



# Türkiye

*e-Devlet and UYAP*



Türkiye: e-Devlet and UYAP

This thematic COI report is not, and does not purport to be, a detailed or comprehensive survey of all aspects of the issues addressed. It should thus be weighed against other country of origin information available on the topic.

The report at hand does not include any policy recommendations. The information does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Danish Immigration Service.

Furthermore, this report is not conclusive as to the determination or merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Terminology used should not be regarded as indicative of a particular legal position.

© 2025 The Danish Immigration Service

The Danish Immigration Service  
Farimagssvej 51A  
4700 Næstved  
Denmark

Phone: +45 35 36 66 00  
us.dk

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## Executive summary

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This report outlines the structure and use of Türkiye's digital public platforms, e-Devlet and UYAP, with a focus on access procedures, document handling, and vulnerabilities to misuse. E-Devlet serves as the main public services portal offering Turkish citizens and residents digital access to a broad range of services, including education, health, and certain legal documentation.

UYAP, a judicial information system managed by the Ministry of Justice and accessible via e-Devlet, allows parties to upload and access legal documents related to court cases. Access is regulated through e-signatures and power of attorney requirements, with restrictions during investigative stages.

While both systems include verification and traceability mechanisms—such as QR codes and digital logs – several sources report irregularities, including failure to upload key documents, arbitrary confidentiality orders, and allegations of forged or fraudulently obtained judicial documents being used in asylum cases. Despite control measures, there are concerns about corruption, manipulation, and the illegal production of seemingly verifiable documents through informal networks and social media.

It is reportedly possible to purchase fraudulent documents online, which are claimed to be verifiable in the UYAP system and can be used in support of asylum applications. In addition, certain social media sources appear to offer such services to Turkish citizens.

Foreign residents, including Syrians staying in Türkiye under temporary protection, with valid ID numbers (beginning with 99) can access both platforms, though this access is revoked if their legal status lapses.

## Table of contents

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<b>Executive summary .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Abbreviations .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Glossary.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1. Background .....</b>	<b>7</b>
1.1 e-Devlet.....	7
1.1.1 Documents available from e-Devlet .....	8
1.2 UYAP .....	8
1.2.1 Documents in UYAP .....	9
1.2.2 Initiation of investigations and prosecutions .....	10
1.2.3 Access to documents in UYAP during investigation and trial stages .....	11
1.2.4 UYAP Document Editor .....	13
1.3 Foreign citizens in Türkiye, including Syrians .....	14
<b>2. Control procedures.....</b>	<b>15</b>
2.1 Parties with access to the UYAP portal.....	15
2.1.1 Verification of documents from e- Devlet .....	15
2.1.2 Verification of documents from UYAP .....	16
2.2 Digital log .....	17
<b>3. Fraudulent documents and corruption .....</b>	<b>18</b>
3.1 Forged and illegitimately issued Turkish judicial documents .....	18
3.1.1 Corruption within the Turkish judicial system .....	19
3.1.2 Consequences related to fraudulent UYAP documents .....	20
3.2 Access to fraudulent documents via social media.....	21
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Annexes 1 – Meeting minutes .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Annex 2 – Terms of Reference (ToR) .....</b>	<b>49</b>

## Introduction

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The thematic COI report at hand focuses on UYAP, the Turkish state's electronic portal for legal documents, and e-Devlet, the digital citizen platform in Türkiye. It examines the structure and operation of Türkiye's digital public platforms with a particular emphasis on access procedures, document management, and potential vulnerabilities to misuse.

The Danish Immigration Service (DIS) developed the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the mission in consultation with the defined target users of the report, in particular the Secretariat of the Danish Refugee Appeals Board and the Asylum Division of DIS. The ToR is included in [Annex 2](#) of this report.

The report is written in accordance with the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) COI Report Methodology and has undergone an internal peer review within the Danish Immigration Service.<sup>1</sup>

The data presented in this report have been collected using the principle of multiple sourcing to ensure validity and balance. The report draws on publicly available written sources. This is complemented by an inexhaustive review of relevant social media posts and groups as well as information obtained through online interviews with six sources, including lawyers, an NGO, and experts with judicial knowledge. The interviewed sources were selected for their expertise, merit, and experience relevant to the Terms of Reference.

