

From Marginalization to Persecution:

Hate Speech and Hate Crime

Against the Gulen Movement in Turkish Media

HUMAN

Table of Content

Page

03

Abstract

Page

04

An Introduction to Hate Speech and Hate Crime: The Plight of the Gulen Movement in Turkiye

Page

06

Defining Hate Speech and Hate Crime: An Overview of the Concepts

Page

10

Historical and Social Context of Hate Speech and Hate Crime Committed in Turkiye against the Gulen Movement

Page

13

Hate Speech and Hate Crime Landscape against the Gulen Movement in Turkiye

Page

20

Impact of Hate Speech and Hate Crime on the Gulen Movement in Turkiye

Page

24

Conclusion

Hate Speech 14

Hate Crime 16



Abstract



This report examines hate speech and hate crimes against the Gulen Movement in Turkish media. The Gulen Movement is a religious and social organization founded by Fethullah Gulen in the 1960s. The Turkish government has targeted the movement and charged it with trying to topple the government. Therefore, there has been an increase in hate speech and hate crimes directed at members of the Gulen Movement, especially in Turkish media.

The report gives a general summary of the Gulen Movement's background and interactions with the Turkish government. The character and scope of hate speech and hate offenses against movement members are then examined. The effect of this hate speech and hate crime on Gulen Movement participants is also examined in the study. The report concludes that hate speech and hate crimes against the Gulen Movement in Turkiye cause serious violations of human rights.



An Introduction to Hate Speech and Hate Crime: The Plight of the Gulen Movement in Turkiye



A growing number of political campaigns and rhetoric used by some lawmakers against specific ethnic, religious, or political groups have included hate speech.¹ Political leaders' divisive statements that are directed at these groups have become their political language. Statements especially made by politically influential people fuel the fires of hate crimes by motivating members of the general public to victimize alleged "enemies" in a target group.²

Nearly every elected administration in the modern Turkish Republic (1920-2020) generated a hegemony and a large number of victims in society, and in nearly every era, politicians have used hate speech against diverse groups such as their political rivals, some communities, and minorities.³ Minorities and political opponents in Turkiye were frequently the targets of widespread purges and oppression in addition to being the targets of political hate speech.⁴ Different groups have been targeted at different times depending on the ideology of the dominant party or authority. For example, in the country, ethnic minorities (such as Kurds, Armenians, Caucasians, Laz, Romans, and Arabs), religious minorities (such as Jews, Orthodox Christians, Assyrians, Ezidis, Alawites, and Jafaris), and other marginalized groups; LGBTQ communities, Muslim organizations, factions, and movements, as well as the more recent Syrian migrants, whose numbers in Turkiye have surpassed three million since the start of the Syrian Civil War in 2011 have all suffered discrimination.⁵⁶

1 Amnesty International. (2017, February 22). Politics of demonization breeding division and fear. Amnesty International. Retrieved March 30, 2023, from <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2017/02/amnesty-international-annual-report-201617/>

2 Perry, B., Akca, D., Karakus, F., & Bastug, M. F. (2020). Planting hate speech to harvest hatred: How does political hate speech fuel hate crimes in Turkey? *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, 9(4), 195-211. <https://doi.org/10.5204/ijcsd.v9i4.1514>

3 Ibid.

4 İnsan Hakları Dernegi. (2020, September 22). Türkiye'de Nefret Suçları ve Son Dönemde Yaşanan İrkçi Saldırıları Özel Raporu. Retrieved March 30, 2023, from https://www.ihd.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/20200922_NefretSuçlarıİrkçisaldırılarıRaporu-OrnekVakalar.pdf

5 Goktan, A. D. (2017). *Hate Crime in Turkey: Implications of Collective Action, Media Representations and Policy Making*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

6 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (n.d.). Refugees and asylum seekers in Turkey. UNHCR Türkiye. Retrieved March 30, 2023, from <https://www.unhcr.org/tr/en/refugees-and-asylum-seekers-in-turkey>

Especially, since 2013, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan “frequently targeted, vilified, threatened and insulted opposition groups, government critics, journalists, and academics. Over the years, hate speech became a political tool for Erdogan to maintain his public support.”⁷ A common component of Erdogan's hate speech is the use of insults directed at those who dispute with the government.⁸

Erdogan has also openly urged collective punishment against government opponents many times, particularly against the members of the Gulen Movement,⁹ a worldwide cultural and educational initiative based on the ethos of Islam and inspired by Fethullah Gulen.¹⁰ In this regard, the movement has been demonized and exposed to hate speech and hate crimes committed by the president, the government, pro-government and opposition journalists, and the public.¹¹

The focus of this report will be on Turkiye's hate speech and hate crime ecosystem against the Gulen movement. The overview will discuss the use of hate speech and hate crime against the movement in national news media in Turkiye. Then, it will explain the historical and social context of hate speech and hate crime committed in Turkiye against the movement. Additionally, it will discuss the impact of this hate speech and hate crime on the movement. The report will conclude with a brief summary.

This report is descriptive in nature and details the Justice and Development Party (AKP) government's national and international hate speech and hate crime campaigns against the Gulen movement, and the extent to which the inflammatory rhetoric of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, members of AKP, and pro-governmental sources has encouraged and fueled hate speech and hate crimes against the members of the movement. ✕

As the government increasingly suppresses freedom of expression, freedom of association, and press freedom, it is essential for policymakers to understand the ‘hate’ ecosystem in Turkiye. The systematic and organized targeting of members or affiliated people of the Gulen movement, their exclusion from society, the violation of their basic human rights, holding them responsible for all kinds of negativity, and the use of the media as a weapon against the movement by the state are of particular concern because of their impact to intimidate people, increase radicalization and oppression, and force people to leave the country



7 Demir, V. (2021). Freedom of the Media in Turkey Under the AKP Government. In: Aydin, H., Langley, W. (eds) Human Rights in Turkey. (p. 81-82). Philosophy and Politics - Critical Explorations, vol 15. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57476-5_3

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.

10 UK Government. (2022, February 14). Country policy and information note: Gülenist Movement, Turkey, February 2022 (accessible version). GOV.UK. Retrieved March 30, 2023, from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/turkey-country-policy-and-information-notes/country-policy-and-information-note-gulenist-movement-turkey-february-2022-accessible-version>

11 Caman, M.E. (2021). Authoritarianization and Human Rights in Turkey: How the AKP Legitimizes Human Rights Violations. In: Aydin, H., Langley, W. (eds) Human Rights in Turkey. (p. 179-198). Philosophy and Politics - Critical Explorations, vol 15. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57476-5_9

Defining Hate Speech and Hate Crime: An Overview of the Concepts



Hate has been the focus of many studies in social and psychological sciences.¹² In 1954, hate was defined as a stable feeling of extreme dislike, in contrast to anger, which is a transient emotional state.¹³ For scholars in the social sciences, hate is more than emotional stimulation. It is motivated by a vision that reflects a desire to exert power and by historical notions of hierarchy with regard to race, religion, sexual and gender identities, bodies, and other characteristics.¹⁴ This motivation can result in criminal or non-criminal behaviors.¹⁵ There are at least five pillars that constitute the definition of a hate behavior: a) the attribute describing the behavior (e.g., hate, bias-motivated, prejudice); b) the name describing the behavior (e.g., incident, crime, speech); c) the name describing the target of hate (e.g., a person, a property, an organization); d) the indicators qualifying the behavior (e.g., a target believes, a witness believes, any person believes, there is evidence of this); e) the protected characteristics (e.g., race, religion, nationality, gender, transgender status, disability, homelessness status).¹⁶



