS GL Association’s report, only 26 out of 150 cases in 2019 were reported to the police. It is seen that victims of hate crimes do not report these to the police or judicial authorities to avoid more rights violations rather than seeking justice. This state of affairs shows that hate speech and hate crimes bear some institutionalized characteristics in Turkey with restrictions on access to justice for disadvantaged individuals and groups while impunity is enforced as a state policy. Moreover, it is seen that impunity protects perpetrators like a shield even in cases into which judicial and administrative processes have been initiated. Certain recent incidents merely reveal the gravity of the situation. For instance, following specialist sergeant Musa Orhan’s rape of İpek Er in Batman, which led to Ms. Er’s suicide, and the fact that the authorities first detained the perpetrator only to release him shortly afterwards carries a certain message. The authorities saw the incident so serious as to dismiss the perpetrator from the army but, at the same time, so “ordinary” as not to hold him in pre-trial detention. Similarly, in attacks against Kurdish seasonal workers in Afyon and Sakarya, the Kurdish workers were virtually exiled to their own hometowns under the control of security forces. It was alleged that a police officer in the Afyon attack told the injured workers that “take your deceased and go away.” The perpetrator of this attack has not been apprehended yet. Kurdish workers, who were attacked in Sakarya and got medical reports indicating battery, filed complaints against the attackers but two persons who were taken under police custody for threat and bodily injury were released. As one can see in the appended sample cases from 2020, statements by both the Sakarya and Afyon governors intend to cover up the real reasons behind the incidents.

The absence of an extensive legislation on hate crimes set the stage for the systematic perpetuation of such crimes. The recent hike in the number of attacks against many groups, particularly Syrian refugees and Kurdish seasonal workers, is a product of such a climate of impunity as well. According to İHD’s data, seven persons were killed, including three Syrian children, in 14 racist attacks in 2020. 32 persons were also injured in these attacks. The detailed

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24 Dokuţ8 Haber. “7 yılda en az 4 kişi Kürççe konuşduğu için öldürüldü.” [At least 4 people were killed for speaking Kurdish in 7 years]. 1 June 2020. <https://doku8haber.net/gundem/insanhaklari/turkiyeye-son-7-yilda-en-az-4-kisi-kurcte-konustugu-da-sarki-soyledigi-icin-olduruldu/>

account of these incidents is presented in the appendix. We also see that 15 persons have been killed, while 1,097 persons have been injured in 280 racist attacks since 2010.

Table 1. Racist Attacks between 2010 and 2020 according to İHD data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Cases</th>
<th>Death</th>
<th>Injury</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7*</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1,097</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Including three Syrian children.
Conclusion

Lack of legislation compliant with the international conventions Turkey is a party to and one that does not include OSCE’s hate crime definition affects access to justice for victimized individuals and groups. Moreover, laws remain limited in the elimination of hate speech brought about by problems in such different areas as history, sociology, economy and education. Politics and education should also assume vital tasks in order to eradicate hate speech and to raise awareness on this subject. Necessary steps should be taken to eradicate hate speech through educational institutions while legal and political measures should be enforced in terms of hate speech and hate crimes by reviewing and updating Article 122 of the TPC that regulates “hate and discrimination.” Further, insufficient provisions in Articles 115, 125, 153 and 216 of the TPC in their definitions of hate crimes should be remedied along with Article 10 of the Constitution. Necessary channels should be opened up for individuals and groups who were subjected to hate speech and hate crimes enabling them to lodge applications and these channels should function effectively. Victims’ right to participation also constitutes a major stage along these lines as well.

On a separate yet quite related note, the obscure definition of terror in Turkey should be removed and authorities should heed İHD’s recommendations on this issue in order to stop repressive policies enforced through the use of the Anti-Terror Code over political dissidents. İHD has presented its recommendations in an extensive report submitted to the Ministry of Justice on 21 January 2020.

İHD believes that official ideology should be abandoned and the criminal legislation closely tied to this official ideology should be revised in order to eradicate hate crimes that is one of the major problems before social peace. Accordingly, necessary legislation should be introduced to recognize ethnic identity, sexual orientation and the right to gender identity, and all kinds of faiths and sects as bases for discrimination and thus to put an end to hate crimes against these groups.

İHD recommends that the following should be provided without delay:

- The definition of hate crimes should comply with that of OSCE’s:

Any criminal offense, including offenses against persons or property, where the victim, premises, or target of the offense are selected because of their real or perceived connection, attachment, affiliation, support, or membership of a group. A group may be based upon a characteristic common to its members, such as real or perceived race, national or ethnic origin, language, color, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, or other similar factor.