The review of social media posts and groups was conducted according to open-source principles, focusing on the collection of publicly available data from social media to map the availability of forged or fraudulently obtained UYAP and e-Devlet-verified documents on social media. The review used Turkish-language keywords such as “UYAP belgesi satın al” (buy UYAP document), “e-Devlet onaylı belgeler” (e-Devlet-approved documents), “tutuklama kararı hazırlama” (preparing arrest warrants), and “iltica evrakları garantili” (guaranteed asylum documents), along with variations and related terms like iltica (asylum), Avrupa (Europe), destek (assistance), yol (route), belge (document), seyahat (travel), and kaçak (illegal) to identify relevant posts and groups.

The oral sources were briefed on the purpose of the meetings and informed that their statements would be included in a publicly available report in accordance with their preferred referencing. Minutes were written for each interview and forwarded to the sources for their approval, giving them the opportunity to amend, comment on or correct their statements. Some sources requested varying degrees of anonymity. All of the meeting minutes can be found in [Annex 1](#). Care has been taken to present the views of the sources as accurately and transparently as possible. The individual sources should not be held accountable for the content of the report.

For the sake of transparency, accuracy and reader-friendliness, the paragraphs in the minutes of the interviews in Annex 1 have consecutive numbers, which are used in the footnotes when

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<sup>1</sup> European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), *Country of Origin (COI) Report Methodology*, February 2022, [url](#)

referring to the statements of the sources. Not all details and nuances of the sources' statements are addressed in the report, but all statements are kept in the minutes.

The research and editing of the report were finalised in June 2025.

The report is available on the website of [us.dk](https://us.dk), thus available to all stakeholders in the refugee status determination process as well as to the public.

## Abbreviations

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<b>COI</b>	Country of Origin Information
<b>DIS</b>	Danish Immigration Service
<b>FETÖ</b>	Fethullahçı Terör Örgütü (Fethullahist Terrorist Organization)
<b>EUAA</b>	European Union Agency for Asylum
<b>GSM</b>	Global System for Mobile Communications
<b>LGBT</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
<b>MoFA</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>PKK</b>	Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê (Kurdistan Workers' Party)
<b>UYAP</b>	Ulusal Yargı Ağı Projesi (National Judiciary Informatics System)

## Glossary

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<b>Alevi</b>	A religious and cultural community in Türkiye that follows a distinct interpretation of Islam, incorporating elements of Shia Islam, Sufism, and local traditions. Alevis differ from the Sunni majority in rituals, theology, and practices, and have historically faced discrimination and marginalisation in Turkish society.
<b>e-Devlet</b>	Türkiye's official online government portal that provides citizens, residents, and businesses with digital access to a wide range of public services. Through e-Devlet, users can access personal records, apply for documents, and interact with various state institutions.
<b>FETÖ</b>	The term used by the Turkish government to describe the movement led by the late Fethullah Gülen. The Turkish authorities accuse the group of orchestrating the failed coup attempt in July 2016 and classify it as a terrorist organisation. Supporters of the movement typically refer to it as the Hizmet movement ("Service movement").
<b>Fake documents</b>	Documents that are entirely fabricated or falsely created to appear genuine, often used to mislead authorities or obtain something under false pretences. Unlike altered or partially genuine documents, fake documents have no legitimate origin.
<b>Forged documents</b>	Altered or tampered versions of genuine documents, where details such as names or dates may be changed to mislead.
<b>Fraudulent documents</b>	Documents that are forged, altered, or falsely issued with the intent to deceive or misrepresent facts. They are commonly used to gain unauthorized access, benefits, or legal status, and include fake identification papers, forged certificates, or manipulated official records.
<b>Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM)</b>	An international standard for mobile phone networks that enables voice calls, text messaging, and basic data services, GSM is now widely used around the world and forms the foundation of many modern mobile communication systems.
<b>Illegitimately issued documents</b>	Documents which may originate from official systems or authorities but are produced without proper legal grounds or due process—often through abuse of power or corruption.
<b>UYAP</b>	A centralised digital system in Türkiye that integrates all judicial institutions, enabling electronic management of legal documents, case files, and court procedures. UYAP is used by judges, prosecutors, lawyers, and citizens to access and process legal information.