12 Vergani, M., & Link, R. (2021). A Conceptual Framework to Map Responses to Hate Crime, Hate Incidents and Hate Speech: The Case of Australia. *Social Policy and Society : a Journal of the Social Policy Association*, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S147474642100052X>
 13 Allport, G. W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Addison-Wesley.
 14 Perry, B. (2001). *In the Name of Hate: Understanding Hate Crimes* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203905135>
 15 Vergani, M., & Link, R. (2021). A Conceptual Framework to Map Responses to Hate Crime, Hate Incidents and Hate Speech: The Case of Australia. *Social Policy and Society : a Journal of the Social Policy Association*, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S147474642100052X>
 16 *ibid*

On the other hand, hate crimes are “criminal acts motivated by bias or prejudice towards particular groups of people.”²⁷ According to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), hate crimes have two main components. The first one is a “criminal offense.”²⁸ A hate crime has to be an action that constitutes a criminal offense under ordinary criminal law. Basic offenses could theoretically include any criminal offense committed against persons or property or public peace, including manslaughter, assault, harassment, destruction of property, hooliganism, etc.²⁹ Hate crimes can likewise take the form of petty offenses, misdemeanors, or serious crimes.³⁰

The second one is ‘bias motivation’.³¹ A hate crime is carried out with a specific motive, i.e. bias. This bias or prejudicial motive distinguishes hate crimes from other ordinary crimes. “The bias motive is the perpetrator’s prejudice towards the target: victims, premises, or the target of the offense are selected because of their real or perceived connection, attachment, affiliation, support, or membership with a protected group.”³² Protected characteristics classically comprise race, national or ethnic origin, language, color, religion, gender, age, mental or physical disability, and sexual orientation, but prejudice can also be triggered by other factors.³³ In this sense, hate crime is a mechanism of power and oppression that aims to reaffirm the unstable hierarchies that characterize a particular social order. It seeks to simultaneously recreate “the threatened (real or imagined) hegemony of the perpetrator’s group and the ‘appropriate’ subordinate identity of the victim’s group.”³⁴ It is used as a means of designating both the ‘Self’ and the ‘Other’ in such a way that reasserts their ‘proper’ relative positions as given and reproduced by a broader set of ideologies and patterns of social and political inequality.³⁵



27 Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. (2023, February 14). OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). Home. Retrieved March 23, 2023, from <https://hatecrime.osce.org/>

28 Ibid.

29 European Parliament. (2020). Hate speech and hate crime in the EU and the evaluation of online content regulation approaches. Retrieved March 23, 2023, from [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/655135/IPOL_STU\(2020\)655135_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/655135/IPOL_STU(2020)655135_EN.pdf)

30 Ibid.

31 Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. (2023, February 14). OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). Home. Retrieved March 23, 2023, from <https://hatecrime.osce.org/>

32 European Parliament. (2020). Hate speech and hate crime in the EU and the evaluation of online content regulation approaches. (p. 22). Retrieved March 23, 2023, from [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/655135/IPOL_STU\(2020\)655135_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/655135/IPOL_STU(2020)655135_EN.pdf)

33 Ibid.

34 Chakraborti, N., & Garland, J. (2016). Hate crime : impact, causes & responses (Second edition.). (p. 5). SAGE.

35 Ibid.

Hate speech poses serious threats to the integrity of a democratic society, the protection of human rights, and the rule of law. Hence, if left unaddressed, it can spark acts of violence and conflict on a wider scale. In this sense, hate speech is an extreme manifestation of intolerance that contributes to hate crime.³⁶ To put it another way, hate speech can provoke large-scale conflicts that can lead to the violation of peace and create suitable contexts conducive to hate crimes.³⁷ As both discrimination and particular forms of hate speech can pave the way to violent hate crimes, these behaviors should be addressed by the state³⁸, and “the problem of hate speech and hate crime should be regarded as a complex social problem, and a symptomatic response given by societies to the challenges which have not been adequately managed.”³⁹



36 Council of Europe. (n.d.). Hate speech and Violence - European Commission against racism and intolerance (ECRI) - [www.coe.int. European Commission against Racism and Intolerance \(ECRI\)](https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-commission-against-racism-and-intolerance/hate-speech-and-violence). Retrieved March 23, 2023, from <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-commission-against-racism-and-intolerance/hate-speech-and-violence>

37 Guillén-Nieto, V. (2023). Hate Speech : Linguistic Perspectives. De Gruyter Mouton., <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110672619>

38 European Parliament. (2020). Hate speech and hate crime in the EU and the evaluation of online content regulation approaches. Retrieved March 23, 2023, from [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/655135/IPOL_STU\(2020\)655135_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/655135/IPOL_STU(2020)655135_EN.pdf)

39 Ibid (p. 21).

Historical and Social Context of Hate Speech and Hate Crime Committed in Turkiye against the Gulen Movement



The Gulen Movement “is a worldwide civic initiative rooted in the spiritual and humanistic tradition of Islam and inspired by the ideas and activism of Fethullah Gulen”⁴⁰, which first appeared in Turkiye in the late 1960s when Fethullah Gulen held reading groups in the homes of his closest followers in Izmir.⁴¹ After sustaining a presence in Turkiye during the 1970s and 80s, Gulen and his followers spread their educational initiatives and activities first to Muslim-majority regions of the Soviet Union and then to Western Europe in the mid-1990s.⁴² Gulen had significant political and social weight on the right of the political spectrum. In this context, the influence of the Gulen movement grew in the 1990s and early 2000s, with many of its members being leading figures in Turkish politics and business.⁴³

However, the Gulen movement's relations with the Turkish government deteriorated in the late 2000s, especially after President Erdogan had more or less secured his power.⁴⁴ The Turkish government's crackdown on the Gulen movement followed the outbreak in December 2013 of a massive corruption scandal involving the president's closest associates and family, which resulted in the detention of numerous people, including the sons of ministers.⁴⁵ Erdogan accused the movement of conspiring to overthrow the government. Then, with the coup attempt in 2016, Erdogan blamed the movement for being behind the coup attempt, and the relations between the Gulen movement and the government were completely severed⁴⁶ although the movement has denied any involvement in the coup attempt.⁴⁷



40 Gulen Movement. (2013, December 4). What is the Gülen movement. Gulen Movement. Retrieved March 24, 2023, from <https://www.gulenmovement.com/gulen-movement/what-is-the-gulen-movement>

41 Pew Research Center. (2022, April 26). Gülen movement. Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project. Retrieved March 24, 2023, from <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2010/09/15/muslim-networks-and-movements-in-western-europe-gulen-movement/>

42 Ibid.

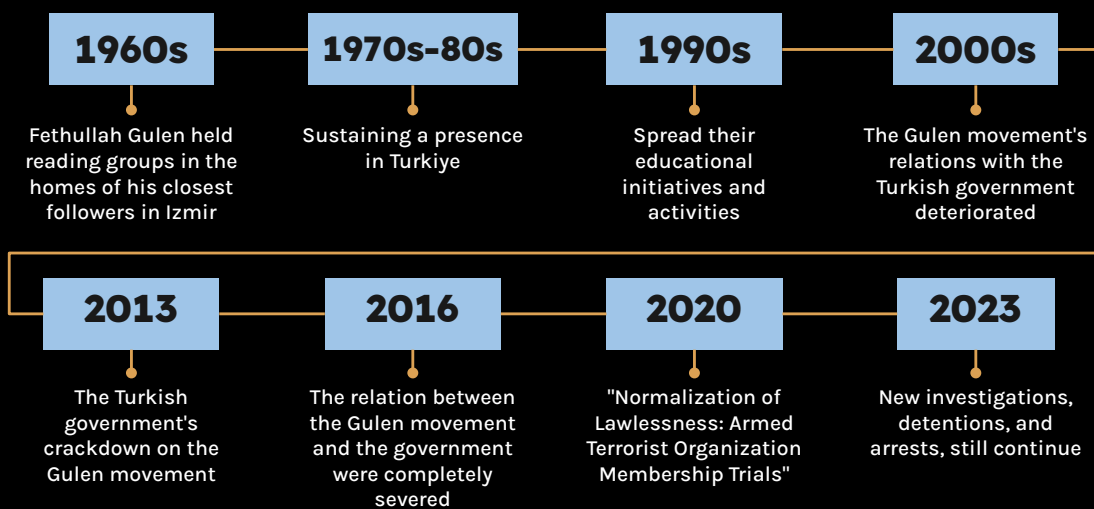
43 Aras, B., & Caha, O. (2000). Fethullah Gulen And His Liberal "Turkish Islam" Movement. Meria: Fethullah Gulen and his liberal "turkish islam" movement. Retrieved March 24, 2023, from https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/meria/meria00_arb01.html