Ethnic affiliation, gender identity and sexual orientation based hate crimes should be included in the definition.
- Turkey had signed Protocol No. 12 to the ECHR that prescribes prohibition of discrimination on 18 April 2001 but the protocol has not gone into force yet because it has

not been ratified by the parliament. The ratification of this protocol is of vital significance for combatting racism and racial discrimination.

- The TPC should be made compliant with the General Policy Recommendation No. 7 of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) on national legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination.
- Article 10 of the Turkish Constitution that prescribes “equality before law” should be amended to include ethnic affiliation, sexual orientation and gender identity, all kinds of faiths or lack thereof, and age.
- Provisions on hate crimes in the TPC should be reviewed.
- The policy of impunity for hate speech should be put to an end and negative conduct toward victims of hate crimes should be avoided. The policy of impunity should be combatted and such negative culture seen within the judiciary should be ended.
- Certain tools should be used to eradicate hate speech. These should be assessed within a wide range of options from awareness raising to self-control, to legal practices.
- Authorities of all levels and political leaders should abstain from hate speech. İHD believes that unless discriminatory, marginalizing, othering and polarizing discourse is ended hate crimes in Turkey will prevail because such discourse affects nationalist and racist groups quite negatively and these effects can easily turn into violence.
- Law enforcement officers and public prosecutors’ offices should cooperate and safely communicate with the victims in the reporting, investigating and sentencing of racist, homophobic and transphobic offenses. They should receive regular training to this end.
Appendix: Racist Attacks in 2020 according to Data Collected by İHD’s Documentation Center
[In Chronological Order]

Hafizullah XXX
19-year-old Afghan Hafizullah, who came to Turkey with hopes of receiving an education and earn a living, was stabbed to death in İstanbul, Ataşehir on 30 May 2020 while he was collecting waste paper from the streets.

Barış Çakan
20-year-old Barış Çakan from Ağrı, Patnos was fatally stabbed in his heart in Ankara, Etimesgut on 31 May 2020 at 22.30 on the grounds that he was listening to Kurdish music. According to information provided by his family, Mr. Çakan went out to meet his friends in the park at night and he and his friend were attacked by three persons on the grounds that he was listening to Kurdish music. It was learnt that the attackers were registered to Yozgat, Kırıkkale and Tokat provinces but no information could be received about the identities of the perpetrators. Mr. Çakan was stabbed in his heart and died on the scene. The Ankara Governor’s Office issued a statement on the same day saying:

The incident took place not because allegedly the suspects interfered with the victim and his friend because they were listening to Kurdish music but, on the contrary, upon when the victim and his friend warned the suspects not to listen to loud music disturbing people in their vehicle because the call for prayer was on.

Three suspects (K. Y., A. B. and Ö. Y.), who were taken under police custody for the murder of Barış Çakan, were detained on 1 June 2020 by a court.

Halid Yusuf and Muhammed Yusuf
Taha B. assaulted his neighbors, who were Syrian refugees -the Yusuf family, in an armed attack on 7 June 2020 in Hatay, Reyhanlı’s Uzunkavak neighborhood. 2-year-old Halid Yusuf, who was injured in the armed attack, died on 9 June 2020 while Yusuf’s grandparent Muhammed Yusuf was critically injured.

Mehmet Nuri Deniz
Mehmet Nuri Deniz claimed that he was battered by officials at İstanbul, Şişli District Governor’s Office, where he went to apply for social relief, on 12 June 2020 and said he was targeted by racist and discriminatory statements because he was Kurdish. Mr. Deniz stated the following to Bianet:

We moved to Istanbul from Bitlis in the 1990s because our village was burnt down. I have been working odd jobs since then. We live in Şişli, Feriköy. I was working at a textile factory lastly but they laid off many workers, including me, because of the pandemic. I couldn’t pay my rent in the meantime. “Last week the landlord came and said ‘Pay your rent or vacate my flat.’ I, then, went to the neighborhood mukhtar who told me I could get social relief from the Şişli District Governor’s Office. I went to the office. I told the situation to a person called Mehmet
who told me that he was an advisor to the district governor. I said: “My monthly rent is 1,200 TRY which I haven’t been able to pay for the last four months. Can you pay it?” He told me that they could pay for two months, in other words, 2,400 TRY but not the whole sum. They took down my bank account information. I received a message on Friday, 5 June stating that the sum was deposited in my account. I went to the bank to withdraw the sum but saw that only 400 TRY was deposited. I went to the district governor’s office to inquire about it. I again talked to the advisor called Mehmet. He said along the lines of: “Do we have to pay you? Go back to where you came from. A Kurd came in from Bitlis and wants to live in Nişantaşı. Go back to your village, who do you think you are to live in Nişantaşı? Why should we pay you?” When I talked back, verbal altercation ensued. He pushed me and tried to batter me. Then he called two security guards. They beat me up towards the elevator. Another person joined them in the elevator and three people beat me up. Then they forced me out of the building. I immediately went to Fulya Central Police Station but the officers did not really take me seriously. They took me to a hospital; I don’t remember their names. My wounds were dressed at the hospital. I received a medical report indicating battery but I was in such a bad condition that I didn’t see the report. 28