# 1. Background

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Turkish law guarantees judicial independence, but in practice, the judiciary continues to be influenced, especially by the executive branch.<sup>2</sup> Since 2016, thousands of judges and prosecutors have been replaced by individuals loyal to the government.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, arbitrariness in the judiciary remains a challenge, which Türkiye has been criticised for by several actors, e.g. the Council of Europe and its Commissioner for Human Rights.<sup>4</sup>

## 1.1 e-Devlet

E-Devlet (e-Government or e-State in English) is a portal that provides access to all public services in one place for Turkish citizens and residents, businesses and government agencies.<sup>5</sup> According to several sources, e-Devlet is the overall access point for any interaction between the citizen and the public authorities in Türkiye.<sup>6</sup>

The portal covers a wide range of services, such as job applications and judicial cases that Turkish citizens might be involved in.<sup>7</sup> Among other things, e-Devlet also provides online services in relation to education, health and social security.<sup>8</sup>

E-Devlet can be accessed on a computer or a mobile phone through an application available via Android or iOS. To obtain an access code for the portal, a Turkish citizen over the age of 15 must provide their national ID-card and ID-number. The access code will be issued at Turkish post offices with the presentation of a Turkish ID-card. It is a requirement for the individual in question to be present at the post office. In some cases, another person can receive the access code on behalf of the applicant with a notarised permission.<sup>9</sup>

Turkish citizens residing abroad can also access the portal. In this case, the individual must apply for an account via a Turkish embassy or consulate. It is also possible to receive an access code from Turkish online banks.<sup>10</sup>

It is not mandatory to have an e-Devlet account, and according to one source, older generations generally do not use the platform.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> USDOS, *2023 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Turkey (Türkiye)*, 23 April 2024, [url](#); Article 19, *Turkey: Another striking example of the absence of an independent judiciary*, 29 April 2022, [url](#)

<sup>3</sup> Freedom House, *Freedom in the World 2024 - Turkey*, 2024, [url](#)

<sup>4</sup> Landinfo, *Tyrkia Gülen-bevegelsen og rettsoppgjøret etter kuppforsøket i 2016*, 12 July 2024

<sup>5</sup> Türkiye.gov, *e-Government Gateway*, 2025, [url](#); A well-informed legal source: 35-36; Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 42

<sup>6</sup> A well-informed NGO: 30; A well-informed legal source: 37; Yasin Turhan: 20; Kerem Altıparmak: 24

<sup>7</sup> Daily Sabah, *Türkiye's e-Govt system now covers almost entire population*, 7 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>8</sup> Türkiye.gov, *Resmî Kurumların Sunduğu e-Hizmetler [E-Services Offered by Official Institutions]*, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>9</sup> Belgien, CEDOCA, *TURQUIE - E-Devlet, UYAP [Türkiye – E-Devlet, UYAP]*, 8 January 2025, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>10</sup> IOM, *Türkiye - Country Fact Sheet 2023*, July 2023, [url](#), p. 9; Belgien, CEDOCA, *TURQUIE - E-Devlet, UYAP [Türkiye – E-Devlet, UYAP]*, 8 January 2025, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>11</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 44

### 1.1.1 Documents available from e-Devlet

It is not possible for citizens to upload documents in e-Devlet, but they are able to apply for many different types of files or documents related to, for instance, health services or social security. An individual can, for example, apply for documents stating that they do not owe money to the state,<sup>12</sup> university graduation documentation, birth certificates and official documents related to military service.<sup>13</sup>

There is some legal information in e-Devlet, albeit more limited than in UYAP, but it is not possible to download judicial documents from e-Devlet.<sup>14</sup>

## 1.2 UYAP

Ulusal Yargı Ağı Projesi (hereafter UYAP) is the Turkish state's electronic judicial information portal. UYAP is a separate part of the e-Devlet system.<sup>15</sup> The Ministry of Justice is responsible for UYAP, which was developed to integrate the national judicial system and enables Turkish citizens and residents to follow their legal cases in judicial and administrative courts electronically.<sup>16</sup> In order to sign into UYAP, a person must have an e-Devlet account.<sup>17</sup>

UYAP connects all divisions of the Ministry of Justice, such as courts, public prosecutor offices and law enforcement offices.<sup>18</sup> Through UYAP, it is possible to share legal information between judicial institutions and other institutions, for instance law enforcement or land registry.<sup>19</sup>

Different groups of users enter UYAP through different portals. For example, ordinary citizens use a portal called *Vatandaş UYAP*, while lawyers use a separate portal called *Avukat UYAP*.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, there are separate portals for experts appointed by the courts, mediators, conciliators as well as public and private institutions.<sup>21</sup>