44 Matthews, D. (2016, July 16). Turkey's coup: The Gülen movement, explained. Vox. Retrieved March 24, 2023, from <https://www.vox.com/2016/7/16/12204456/gulen-movement-explained>

45 Human Rights Watch. (2021, September 6). Silencing Turkey's media. Human Rights Watch. Retrieved March 24, 2023, from <https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/12/15/silencing-turkeys-media/governments-deepening-assault-critical-journalism>

46 Al Jazeera. (2017, July 15). Turkey's failed coup attempt: All you need to know. Turkey Attempted Coup News | Al Jazeera. Retrieved March 24, 2023, from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/7/15/turkeys-failed-coup-attempt-all-you-need-to-know>

47 Ibrahim, A. (2022, July 15). What was Turkey's failed coup about and what's happened since? Turkey Attempted Coup News | Al Jazeera. Retrieved March 24, 2023, from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/7/15/turkeys-failed-coup-attempt-explainer>



Since these days, President Erdogan's political rhetoric has increasingly targeted members of the movement.⁴⁸ Erdogan's violence has taken the shape of openly demonizing and vilifying the Movement following the failed coup attempt in July 2016. It was recorded that Erdogan used 240 different terms to insult the Gulen Movement between 2013 and 2017.⁴⁹ In his speech following the 2016 coup attempt, the President described denouncing Gulen supporters as a "patriotic duty" and "encouraged citizens to become volunteer informants who spy on their colleagues, neighbors, relatives and even family members."⁵⁰ During this period, the public began openly targeting the Gulen Movement, and thousands of group members were forced to leave Turkiye and seek asylum in Western countries due to increasing demonization. Those who still stay have become the targets of violent hate crimes.⁵¹

The Turkish government's crackdown on the Gulen movement has led to a significant increase in hate speech against the movement and its members. In this regard,

the Gulen movement and its members are portrayed as 'terrorists' by the government. For example, "Turkish Vice President Fuat Oktay called the victims of a massive purge of state institutions as "terrorists".⁵² Since the coup attempt in Turkiye, more than 600,000 people have been investigated for alleged links to the Gulen movement^{53,54}, which means that there are more than 600,000 so-called 'terrorists' in Turkiye whose jobs range from a journalist, doctor, and academician to judge and governor. Additionally, according to Democracy and Progress Party (DEVA)'s report titled "Normalization of Lawlessness: Armed Terrorist Organization Membership Trials," between 2016 and 2020, "armed terrorist organization" investigations were opened against at least 1,576,566 people in Turkiye.⁵⁵ When new investigations, detentions, and arrests, which continue in 2023⁵⁶ and hundreds of people are subjected to every day, are added, the number will probably reach 2 million. This amount of people also gives hints about the extension of hate speech and hate crimes committed against the Gulen movement members.

48 Perry, B., Akca, D., Karakus, F., & Bastug, M. F. (2020). Planting hate speech to harvest hatred: How does political hate speech fuel hate crimes in Turkey? *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, 9(4), 195-211. <https://doi.org/10.5204/ijcjsd.v9i4.1514>

49 Stockholm Center for Freedom (SCF) (2017) Erdo.an's Vile Campaign of Hate Speech. Case Study: Targeting of The Gulen Movement. https://stockholmcf.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Erdogans-Vile-Campaign-Of-HateSpeech-Case-Study-Targeting-Of-The-Gulen-Movement_2017.pdf

50 Perry, B., Akca, D., Karakus, F., & Bastug, M. F. (2020). Planting hate speech to harvest hatred: How does political hate speech fuel hate crimes in Turkey? *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, 9(4), (p. 199). <https://doi.org/10.5204/ijcjsd.v9i4.1514>

51 Ibid.

52 Stockholm Center for Freedom. (2023, January 15). Turkey's crackdown on the Gulen Movement: 2022 in Review. Stockholm Center for Freedom. Retrieved March 24, 2023, from <https://stockholmcf.org/turkeys-crackdown-on-the-gulen-movement-2022-in-review/>

53 Ibid.

54 Stockholm Center for Freedom. (2022, February 8). Turkey's vice president calls purge victims 'terrorists'. Stockholm Center for Freedom. Retrieved March 24, 2023, from <https://stockholmcf.org/turkeys-vice-president-calls-purge-victims-terrorists/>

55 Yeneroglu, M. (2021, September 24). Silahl. Teror orgutu uyeli.i Yarg.lamalar. - Deva partisi. Retrieved March 24, 2023, from <https://cdn.devapartisi.org/422/Hukuksuzlugun-Siradan-lasmasi.pdf>

56 Atik, O. (2023, March 22). Son Dakika... istanbul'da feto/PDY OPERASYONU: 21. upheli yakaland. Hurriyet Ana sayfa. Retrieved March 24, 2023, from <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/son-dakika-istanbulda-feto-pdy-operasyonu-21-supheli-yakalandi-42238270>

States and political powers foster hatred against targeted groups by manipulating and controlling the "language of news". Press conferences, press releases, briefings, and official statements are utilized for this purpose. By dictating to the media, the adjectives and descriptors that define the individuals, groups, and communities declared to be objects of hatred, they try to impose the official discourse on domestic and foreign public opinion.⁵⁷ In this period, the government has promoted and received popular support for the FETO (Fethullahist Terrorist Organization) discourse. The regime's 'FETO' discourse, which has turned into a "witch hunt" involving all AKP, which is the government party in Türkiye, opponents in the country and turned into a "hate speech", is used unquestioningly, freely, and irresponsibly in the Turkish media. It has evolved into a "discourse" that started as the "Hizmet movement" in Erdogan's speeches, continued as "beyond the ocean, parallel organization, parallel state," and after July 15, became the official discourse of the regime as the Fetullahist Terrorist Organization or FETO and targeted millions of people.⁵⁸

What is interesting is that the discourse produced and used by the government is also directly or indirectly used and supported by the opposition to produce a common hatred against the Gulen movement. Since the government and its supporters are consciously and publicly using hate speech and trying to spread it, the main responsibility for the acts of violence that will occur will be the words and behaviors of the opposition and members of the media who claim to be opposition, which prepare the environment for hate speech to turn into violence because if this hate speech environment was not supported by them, the government's hate speech would be ineffective.⁵⁹ Actions in which members of the community are subjected to violence, injustice, and unlawfulness are made the subject of media coverage and news as presented by the government and its supporters, thus legitimizing the unlawful actions of the government and paving the way for hate speech to turn into hate crimes.