Osman İnan
It was learnt that Osman İnan, who was working in Giresun as a recycler, was attacked by a group of 50-60 people on 14 June 2020 because he shared Selahattin Demirtaş’s photograph. Following the attack, 21 Kurdish workers were put on a bus by gendarmerie officers and sent to their hometown of Urfa from Giresun on the grounds that they could not guarantee their safety.

Hamza Acan
17-year-old Syrian national Hamza Acan, who was working at a farmer’s market in Bursa’s Gürsu district on 15 July 2020, was injured in his head when he was hit by a stone during an altercation because he warned a group working in the same market who verbally attacked a Syrian woman. It was later learnt that Mr. Acan died of brain hemorrhage at a hospital.

XXX
Kurdish forestry workers in Bazlamaç and Kayalar villages of Yozgat’s Çekerek district were attacked on 21 July 2020. The workers had to leave Yozgat following the attack to go back to their hometown Derik in Mardin. It was reported that the workers were accompanied by the gendarmerie until Malatya.

It was learnt that 13 families, who left for Çekerek from Derik in May, started living in tents they set up on public lands in Çekerek where they went to work as forestry workers for a company that won a tender from the Forestry Sub-District Directorate. The workers were harassed by mukhtars from different villages at their campsites and they were asked to pay “town tolls.” The workers refused to pay such tolls stating that their campsite was on public lands. The mukhtars of 18 villages who got together on 18 July 2020 went to the camp site asking the workers to pay them 1,000 TRY per tent. The workers refused to pay again indicating that the site was a public land while the district governor’s office knew about it. Upon this development, the mukhtars gathered villagers and brought them to the campsite to attack the workers. According to the workers, the crowd said: “We will not let you live here.” The gendarmerie were sent to the site following the

attack and when things escalated a delegation including Çekerek’s district governor, mayor, district gendarmerie commander, and AKP district head went to the site to talk to the workers and villagers. While the mukhtars claimed that the workers used foul language in Kurdish, the workers indicated that the mukhtars wanted to shake them down and there was no insult whatsoever. The workers and the villagers filed complaints against one another and the Çekerek District Governor’s Office told the workers to leave the district saying “we cannot guarantee your safety of life” following another attack attempt. Some workers, then, were driven out of Yozgat with their families at night accompanied by the gendarmerie in vehicles provided by the district governor’s office.

5 Syrian Refugee Students [E. H., Muvaффad Ibrahim and three others]
The press reported on 30 July 2020 that five Syrian national students left a private teaching center where they were studying for the centralized university exam for international students in Hatay’s Kırıkhan district on 26 July 2020. The students were attacked by a racist group telling them “Either you will leave this country or we will kill you.” Reports indicated that two students, 17-year-old E.H. and Muvaффad Ibrahim, were critically injured. Hatay Governor’s Office said in a statement that a criminal investigation was initiated into the attack.

Muhammed Saeed
The press reported on 1 August 2020 that Syrian national 19-year-old Muhammed Saeed was attacked by a racist group on 26 July 2020 in İstanbul’s Küçükçekmece district. Mr. Saeed was stabbed in the leg and was then hospitalized. It was reported that Mr. Saeed said the following about the attack:

A relative of mine and I were walking in the Perşembe Market on Sunday at about 20:00. As we turned the corner we came across a group of people. They were about 20-person strong and were speaking Turkish. One of them yelled at us waving a knife; he was about 22-23 years old. My relative began running but I couldn’t. (...) One of them swung a knife at my abdomen. When I moved the knife hit my leg. They were shouting “We will kill all Syrians one day” in the meantime. The guy holding the knife said, “I will kill all Syrians I come across.” The group rapidly moved away with that man.