Though it has not been implemented in all of Türkiye, it is possible to attend online hearings in UYAP in some cases.<sup>22</sup> One source added that electronic hearings are specific for lawyers.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>12</sup> A well-informed NGO: 30

<sup>13</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 39

<sup>14</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 38

<sup>15</sup> Landinfo, *Tyrkia: UYAP*, 23 July 2024, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>16</sup> A well-informed NGO: 1, 28; Yasin Turhan: 1; Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 1, 43; Kerem Altıparmak: 1; A well-informed legal source: 33

<sup>17</sup> CEDOCA, *TURQUIE - E-Devlet, UYAP [Türkiye – E-Devlet, UYAP]*, 8 January 2025, [url](#), p. 5; Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 7

<sup>18</sup> Moroğlu Arseven, *VIRTUAL JUSTICE IN TURKEY: Where We Are and What to Expect From the Future?*, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 7; CoE, *The Mediation screens are becoming operable in UYAP (National Judicial Network System) as of 1 June 2016*, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>19</sup> Berk, S., "Access to Justice" in Turkey: Indicators and Recommendations, October 2011, [url](#), p. 40

<sup>20</sup> The Netherlands, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *General Country of Origin Information Report on Türkiye*, August 2023, [url](#), p. 17; A well-informed NGO: 2; A well-informed legal source: 4; Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 2; Kerem Altıparmak: 2

<sup>21</sup> Moroğlu Arseven, *VIRTUAL JUSTICE IN TURKEY: Where We Are and What to Expect From the Future?*, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 8; A well-informed NGO: 2; A well-informed legal source: 4

<sup>22</sup> A well-informed legal source: 6; Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 6

<sup>23</sup> A well-informed legal source: 6

### 1.2.1 Documents in UYAP

Citizens can upload documents to UYAP in formats such as UDF, PDF and JPG.<sup>24</sup>

Every document related to a court case is uploaded to UYAP,<sup>25</sup> including civil actions, petitions, drafts of verdicts, evidence,<sup>26</sup> subpoenas, indictments, etc. Sometimes, however, there are several defendants in a particular case and it can happen that large dossiers are not scanned and uploaded to UYAP. When that happens, it is necessary to make photocopies from the physical courthouse.<sup>27</sup>

One source said that while all documents related to a specific case should be uploaded to UYAP to ensure an effective legal defence, there is a risk that a court clerk may forget to upload a particular document. Therefore, lawyers can visit the courthouse to check the physical files if they suspect that a document is missing from the system.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, according to a Belgian COI report, it happens that some documents are not uploaded to UYAP for various reasons.<sup>29</sup>

There are two levels in UYAP: open cases and an archive for closed cases. All documents from a case remain visible and accessible after it has been closed,<sup>30</sup> but not to third parties.<sup>31</sup>

UYAP does not support video files, as the file size limit is 10 megabytes. Documents larger than 10 megabytes cannot be uploaded and must be compressed. Video recordings of demonstrations from police cameras, for instance, can be requisitioned physically from the courthouse but are not accessible through UYAP. Photographs under 10 megabytes can be uploaded to UYAP, while larger photos must be obtained physically at the courthouse.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> A well-informed NGO: 5

<sup>25</sup> Landinfo, *Tyrkia: UYAP*, 23 July 2024, [url](#), p. 1; A well-informed legal source: 5; Yasin Turhan: 2

<sup>26</sup> Yasin Turhan: 2

<sup>27</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 8-9

<sup>28</sup> Kerem Altıparmak: 3, 5

<sup>29</sup> CEDOCA, *TURQUIE - E-Devlet, UYAP [Türkiye – E-Devlet, UYAP]*, 8 January 2025, [url](#), p. 5

<sup>30</sup> Kerem Altıparmak: 6; A well-informed NGO: 7; A well-informed legal source: 8; Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 19; Yasin Turhan: 4

<sup>31</sup> Yasin Turhan: 4

<sup>32</sup> Kerem Altıparmak: 3, 4

### 1.2.2 Initiation of investigations and prosecutions

According to several sources, the threshold for initiating investigations in Türkiye is very low<sup>33</sup> and includes liking, sharing and commenting on certain content on social media.<sup>34</sup> Investigations can be based on complaints against an individual by a neighbour, relative, friend<sup>35</sup> or an informant.<sup>36</sup> According to sources, investigations may be initiated arbitrarily.<sup>37</sup>