57 Demir, V. (2021, December 26). Medyanın Haber Dili ve Devlet Gdml 'Fet Nefret Sylemi'. International Journalists. Retrieved March 24, 2023, from <https://internationaljournalists.org/tr/medyanin-haber-dili-ve-devlet-gudumlu-feto-nefret-soylemi/>

58 Ibid.

59 Albayrak, N. (2020, May 17). 'Fet' ifadesini kullanmak; siddete Ynelik Nefreti Yaymak, Tevik Etmek ve Savunmaktir. Tr724. Retrieved March 24, 2023, from <https://www.tr724.com/feto-ifadesini-kullanmak-siddete-yonelik-nefreti-yaymak-tesvik-etmek-ve-savunmaktir/>

Hate Speech and Hate Crime Landscape against the Gulen Movement in Turkiye



Hate speech and hate crime statements against the Gulen Movement are quite often used in Turkish media. According to “Nefretsucu.com”⁶⁰, whose aim is “to raise awareness about hate speech, incitement to violence and discrimination against members of the Gulen/Hizmet Movement carried out under the leadership of the AKP government, and to fight against incitement to violence,” between 2015 and 2020, in all national newspapers and news websites, there are 3088 attacks on rights and dignity, 159,835 incitement to hostility, 10,927 intolerance statements, 685 incitement to commit crimes against humanity, 149,781 news articles, 159,923 publications, 10,125 columns, and 917,048 crime words containing hate speech and hate crime against the movement, which means there are a lot of hate speech and hate crime against the movement.⁶¹ The news source that uses these hate speech and hate crime expressions the most is “Sabah” newspaper with 215,610, while “Yenisafak” ranks second with 126,867 expressions and “Hurriyet” newspaper ranks third with 113,263 expressions. During this period, individually, the media figures who used these expressions the most were Osman Ozgan (Yeni Safak) with 4773 expressions, Ersin Ramoglu (Sabah) with 4325 expressions and Nedim Sener (Posta and Haberturk) with 2667 expressions.⁶² The most used hate speech statement in all sources, without exception, is the ‘FETO’ discourse.⁶³

60 Nefretsucu.com. (n.d.). Home hate crime. Home Hate Crime. Retrieved March 29, 2023, from <https://en.nefretsucu.com/>

61 Ibid

62 Nefretsucu.com. (n.d.). Hate fueled writings. Hate Fueled Writings Hate Crime. Retrieved March 29, 2023, from <https://en.nefretsucu.com/hate-fueled-writings>

63 Ibid.

Hate Speech



Hate speech usually arises from the conceptual framework of "us versus them," in which individuals distinguish the group they think they are part of, the "in-group" or the "out-group".⁶⁴ Hate speech against out-groups is divided into three main categories. The first category, most commonly linked to hate speech, encompasses dehumanizing and demonizing the outgroup and its members. The second category proceeds from the conceptual to the physical attack and includes incitement to violence and even death against the outgroup.⁶⁵ The third category is called 'early warning', which means the origin of group-based hate speech is rarely dehumanization or incitement, rather it is usually more nuanced and restrained and demarcates the boundaries of hate speech.⁶⁶ Hate speech against the Gulen movement mostly fits into the first two categories.

These are some of the examples of hate speech committed against the Movement and its members on mainstream media websites just within two days (30-31 December 2020):

1. "Structures that have gained a strong position in our country by relying on imperial powers have begun to experience a major shake-up. July 15, 2016 can be seen as a starting point. FETO had also betrayed our country."⁶⁷
2. "They conduct a conscious, deliberate, organized smear campaign, a synchronized slander campaign that has been going on for years and escalated in the last 2 years. I guess they learned from FETO because they did their internship there."⁶⁸
3. "Bolu Deputy Governor Çağlayan Kaya has been suspended within the scope of the Fethullahist Terrorist Organization Parallel State Structure investigation conducted by the Ministry of Interior. On August 28, 2018, Çağlayan Kaya, who was appointed as Bolu Deputy Governor, left his position yesterday after being suspended. It is reported that there is no detention order against Kaya."⁶⁹
4. "FETO-affiliated son-in-law made "dictator" movie... "Mevlit Hilmi, Cinar, the director of the Niagara Foundation, of which Fethullah Gulen is the honorary chairman, and the son in-law of former AKP deputy Mehmet Ihsan Arslan, produced the short film "Diktatorler Olmez"."⁷⁰



64 Bahador, B. (2020, December 3). Classifying and identifying the intensity of hate speech. Items. Retrieved March 25, 2023, from <https://items.ssrc.org/disinformation-democracy-and-conflict-prevention/classifying-and-identifying-the-intensity-of-hate-speech/>

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid.

67 Turkyılmaz, S. (2020, December 31). Geride Kalan Bir Yıl Değil, Uzun Bir Sömürgecilik Dönemidir. Yeni Şafak. Retrieved March 25, 2023, from <https://www.yenisafak.com/yazarlar/selcuk-turkyilmaz/geride-kalan-bir-yil-degil-uzun-bir-somurgencilik-donemidir-2057221>

68 Sözcü Gazetesi. (2020, December 31). Yılın Komedişi: Yılmaz özdi'le atatürk'e Hakarettten Soruşturma. Sözcü Gazetesi. Retrieved March 25, 2023, from https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2020/gundem/yilin-komedişi-yilmaz-öz-di'le-ataturke-hakarettten-sorusturma-6191691/?utm_source=dahafazla_haber&utm_medium=free&utm_campaign=dahafazlahaber

69 Sabah. (2020, December 31). Bolu'da Vali Yardımcısı fetö'den Açığa Alındı. Sabah. Retrieved March 25, 2023, from <https://www.sabah.com.tr/bolu/2020/12/31/boluda-vali-yardimci-si-fetoden-aciga-alindi>

70 odatv4.com. (2020, December 31). Fetocudamat "diktator" Filmi cekti. ODATV. Retrieved March 25, 2023, from <https://www.odatv4.com/guncel/fetocudamat-diktator-filmi-cek-ti-31122006-199201>



5. “Istanbul Police Directorate Anti-Terror Department teams carried out a raid on the FETO terrorist organization's cell house in Ümraniye, which is called the 'hideout house'. During the operation, Kamil Bakum and Eşref Üstünova, the so-called 'private imam' in charge of lawyers of the organization, were arrested and detained. During the searches conducted in the cell house, many photographs taken at different times with FETO leader Fetullah Gülen were seized.”⁷¹
6. “On July 15, the EU did not take a stance in favor of Turkish democracy. On the contrary, it showed a much more open solidarity with those who wanted to carry out the coup. This is actually one of the biggest ruptures with the EU today. FETO, on the other hand, was a supra-legal organization that had infiltrated and embedded itself in Turkey's democracy, disrupting the democratic functioning of the system in every respect.”⁷²
7. “When FETO members say, "strip search", they are making a deliberate distortion and trying to exploit people's moral attitudes.”⁷³

As it is seen, every Gulen movement member is called as “terrorist” and “traitor” by news sources. When it is considered the number of people who have been investigated under “FETO”, it is obvious that 2 million people can not be traitors in a country. In this regard, this situation is nothing but targeting and demonizing millions of people and their families, justifying and legitimizing the unlawfulness (1st news).

When encountering any case that people could not deal with or explain, actors tend to associate these situations with FETO activities and smear these cases and their leading figures because the movement has always been blamed for the fulfillment of deep and hidden activities against not only the government but also the whole country as if they serve for other so-called “imperial powers” (2nd news).

Even if there is no proof or detention order on people working, especially, in public service, they can be dismissed by claiming that they have alleged links with the Gulen

movement because associating a person with the “FETO” discourse increases hatred against that person. Moreover, this situation leads to the creation of discrimination against those people in society and eroding trust in not only those people but also other people still working in public service (3rd news).

When people succeed in anything, their successes are undermined by referring their alleged connections to the movement with the aim of creating the perception that the Gulen movement and its members can not achieve any national or international success without cheating, fraud, or trick, which causes people to approach these achievements with hatred and prejudice. Additionally, mostly in those cases, those people are aligned with their relatives or connections who still have especially political roles at the national level, if they have, not only to undermine the success of those people but also target their connections and relatives who are still in charge (4th news).