6 Syrian refugees
It was reported that an unknown assailant first insulted then shot at six Syrian nationals in İstanbul’s Zeytinburnu district on 17 August 2010. 21-year-old Syrian national Abdulkadir Davud was shot and killed in the incident. An eyewitness to the attack, Ahmet Uzun, stated the following as reported by the press:

We went to the bus stop to go home. (...) A man we didn’t know leaned out from the window of his flat and started insulting us. We asked: “Why are you swearing? What did we do to you?” He went on saying “F… off Syrians,” he called us names. We didn’t talk back. (...) Then he went in. This time his spouse came out on the balcony. The woman said: “Run! He is drunk, he went in to get his gun!” We started running. We heard three counts of gunshots. Two had hit Abdulkadir; one went astray. When we went back we saw that the kid was in a pool of blood.

16 Kurdish workers

The press reported on 4 September 2020 that 16 Kurdish workers, including women and children, who were working as seasonal agricultural workers in Sakarya’s Kocaali district were targeted in a racist attack by their employer and villagers. Ş. D., one of the workers attacked, said the following about the attack:

We were working in the field Friday morning. We were insulted when we moved to the other side of the field. Unmentionable insults were uttered. Then we said that we were going to call the gendarmerie. He responded: “Call whoever you like, the gendarmerie are on our side, they are ours.” They said: “You are from the East, they won’t believe you.” Afterwards they started attacking us. A woman among them came at my cousin holding an axe in her hand saying: “Kill them!” They pushed one woman to the ground and kicked her. They were coming at us saying “We will set you on fire!”

Sakarya Governor’s Office stated the following about the incident on 4 September 2020:

It was seen that a dispute broke up between the owners of a hazel nut field in our city’s Kocaali district on 22 August 2020, that a brawl ensued, that one person drove their vehicle on to another, that in the meantime two women workers registered to the city of Mardin and a male worker registered to the city of Düzce were injured, that the incident was now before the judicial authorities, and an investigation was initiated by the Chief Public Prosecutor’s Office.

The press reported on 7 September 2020 that two persons (K. C. and H. C.) were taken under custody about the incident for “threat” and “bodily injury.” The workers, who returned to Mardin after the attack, received medical reports Mazdağı State Hospital documenting the physical violence they were subjected to from. It was also learnt that the workers would file criminal charges against the attackers. According to news reports of 5 September 2020, journalists who wanted to interview the workers were prevented from going to their village by the gendarmerie on the grounds of measures taken against the COVID-19 pandemic.

Özkan Tokay, Fırat T. and Emrah Ö.

It was reported that construction workers were targeted by Ömer A. in an armed attack on 13 September 2020 in Ayfon’s Dinar district. Özkan Tokay was killed in the attack, while two other workers (Fırat T. and Emrah Ö.) were injured. Afyon Governor’s Office said in a statement about the incident on 14 September 2020:

The incident is now before the judicial authorities and the chief public prosecutor’s office launched an investigation. It was seen that the incident happened among construction workers and a family residing next to the construction building and it did not have any social background. It was understood that the incident had nothing to do with the claims put forth by some different social media platforms and news websites while it was ascertained that the grounds set forth about the cause of the incident were intentionally manipulated to publish fake news.
Eymenh Hammami

The press reported on 14 September 2020 that a Syrian national 16-year-old child living in Samsun, Eymenh Hammami, was killed in a racist attack. Eymenh Hammami’s brother, İbrahim Hammami, stated in his account of the murder that as his brother and he were waiting by the road, some people in a vehicle uttered racist swear words at them while the same people along with a 20-person group blocked their way and attacked them with knives.

Çetin_Doğan

The press reported on 14 September 2020 that Çetin_Doğan, who was serving his mandatory military service at the 54th Mechanized Infantry Brigade in Edirne, was attacked by a group of soldiers in a racist attack on 15 August 2020. It was reported that Çetin_Doğan sustained frontal and nasal fractures, cracks in his ribs and ecchymosis in his legs; filed criminal charges against the attackers before Edirne Chief Public Prosecutor’s Office after he was released from the hospital. Çetin_Doğan said in his account of the attack:

I neither had a dispute nor a talk with U.Y. When I turned back he said “You will pay the price for my martyrs.” As soon as I turned back he hit me with a gun. I have 9 stitches; my nose was broken. As I fell down they started beating me up on the ground with pieces of the gun. There my ribs are fractured. I still have a hard time. There are no traces as they kicked me but this is already indicated in the battery report. These people had talked among themselves 10-15 minutes before the incident. This is a planned one; this is one that is intentional.