In a report published by the Finnish Immigration Service, a researcher noted that in Gülen-related cases, citizens can easily submit accusations to the Ministry of Information through the CİMER web portal,<sup>38</sup> and many cases have been initiated based on reports containing unreliable or fabricated information.<sup>39</sup> Still, the Ministry is required to investigate all accusations, and the government allegedly tends to rely on them. Accusations may stem from personal rivalry or dislike, and if the complainant holds a higher position, authorities are allegedly more likely to believe them.<sup>40</sup>

A considerable number of cases involving defamation of the current president of Türkiye and defamation of public officials, ministers, mayors and members of parliament result in criminal prosecution.<sup>41</sup>

A legal source noted that in recent years, it has become more usual that prosecutors begin investigations with or without solid evidence and subsequently file the case with the courts. The universal rule that a person is presumed innocent until proven guilty has been switched around, so that people try to prove their innocence.<sup>42</sup> A professor of law added that courts and judges rarely reject indictments because of irregularities. In almost all cases, indictments, whether problematic or not, are accepted by the courts.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Kerem Altıparmak: 23; Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 37; A well-informed NGO: 22, 25; A Turkish lawyer: 15; Landinfo, *Tyrkia Gülen-bevegelsen og rettsoppgjøret etter kuppforsøket i 2016*, 12 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>34</sup> Freedom House, *Freedom on the Net 2024 - Turkey*, 16 October 2024, [url](#); Euronews, *Dozens arrested over online posts in Turkey after key Erdoğan rival detained*, 20 March 2025, [url](#); Article 19, *Blog: COVID-19, social media and freedom of expression in Turkey*, 8 April 2022, [url](#); A well-informed legal source: 29; Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 34, 36

<sup>35</sup> A well-informed legal source: 30; A well-informed NGO: 23

<sup>36</sup> Finnish Immigration Service, *Turkey - Individuals associated with the Gülen movement*, June 2024, [url](#), pp. 27-28, 31

<sup>37</sup> A well-informed NGO: 25; Yasin Turhan: 17; A well-informed legal source: 26

<sup>38</sup> CİMER is an online platform designed to address inquiries, complaints and requests for information from the public, AIDA, *Türkiye COUNTRY REPORT*, August 2024, [url](#), p. 127

<sup>39</sup> Finnish Immigration Service, *Turkey - Individuals associated with the Gülen movement*, June 2024, [url](#), pp. 27-28, 65

<sup>40</sup> Finnish Immigration Service, *Turkey - Individuals associated with the Gülen movement*, June 2024, [url](#), pp. 27-28, 65

<sup>41</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 34; A Turkish lawyer: 16; Freedom House, *Freedom on the Net 2024 - Turkey*, 16 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>42</sup> A well-informed legal source: 25

<sup>43</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 33

### 1.2.3 Access to documents in UYAP during investigation and trial stages

#### 1.2.3.1 Investigation stage

The first stage of a criminal case is the investigation by the authorities, which can be initiated by the prosecutor or upon an accusation made by a third party. Once the prosecutor has started the investigation, there should be an entry in UYAP based on an investigation file number. This does not mean that the involved person would be able to access the case in the UYAP-system, but if they were summoned for a statement or defence by the authorities, they may be aware of the case's existence. However, the person in question is not able to access the case in UYAP during the investigation phase.<sup>44</sup>

Article 157 of the Code of Criminal Procedure states that investigations are conducted confidentially by default.<sup>45</sup> Thus, the defendant cannot access information about the case or documents related to the case in e-Devlet or UYAP during the investigation stage.<sup>46</sup> An appointed lawyer would be able to access information and documents in UYAP<sup>47</sup> if they request access by submitting a file examination request. If approved by the prosecutor, they can view documents not subject to a confidentiality order.<sup>48</sup>

Defence lawyers and public defenders may gain access to a criminal case during the investigation stage. However, certain categories of files—such as intelligence reports or anonymous witness statements—may be withheld for reasons of national security or to protect the integrity of the investigation. These files remain confidential and are not visible in UYAP. While lawyers can challenge such restrictions, it is generally difficult to obtain access when the court has deemed the information sensitive.<sup>49</sup>

#### 1.2.3.2 Restriction of the defence attorney's right to examine the file (confidentiality orders)

A lawyer's access to examine contents of a file or to obtain copies of documents during the investigation stage can be restricted by a judge's decision upon the request of the public prosecutor, if such access jeopardises the purpose of the investigation.<sup>50</sup> Article 153 of the Code of Criminal Procedure limits confidentiality orders to certain crimes, such as crimes against state