71 Cumhuriyet. (2020, December 31). Fetö'Nün Kilit İsimleri yakalandı. Cumhuriyet. Retrieved March 25, 2023, from <https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/fetonun-kilit-isimleri-yakalandi-1802808>

72 Yeni Safak. (2020, December 30). Türkiye'nin teröristi AiHM'e Nasıl Görünüyor? Yeni Şafak. Retrieved March 25, 2023, from <https://www.yenisafak.com/yazarlar/yasin-aktay/turkiyenin-teroristi-aihme-nasil-gorunuyor-2057211>

73 Selvi, A. (2020, December 31). AiHM'Den çarpıcı çıplak Arama Kararları. Hürriyet Ana sayfa. Retrieved March 25, 2023, from <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/abdulkadir-selvi/aihmden-carpici-ciplak-arama-kararlari-41700736>

Having photographs with the leader of the Gulen movement is regarded as proof of being a terrorist and demonized by society because, with these photographs, it is much easier to be discriminated against, targeted, and associated with a higher position or role in the so-called ‘the hierarchy of the movement’, which result in more years in imprisonment and an increase in the possibility of being subjected to verbal and physical attack in a police interrogation (5th news).

The government creates an impression in society that the Gulen movement is the biggest obstacle that prevents the government from gaining respect at the international level, developing economically, and having good diplomatic relations with international organizations and other countries by claiming that the Gulen movement members have disrupted the function of the democratic and economic

system in the country. In this regard, the Gulen movement is designated as a scapegoat for any negativity and challenge that the government faces at both the national level and international level, and they resort to the ‘FETO’ discourse for every failure they face (6th news).

The government strives to discredit the allegations and accusations of rights violations, which specifically, Gulen movement members encounter, with the use of “FETO” discourse. In this way, they aim to lead ordinary people to ignore these accusations of rights violations, and target claimants as ‘liars’ and ‘terrorists’ trying to harm the reputation of the country; and they try to exonerate themselves of these rights violations at the international level by blaming those claimants as so-called “terrorists” recognized by the Turkish government (7th news).

Hate Crime



The impact and harm of hate speech can go beyond the targeted group or individual when hate speech is integrated into everyday political discourse.⁷⁴ In this context, political hate speech can mobilize members of the public to commit hate crimes against these target groups in support of their own groups.⁷⁵ Hate crime has three different types, which are physical assault, verbal harassment, and incitement to hatred.⁷⁶ In the first type of hate crime, “depending on the level of violence, the perpetrator may be charged with common assault, actual bodily harm or grievous bodily harm.”⁷⁷ The second type includes verbal abuse, threats, or name-calling that causes “common and an equally unpleasant experiences for minority groups”.⁷⁸ The third type of hate crime encompasses the offense of incitement to hatred arising when a person acts in a threatening way and intends to incite hatred, which “could be in words, pictures, videos, or music and includes information posted on websites”.⁷⁹ Hate crime against the Gulen movement includes all these three types of hate crime.

74 Roberts, J. V. (1995). Disproportionate harm: Hate crime in Canada. WORKING DOCUMENT. Retrieved March 25, 2023, from https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/csj-sjc/crime/wd95_11-dt95_11/p5.html

75 Perry, B., Akca, D., Karakus, F., & Bastug, M. F. (2020). Planting hate speech to harvest hatred: How does political hate speech fuel hate crimes in Turkey? *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, 9(4), 195–211. <https://doi.org/10.5204/ijcsd.v9i4.1514>

76 East Cambridgeshire District Council. (2023, January 16). Types of hate crime. East Cambridgeshire District Council. Retrieved March 25, 2023, from <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/content/types-hate-crime>

77 Ibid

78 Ibid

79 Ibid

Some of the examples of hate crimes committed against the movement and its members include the following:

1. "Turkey's Maarif Foundation, which has been waging a determined struggle to rid Africa of FETO, has also succeeded in taking over the organization's schools in South Sudan. The number of countries cleansed of FETO in the continent has reached 28. The President of South Sudan gave full support to the Turkish delegation, saying, "I am against foreigners, except my brother Erdogan."⁸⁰
2. "The task of eradicating FETO from the state and society cannot be accomplished with police, prosecutors, judiciary and prisons alone. For a lasting result, citizens who fall into the network of the sect must be ideologically transformed."⁸¹
3. "The fight against FETO continues relentlessly and inexorably. However, it is still not possible to say that this terrorist organization has been eradicated. The process must continue until the last FETO member is neutralized."⁸²
4. "If we want unity for independence, stability for the future and Turkey to be the winner, it is vital that we liquidate FETO's cadres, resources and command centers and clean up its remnants in state and social life."⁸³
5. "I want it to be known that the traitors and heroes of July 15 are still alive."⁸⁴
6. "Minister of National Defense Hulusi Akar ... said, "On July 15th, the treacherous militants of FETO, whose minds were indoctrinated with sacred values and so-called references and who infiltrated every aspect of the state and human life, attempted an unprecedented betrayal in our history against our nation, state, army, Turkish Armed Forces and democracy."⁸⁵
7. "Clear messages from President Erdogan: "We are making the world narrow for FETO members"⁸⁶
8. "Former AKP MP Mehmet Metiner said, "These FETO members are like an octopus, you cut off their arms from one side and they can enter another formation and infiltrate the party from there. But we will continue to fight them without giving up. As far as we know, we have cleared the AK Party of FETO members, but we cannot say the same for the cryptos, no one can."⁸⁷

80 Mentés, T. (2018, November 22). Fet•Afrika'Da cokuyor. Yeni ́afak. Retrieved March 27, 2023, from <https://www.yenisafak.com/gundem/feto-afrikada28-ulkede-sifirlandi-3410318>
81 Perincek, D. (2018, August 7). Dogu Perincek - FetoNun bitirilmesi icin Yeni Siyaset. Aydinlik. Retrieved March 27, 2023, from <https://www.aydinlik.com.tr/koseyazisi/fetonun-bitirilmesi-icin-yeni-siyaset-99642>

82 Bursalı, S. (2020, July 21). Ayasofya'nın Açılması Egemenlik Hakkımız. Sabah. Retrieved March 26, 2023, from <https://www.sabah.com.tr/yazarlar/sebnem-bursalı/2020/07/21/ayasofyanin-acilmasi-egemenlik-hakkimiz>

83 Odatv4.com. (2020, July 21). Kripto Damar Koparılmış Değil. ODATV. Retrieved March 26, 2023, from <https://www.odatv4.com/guncel/kripto-damar-koparilmis-degil-21072029-188074>

84 Ozturk, H. (2020, July 17). 15 Temmuz'un hainleri de Kahramanları da Hala Hayatta bilinsin isterim. Yeni ́afak. Retrieved March 26, 2023, from <https://www.yenisafak.com/yazarlar/hasan-ozturk/15-temmuzun-hainleri-de-kahramanlari-da-hala-hayatta-bilinsin-isterim-2055688>

85 Sozcu. (2020, July 17). Akar'Dan ermenistan'a çok Sert Tepki: Açtığı Bu kumpasta boğulacaktır. Sözcü Gazetesi. Retrieved March 26, 2023, from <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2020/gundem/son-dakika-akar-dan-ermenistana-cok-sert-tepki-ermenistan-actigi-bu-kumpasta-bogulacaktır-5932784/>

86 Sabah. (2020, July 15). Son Dakika: Başkan erdoğan'dan net mesajlar: Fetö'cülere Dünyayı Dar Ediyoruz... Sabah. Retrieved March 26, 2023, from <https://www.sabah.com.tr/gundem/2020/07/15/son-dakika-baskan-erdogandan-15-temmuzun-4uncu-yilinda-onemli-aciklamalar>

87 Akin, I. (2019). Mehmet Metiner: "Kayseri türkiye'nin pensilvanyası'dır". Sözcü Gazetesi. Retrieved March 26, 2023, from <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2019/gundem/mehmet-metiner-kayseri-turkiyenin-pensilvanyasidir-5368888/>

The schools and universities of the movement abroad are taken over by the Turkish government's organization which is called Maarif Foundation. The government carries out these activities mostly in autocratic regimes (such as South Sudan). With FETO discourse, people who are a member or work for the institutions of the movement are targeted not only in Türkiye but also in other countries. In particular, the Turkish government strives to cause these countries to regard those people as a national threat in their countries as well by collaborating with the leaders of these countries. In this regard, the right to work and the right to liberty and security of the Gulen movement members are endangered in these countries, and those people are forced to go back to Türkiye. **(1st news)**

The government endeavors to eradicate the Gulen movement from society; when doing this eradication, the police, the law, the judiciary, or even prison is not considered a solution to deal with the movement and its members by some media sources. This situation directly pushes ordinary people to create a broad-scale conflict environment, deny the state responsibility, and appeal to personal, illegal, and arbitrary punishment methods against the member of the movement. **(2nd news)**

In dealing with the movement, the government resorts to very radical statements. The statement of "...until the last FETO member is neutralized" is very similar to the Nazi narrative, which denied the Jews the right to life, in terms of inciting people to commit a kind of societal genocide. These kinds of statements carry the meaning of organized polarization, discrimination, and persecution. **(3rd news)**

In the Turkish media, the government creates a perception that the Gulen movement members are the sole and only barrier to the stability of the country. The members of the movement are subjected to dehumanized insults. "FETO" discourse is used as a means of oppression and power by the government. In this regard, the government excludes the members from not only bureaucratic cadres but also social life. **(4th news)**

The Turkish media incites people to violence against the movement and its members. They assume that each member of the movement is a "traitor" and create prejudice against these groups of people in society. In general, this prejudice factor, which is effective in the commission of hate crime, targets not only the victim of the hate crime but also the group to which the victim belongs. Therefore, the main target of the perpetrator or perpetrators becomes not the victim, but the whole group with whom the victim shares certain common characteristics. **(5th news)**

The Gulen movement is accused of infiltration and undermining of sacred values by the Turkish government. When such accusations are made, exaggeration and abuse of national and religious values are used to increase the efficacy of the "FETO" narrative. Especially by referring to these values, people are intimidated to oppose this "FETO" narrative due to the fact that they are afraid of being aligned with the movement that "betrayed" the country. **(6th news)**



The government explicitly commits hate crimes and causes the Gulen movement members to be exposed to discrimination and denied the enjoyment of their fundamental rights. The statement of “making the world narrow for FETO members” is an obvious threat to the right to life. Millions of people are clearly identified, targeted, and separated out not only at the national level but also at the international level by the Turkish government. This motivation is spread and instilled in people through mass media. In this regard, mass media is used as a kind of political and social weapon to fight against the movement. (7th news)

The government’s discourse about the Gulen movement in the media overlaps with the idea of purging and cleansing the Gulen movement members from every part of social life. Members of the movement are equated with animals (such as octopuses), which is a kind of dehumanization. Dehumanization paves the way for an individual to overcome the normal revulsion against murder and facilitates committing a crime. Furthermore, through this way, the government creates a sense of self-defense against a group of people and legitimizes their purge and cleansing idea, which is that if we do not get rid of them, they will get rid of us. (8th news)



Impact of Hate Speech and Hate Crime on the Gulen Movement in Turkiye

Since the corruption scandal that erupted in late 2013 and implicated several ministers from President Erdogan's family⁸⁸, a new era in Turkiye's history of "hatred" has begun. The President blamed the Gulen movement due to alleged ties of police officers to the movement for revealing the scandal in order to weaken his government, and in 2015, he officially identified the Gulen movement as the "Fethullahist Terrorist Organization" ('FETO')⁸⁹ and began effectively neutralizing the movement in Turkiye.⁹⁰ Immediately after the failed coup attempt in 2016 in Turkiye, Erdogan accused the movement of organizing the coup and launched a process of liquidation or purge in retaliation.⁹¹ The government, characterization of the movement initially as a "parallel state", a "state within the state," and then, ultimately a 'terrorist organization' has turned it to Turkiye's arch-enemy.⁹²

The impact of hate speech and hate crime on the movement in Turkiye has been multifaceted. One of the most important impacts has been the stigmatization of the movement and its followers, especially after the coup attempt.⁹³ Even "those who were not involved in the coup or any wrongdoing were discriminated against based on their political positions. Opponents, dissidents and political parties, who did disagree with the policies of the AKP were labeled as terrorists and enemies of the state."⁹⁴ During this period, those who oppose the narrative and practices of the government have been labeled as Gulenists, indirectly as terrorists as well.⁹⁵

88 Orucoglu, B. (2015, January 6). Why Turkey's mother of all corruption scandals refuses to go away. Foreign Policy. Retrieved March 28, 2023, from <https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/01/06/why-turkeys-mother-of-all-corruption-scandals-refuses-to-go-away/>

89 Pandya, S., Oliden, B., Anli, I.A. (2021). Shunned and Purged: Turkey's Crackdown on the Hizmet (G•en) Movement. In: Aydin, H., Langley, W. (eds) Human Rights in Turkey. Philosophy and Politics - Critical Explorations, vol 15. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57476-5_10

90 Human Rights Watch. (2016, July 26). Turkey: Rights protections missing from emergency decree. Human Rights Watch. Retrieved March 28, 2023, from <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/07/26/turkey-rights-protections-missing-emergency-decree>

91 Pandya, S., Oliden, B., Anli, I.A. (2021). Shunned and Purged: Turkey's Crackdown on the Hizmet (G•en) Movement. In: Aydin, H., Langley, W. (eds) Human Rights in Turkey. Philosophy and Politics - Critical Explorations, vol 15. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57476-5_10

92 Pandya, S. (2017). The roots of the Turkish crisis. Democracy Journal. Retrieved March 28, 2023, from <https://democracyjournal.org/magazine/43/the-roots-of-the-turkish-crisis/>

93 Pandya, S., Oliden, B., Anli, I.A. (2021). Shunned and Purged: Turkey's Crackdown on the Hizmet (G•en) Movement. In: Aydin, H., Langley, W. (eds) Human Rights in Turkey. Philosophy and Politics - Critical Explorations, vol 15. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57476-5_10

94 Caman, M.E. (2021). Authoritarianization and Human Rights in Turkey: How the AKP Legitimizes Human Rights Violations. In: Aydin, H., Langley, W. (eds) Human Rights in Turkey. (p. 184-185). Philosophy and Politics - Critical Explorations, vol 15. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57476-5_9

95 Ibid.



The 2016 coup attempt presented an opportunity for the government to employ these hateful narratives productively in the country, which has made the Gulen movement members vulnerable to hate speech and hate crime.⁹⁶ The government marginalized the movement and demonized it with all these hateful narratives. This discourse has resonated with the opposition, the CHP (the Republican People's Party) and the İYİP (the Good Party), and partly with the pro-Kurdish HDP (the People's Democratic Party). The nationalist MHP (the Nationalist Movement Party) is already siding with the Erdogan regime and supporting the position. All these situations have led these parties to accept "FETO" discourse generated by the AKP.⁹⁷ The acceptance of "FETO" and "terrorist" discourses encouraged politicians to increase hate speech used against social groups, especially the Gulen movement. "In this context, political fanaticism, combined with politicians' abuse of supporters' religiosity, created a climate of intolerance and suspicion toward the Gulen Movement."⁹⁸

Hate speech and hate crimes against the Gulen Movement in Türkiye have also had a deterrent effect on freedom of expression and association.⁹⁹ Everyone has the rights of association, which means "the right of individuals to interact and organize among themselves to collectively express, promote, pursue and defend common interests,"¹⁰⁰ and the right to freedom of expression, which means to "have the right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of your choice without interference and regardless of frontiers."¹⁰¹ Yet, In Türkiye, even people who might sympathize with those affected by the purge are unable to express it openly for fear of reprisals or others stigmatizing them as associated with the movement or other opposition groups.¹⁰² People do not feel secure criticizing the purge even on social media or openly protesting against the government¹⁰³ although providing freedom of expression and having free, independent, and diverse media are essential elements for a strong democracy.¹⁰⁴