<sup>44</sup> A well-informed legal source: 23

<sup>45</sup> Türkiye, Mevzuat.gov.tr, CEZA MUHALEMESİ KANUNU [Code of Criminal Procedure], 2004, [url](#), Article 157; Hukuki Haber, Basın Yayında ve Uygulamada Karıştırılan Bir Kavram Olarak SORUŞTURMADA GİZLİLİK KARARI ve AVUKATIN SORUŞTURMA DOSYASINI İNCELEME YETKİSİ, BU YETKİNİN KISITLANMASI [The Confidentiality Decision In Investigations As A Misunderstood Concept In Media And Practice, And The Lawyer's Right To Examine The Investigation File, And The Restriction Of This Right], 17 September 2024, [url](#); A well-informed NGO: 16

<sup>46</sup> The Netherlands, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Country of Origin Information Report on Türkiye, August 2023, [url](#), p. 17; CEDOCA, TURQUIE - E-Devlet, UYAP [Türkiye – E-Devlet, UYAP], 8 January 2025, [url](#), p. 6; A well-informed NGO: 10; Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 12

<sup>47</sup> CEDOCA, TURQUIE - E-Devlet, UYAP [Türkiye – E-Devlet, UYAP], 8 January 2025, [url](#), p. 6; A Turkish lawyer: 12

<sup>48</sup> A well-informed NGO: 10, 17; Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 16; Kerem Altıparmak: 7

<sup>49</sup> A well-informed NGO: 16-18

<sup>50</sup> Türkiye, Mevzuat.gov.tr, CEZA MUHALEMESİ KANUNU [Code of Criminal Procedure], 2004, [url](#), Article 153 (2);

security, intentional killing and sexual assault. A professor of law opined that in practice, confidentiality orders are often issued arbitrarily in criminal investigations with regards to crimes other than those listed in Article 153.<sup>51</sup>

If the court issues a confidentiality order in a particular case, in principle, neither the person concerned nor their lawyer can access court documents in UYAP. Pursuant to Article 153 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, however, lawyers are able to obtain a limited range of documents during the investigation, such as the suspect's statements, expert reports and records of other judicial procedures in which the person concerned has the right to be present.<sup>52</sup>

According to Landinfo, lawyers can apply for access or insight to documents in such cases, but it is rarely granted.<sup>53</sup> One source informed the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs that, during the investigative phase, access to documents varies. In some cases, all documents are available, while in others, none will be shown. This depends on the nature of the case and the discretion of the prosecutor.<sup>54</sup> A Turkish lawyer informed DIS that in theory, access to documents in every case can be limited by the president of the court, but it depends on the margin of appreciation of the president in question. Normally, it would apply to cases regarding organised crime.<sup>55</sup>

If a court issues a restriction for confidentiality reasons on a case, it would not be possible to access the documents physically at the courthouse either. Only the president of the court would have access to documents in such a case.<sup>56</sup>

Sources have seen confidentiality orders being used arbitrarily<sup>57</sup> to deny their clients access to documents.<sup>58</sup> According to two sources, it depends on the subject and parties of the case.<sup>59</sup> A professor of law added that in some cases, the authorities issue a confidentiality order to delay access to the information for the lawyers.<sup>60</sup>

Confidentiality orders, whether in compliance with the law or not, are mostly used in cases related to terrorist offences, crimes against the safety of the country, child abuse or rape. In prac-

<sup>51</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 17; Türkiye, Mevzuat.gov.tr, *CEZA MUHALEMESİ KANUNU* [Code of Criminal Procedure], 2004, [url](#), Article 153 (2)

<sup>52</sup> Türkiye, Mevzuat.gov.tr, *CEZA MUHALEMESİ KANUNU* [Code of Criminal Procedure], 2004, [url](#), Article 153; The Netherlands, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *General Country of Origin Information Report on Türkiye*, August 2023, [url](#), p. 17; CEDOCA, *TURQUIE - E-Devlet, UYAP* [Türkiye – E-Devlet, UYAP], 8 January 2025, [url](#), p. 6; A well-informed legal source: 11; Hukuki Haber, *Basın Yayında ve Uygulamada Karıştırılan Bir Kavram Olarak SORUŞTURMA GİZLİLİK KARARI ve AVUKATIN SORUŞTURMA DOSYASINI İNCELEME YETKİSİ, BU YETKİNİN KISITLANMASI* [The Confidentiality Decision In Investigations As A Misunderstood Concept In Media And Practice, And The Lawyer's Right To Examine The Investigation File, And The Restriction Of This Right], 17 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>53</sup> Landinfo, *Tyrkia: UYAP*, 23 July 2024, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>54</sup> The Netherlands, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *General Country of Origin Information Report on Türkiye*, August 2023, [url](#), p. 17