96 Yilmaz, I., Caman, M. E., & Bashirov, G. (2020). How an Islamist party managed to legitimate its authoritarianization in the eyes of the secularist opposition: the case of Turkey. *Democratization*, 27(2), 265-82. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2019.1679772>

97 Caman, M.E. (2021). Authoritarianization and Human Rights in Turkey: How the AKP Legitimizes Human Rights Violations. In: Aydin, H., Langley, W. (eds) *Human Rights in Turkey*. (p. 194). *Philosophy and Politics - Critical Explorations*, vol 15. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57476-5_9

98 Perry, B., Akca, D., Karakus, F., & Bastug, M. F. (2020). Planting hate speech to harvest hatred: How does political hate speech fuel hate crimes in Turkey? *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, 9(4), (p. 207). <https://doi.org/10.5204/ijcsd.v9i4.1514>

99 Pandya, S., Olliden, B., Anli, I.A. (2021). Shunned and Purged: Turkey's Crackdown on the Hizmet (G•en) Movement. In: Aydin, H., Langley, W. (eds) *Human Rights in Turkey*. *Philosophy and Politics - Critical Explorations*, vol 15. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57476-5_10

100 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (n.d.). Freedom of Assembly and of Association. OHCHR. Retrieved March 28, 2023, from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/topic/freedom-assembly-and-association>

101 The Council of Europe. (n.d.). Freedom of expression and information. Freedom of Expression. Retrieved March 28, 2023, from <https://www.coe.int/en/web/freedom-expression/freedom-of-expression-and-information#:~:text=You%20have%20the%20right%20to,opinions%20and%20expressions%20of%20others.>

102 Pandya, S., Olliden, B., Anli, I.A. (2021). Shunned and Purged: Turkey's Crackdown on the Hizmet (G•en) Movement. In: Aydin, H., Langley, W. (eds) *Human Rights in Turkey*. *Philosophy and Politics - Critical Explorations*, vol 15. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57476-5_10

103 Ibid.

104 Council of Europe. (1999, March 23). Media and Democratic culture - pace.coe.int. Retrieved March 28, 2023, from <https://pace.coe.int/files/8666/html>

Growing relativism in public debates has led media ownership to become more concentrated in Türkiye.¹⁰⁵ “Using emergency powers, Turkey’s government closed around 150 media outlets, many with alleged ties to Gulen.”¹⁰⁶ Following the coup attempt, a state of emergency was declared and remained in place for two years. During this time, the Turkish government carried out an intense crackdown on critics of Erdogan and mass arrests of journalists.¹⁰⁷ Self-censorship in the Turkish media allowed Erdogan to dominate public discourse with ease. Erdogan portrayed himself as the main victim of the coup attempt, which enabled him to unite Turkish society, regardless of political affiliation, against the coup attempt and a common internal and external enemy which is the Gulen movement.¹⁰⁸

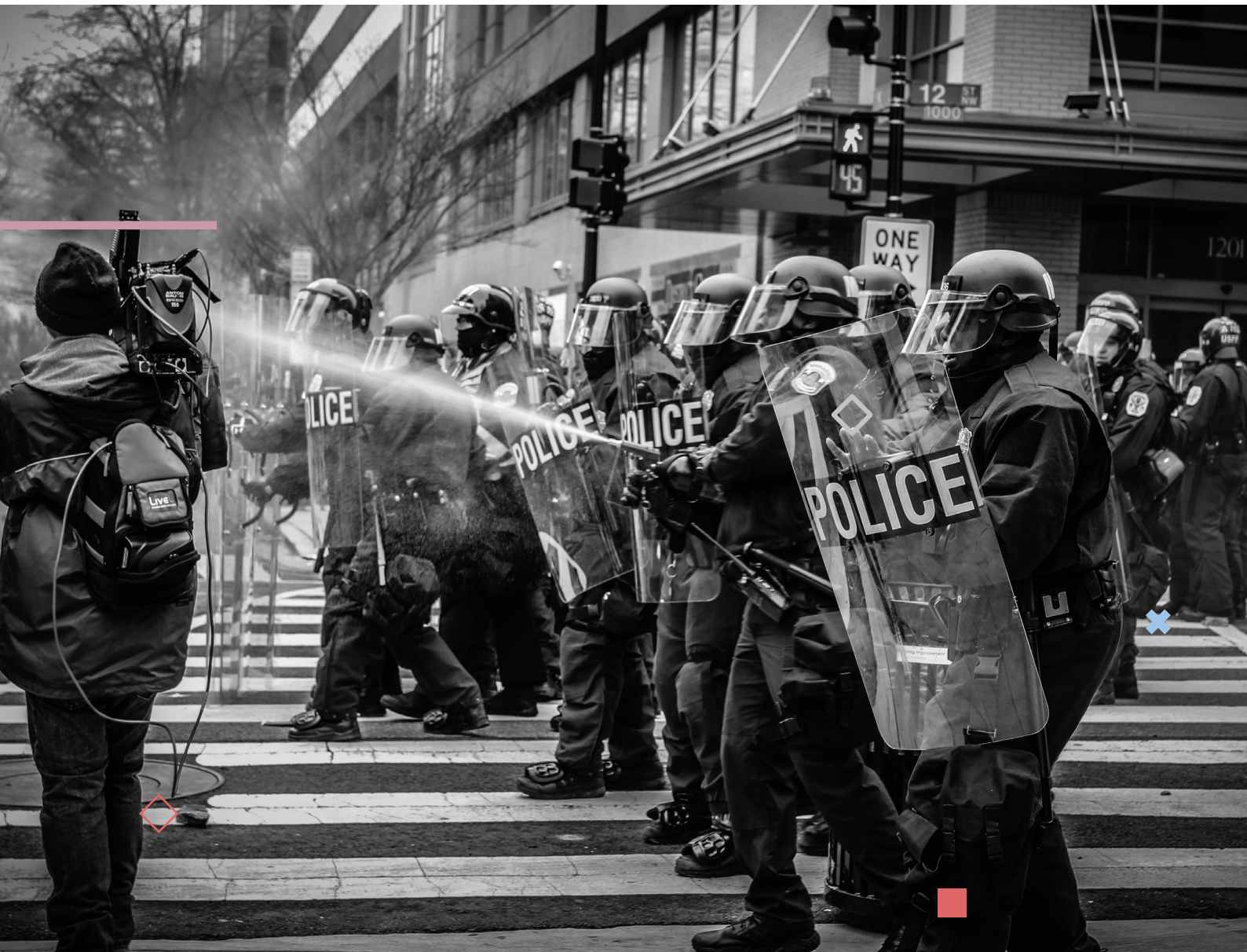
Hate speech and hate crimes have had a destructive impact on the social and economic well-being of the members of the movement.¹⁰⁹ The Gulen Movement ended up losing billions of dollars when its schools, universities, and tutoring centers were shut down and taken over by the Turkish government. From the coup attempt to 2019, more than 5800 academics have been dismissed without due process, many of whom have been suspected of links to the movement.¹¹⁰ Moreover, more than 130.000 public officers including teachers, judges,

police officers, military personnel, civil servants, etc. were dismissed.¹¹¹ Those who lost their jobs as a result of the dismissals suffered “professional annihilation” and were made unable to work in public service.¹¹² “Many dismissed workers are forbidden to work privately in professions regulated by the state, such as law and teaching.”¹¹³ Those who have been laid off have lost their income and health and social service benefits and, if living in public housing, are vulnerable to eviction by government order.¹¹⁴ Additionally, the government has seized private businesses and frozen bank accounts and other assets of some Gulen movement-affiliated people.¹¹⁵ The hate crime generated by this abuse of social power has dramatically manipulated the views and actions of pro-government supporters in Türkiye towards members of the movement and motivated people to mobilize against the movement to serve the interests of the government.¹¹⁶ ‘Personal bias’ and ‘prejudice’, as well as ‘unfair media’ coverage, have contributed to the further victimization of the Gulen movement members.¹¹⁷ In this regard, “Hate crimes incited by politically charged hate speech have reached a dangerous level, such that the victims have been forced to leave their country or otherwise distance themselves from society.”¹¹⁸



105 Akca, I., & Cammarata, S. (2023). Disinformation Report Türkiye. Retrieved March 28, 2023, from <https://peacejustice.eu/wp-content/uploads/Disinformation-Report-Turkiye.pdf>.
106 Reuters. (2022, August 31). Insiders reveal how Erdogan Tamed Turkey’s newsrooms. Reuters. Retrieved March 28, 2023, from <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/turkey-erdogan-media/>
107 Freedom House. (2017). Freedom House | expanding freedom and democracy. Retrieved March 28, 2023, from https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FH_FIW_2017_Report_Final.pdf
108 Demir, V. (2021). Freedom of the Media in Turkey Under the AKP Government. In: Aydin, H., Langley, W. (eds) Human Rights in Turkey. Philosophy and Politics - Critical Explorations, vol 15. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57476-5_3
109 Pandya, S., Olliden, B., Anli, I.A. (2021). Shunned and Purged: Turkey’s Crackdown on the Hizmet (Gülen) Movement. In: Aydin, H., Langley, W. (eds) Human Rights in Turkey. Philosophy and Politics - Critical Explorations, vol 15. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57476-5_10
110 Human Rights Watch. (2018, May 14). Turkey: Government Targeting Academics. Human Rights Watch. Retrieved March 28, 2023, from <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/05/14/turkey-government-targeting-academics>
111 Human Rights Watch. (2019). World Report 2019: Rights trends in Turkey. Human Rights Watch. Retrieved March 28, 2023, from <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/turkey>
112 Gardner, A. (2017, May 22). Turkey: “Professional annihilation” of 100,000 public sector workers in post-coup attempt purge. Amnesty International. Retrieved March 28, 2023, from <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/05/turkey-professional-annihilation-of-100000-public-sector-workers-in-post-coup-attempt-purge/>
113 Ibid.
114 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2018, March 20). Turkey: Un report details extensive human rights violations during protracted state of emergency. OHCHR. Retrieved March 28, 2023, from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2018/03/turkey-un-report-details-extensive-human-rights-violations-during-protracted-state-of-emergency>
115 Tr724. (2021, December 28). Mal Varlığının Dondurulması Kararı keyfi; Somut Tek Gerekecek yok. Tr724. Retrieved March 28, 2023, from <https://www.tr724.com/mal-varliginin-dondurulmasi-karari-keyfi-somut-tek-gerekecek-yok/>
116 Perry, B., Akca, D., Karakus, F., & Bastug, M. F. (2020). Planting hate speech to harvest hatred: How does political hate speech fuel hate crimes in Turkey? International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy, 9(4), (p. 199). <https://doi.org/10.5204/ijcjsd.v9i4.1514>
117 Ibid.
118 Ibid (p. 208).

The impact of hate speech and hate crime on the Gulen Movement in Türkiye is not confined to its supporters in Türkiye.¹¹⁹ Since the movement has an international presence,¹²⁰ its members and sympathizers have also been exposed to hate speech and hate crimes in other countries.¹²¹ Turkish government, in this regard, cooperates especially with these countries' intelligence organizations.¹²² This situation leads these countries to ignore or overlook human rights violations. For example, "six Turkish citizens and participants of the HGM (Hizmet/Gulen movement), residing in Kosovo, were "deported" in April, 2018, by Kosovo's secret service, clearly pressured by Turkey - but without the consent of Kosovo's Prime Minister (suggesting bribery)."¹²³ The Turkish government attempts to put bilateral pressure on other governments to help with the detentions. Erdogan urged the Albanian government to shut down Gulen-affiliated schools and take counter-action against alleged Gulenists, linking the request to development aid.¹²⁴ This set of tactics of the government causes the Gulen movement-affiliated people to be targeted, subjected to hate speech and hate crimes, deported, or kidnapped by other countries as well.




119 Pandya, S., Oliden, B., Anli, I.A. (2021). Shunned and Purged: Turkey's Crackdown on the Hizmet (G•en) Movement. In: Aydin, H., Langley, W. (eds) Human Rights in Turkey. Philosophy and Politics - Critical Explorations, vol 15. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57476-5_10
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122 Pandya, S., Oliden, B., Anli, I.A. (2021). Shunned and Purged: Turkey's Crackdown on the Hizmet (G•en) Movement. In: Aydin, H., Langley, W. (eds) Human Rights in Turkey. Philosophy and Politics - Critical Explorations, vol 15. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57476-5_10
123 Ibid (p. 209).
124 United States Department of State. (2023). 2022 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Turkey (T•kiye). U.S. Department of State. Retrieved March 29, 2023, from <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/turkey/>

Conclusion



Hate speech targets minorities who are already marginalized and undermines their civil integrity by making their predicament worse. Hate speech can be seen as a form of collective offense that targets the targets' reputations in society. On the other hand, hate crimes are criminal actions prompted by bias or prejudice toward specific groups of people, and they consist of two primary components: a criminal offense and bias motivation.

The Turkish government's assault on the Gulen movement came after a major graft controversy involving the president's closest allies and family broke out in December 2013, resulting in the imprisonment of numerous individuals, including ministers' sons. Erdogan accused the organization of plotting to destabilize the government. President Erdogan's political rhetoric has increased attacked members of the movement since this time. Following the unsuccessful coup attempt in July 2016, Erdogan's violence has taken the form of publicly demonizing and vilifying the movement. Because of the Turkish government's crackdown on the Gulen

movement, there has been a large rise in hate speech directed at the movement and its members. In this respect, the government portrays the Gulen movement and its followers as "terrorists." During this time, the government's and the public's approved rhetoric has been the "FETO" discourse. 

In this respect, when actors come across a case that they are unable to deal with or explain, they began to link it with FETO actions and smear the cases and their main figures. Even if there is no evidence or a detention order against individuals working, particularly in public service, they have been dismissed by saying that they have alleged ties with the Gulen movement, because associating a person with the 'FETO' rhetoric raises hate against that person. Additionally, in order to create the impression that the Gulen movement and its members cannot achieve any national or international success without cheating, fraud, or trick, people who have achieved success in anything are criticized for it by bringing up their alleged connections to the movement. This causes people to view these successes with prejudice and hatred.





The government employs "FETO" rhetoric as a tool of oppression and control. In this respect, the government excludes members not only from administrative positions but also from social life. The Turkish media incites violence against the movement and its supporters. They label every member of the movement as a "traitor," instilling bias in society against these categories of people. In general, this prejudice element, which is successful in the execution of hate crime, targets not only the victim of the hate crime, but also the victim's group. As a result, the primary goal of the perpetrator or perpetrators is no longer the victim, but the group with which the victim shares certain traits.

The movement in Turkiye has been impacted in a variety of ways by hate speech and hate crimes. The stigmatization of the movement and its supporters, particularly after the coup attempt, has been one of the most significant effects. Political groups, dissenters, and opponents of the AKP's policies were branded as foes of the state and terrorists. The Gulen movement in Turkiye has been the target of hate speech and hate crimes, which have a deterrent impact on freedom of assembly and expression. Even on social media, people do not feel safe condemning the sweep or publicly opposing the government. The movement's members' social and economic well-being have been negatively impacted by hate discourse and hate crimes. The dismissals caused "professional annihilation" for those who lost their positions and rendered them unable to work in the public sector. Many fired employees are prohibited from working individually in occupations governed by the government, like education and the law. In this regard, hate speech and hate crimes against the movement led to many victimizations, suffering, violation of human rights, and discrimination cases.