<sup>55</sup> A Turkish lawyer: 6

<sup>56</sup> A Turkish Lawyer: 7

<sup>57</sup> A well-informed legal source: 13; Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 18; Kerem Altıparmak: 10

<sup>58</sup> Kerem Altıparmak: 10

<sup>59</sup> A well-informed legal source: 13; Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 18

<sup>60</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 18

tice, in recent years, when an investigation begins concerning politicians or NGOs who are accused of acting contrary to the benefit of the country, the authorities can use this provision. Confidentiality orders could technically be used in cases involving ordinary citizens, such as investigations into insults against the president and offences committed on social media, but it is less common.<sup>61</sup>

### 1.2.3.3 Trial stage

Once the trial stage begins and the prosecutor has issued an indictment, all documents related to a case should become accessible.<sup>62</sup> An exception to this can be reports prepared by intelligence services, which in administrative cases may remain confidential despite legal challenges and are only accessible to the judge and the prosecutor in the case in question. Generally, information, documents, data and records of an intelligence nature and analyses made by the National Intelligence Organisation cannot be requested by judicial authorities, except for crimes included in the seventh chapter of the fourth part of the second book of the Turkish Penal Code.<sup>63</sup>

According to Landinfo, documents in cases bound by a confidentiality order will not become visible after a court case has been initiated.<sup>64</sup> Contrary to this, a lawyer stated that there are no cases where certain documents from the prosecution will not be made available to the defendant's attorney when the case has reached the prosecution stage, as a defendant has the right to access all documents connected to a case, and there are no restrictions to this.<sup>65</sup> A Turkish lawyer informed DIS that in general, there is no restriction on any documents in the trial stage. However, the court can decide to place a secrecy order in the trial stage due to, for instance, state secrecy or national security.<sup>66</sup>

If the prosecutor decides not to pursue a case, the documents from the investigation will, as a general rule, not become available to the subject of the investigation or their lawyer.<sup>67</sup>

### 1.2.4 UYAP Document Editor

UYAP uses a specific file format called UDF, which has not been adopted by other applications or systems. It is not possible to open UDF files without the UYAP Document Editor, which is available for free for both Windows and mac OSX systems.<sup>68</sup> It was developed by the Ministry of

<sup>61</sup> A well-informed legal source: 12; CEDOCA, *TURQUIE - E-Devlet, UYAP [Türkiye – E-Devlet, UYAP]*, 8 January 2025, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>62</sup> Mevzuat.gov.tr, Türkiye, *CEZA MUHALEMESİ KANUNU [Code of Criminal Procedure]*, 2004, [url](#), Article 153; The Netherlands, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *General Country of Origin Information Report on Türkiye*, August 2023, [url](#), p. 17; CEDOCA, *TURQUIE - E-Devlet, UYAP [Türkiye – E-Devlet, UYAP]*, 8 January 2025, [url](#), p. 6; A well-informed NGO: 10, 16; A well-informed legal source: 12, 24; Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 12, 32; Kerem Altıparmak: 9; A Turkish Lawyer: 8

<sup>63</sup> Kerem Altıparmak: 9; Türkiye, Mevzuat, *Devlet İstihbarat Hizmetleri ve Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı Kanunu [State Intelligence Services and National Intelligence Organisation Law]*, 1983, [url](#), Additional Article 1

<sup>64</sup> Landinfo, *Tyrkia: UYAP*, 23 July 2024, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>65</sup> Yasin Turhan: 7

<sup>66</sup> A Turkish lawyer: 8

<sup>67</sup> Kerem Altıparmak: 11

<sup>68</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 21; CEDOCA, *TURQUIE - E-Devlet, UYAP [Türkiye – E-Devlet, UYAP]*, 8 January 2025, [url](#), p. 5; Kerem Altıparmak: 14



Justice. UYAP Document Editor is integrated with UYAP,<sup>69</sup> and its main purpose is to upload documents to UYAP in UDF format<sup>70</sup> and to enable electronic signatures.<sup>71</sup> For more information on electronic signatures, see 2.1.2.1.

Documents can be submitted in PDF, but it is necessary to include a cover page in UDF format.<sup>72</sup> UYAP Document Editor is not compatible with complex documents, e.g. defence statements with photos or graphics.<sup>73</sup>

### 1.3 Foreign citizens in Türkiye, including Syrians

Foreign residents, including Syrian citizens, with official residence permits in Türkiye, have the right to access e-Devlet, and obtain a password for the platform by applying for one at the post office (PTT Universal Postal Service Provider)<sup>74</sup> or other authorised branches<sup>75</sup> using their foreigner's identity number, which begins with 99.<sup>76</sup> Furthermore, this grants them access to the UYAP portal.<sup>77</sup>

This also applies to Syrian citizens residing in Türkiye under temporary protection as long as they are in possession of a 99-foreigner's number.<sup>78</sup> However, if their temporary protection registration has been canceled or ceased, it is deactivated, preventing them from accessing e-Devlet and, consequently, UYAP.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> A well-informed NGO: 5; A well-informed legal source: 15

<sup>70</sup> A well-informed legal source: 15

<sup>71</sup> A well-informed NGO: 5

<sup>72</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 24-25; Kerem Altıparmak: 14; Yasin Turhan: 6

<sup>73</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 24-25

<sup>74</sup> A well-informed legal source: 33

<sup>75</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 42

<sup>76</sup> A well-informed NGO: 28-29; Yasin Turhan: 19; A well-informed legal source: 33; Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 42; Kerem Altıparmak: 26

<sup>77</sup> A well-informed legal source: 33; A well-informed NGO: 28; Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 43

<sup>78</sup> A well-informed legal source: 34 A well-informed NGO: 29; Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 42

<sup>79</sup> A well-informed NGO: 29



## 2. Control procedures

### 2.1 Parties with access to the UYAP portal

According to an NGO, all individuals can access the UYAP portal, provided they have an electronic signature. However, they may only upload documents to cases in which they are directly involved.<sup>80</sup> Third parties do not have access to the documents in UYAP connected to a specific case.<sup>81</sup> Lawyers have more extensive access but are still subject to clear limitations. They can access and upload documents in cases where they have been officially granted a power of attorney. This access is initiated through the UYAP system, where the power of attorney must be submitted and subsequently approved by a judge.<sup>82</sup>

Lawyers do not have access to files in UYAP before the judge has approved their authority. Once a lawyer has resigned from a case, they retain access for a further 15 days in order to fulfill any remaining obligations, after which their access is terminated.<sup>83</sup> Lawyers also retain the right to physically search for case files at the courthouse<sup>84</sup> but they cannot access electronic files without it.<sup>85</sup> According to a Turkish lawyer, sometimes a client can access documents in UYAP that their lawyer cannot, as the president of the court may restrict access for lawyers — though the documents can still be accessed physically at the courthouse.<sup>86</sup>

It is not possible for lawyers<sup>87</sup> or citizens to delete files or documents in UYAP.<sup>88</sup> Two sources added that courts have the authority to delete or modify documents.<sup>89</sup> A legal source elaborated that there is a trace and since the parties or the lawyers of the parties would have access and keep the physical part, it is not that feasible or easy to delete something without the knowledge of the other parties. Without a court decision, any deletion would be illegal. The same source and a professor of law had not heard of instances where the state deleted files or documents in a case in UYAP.<sup>90</sup> Contrary to this, a lawyer noted that technical issues can occur, but in general, the state is not able to delete documents from UYAP.<sup>91</sup>

#### 2.1.1 Verification of documents from e-Devlet

According to several sources, it is possible to verify documents from e-Devlet using a QR code.<sup>92</sup> A legal source explained that once a person downloads a document from e-Devlet, a barcode or

<sup>80</sup> A well-informed NGO: 11-12

<sup>81</sup> Yasin Turhan: 8

<sup>82</sup> A well-informed NGO: 13; Yasin Turhan: 9; Kerem Altıparmak: 18

<sup>83</sup> A well-informed NGO: 13-14

<sup>84</sup> A well-informed NGO: 15

<sup>85</sup> Yasin Turhan: 10

<sup>86</sup> A Turkish lawyer: 5

<sup>87</sup> Kerem Altıparmak: 12

<sup>88</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 20; A well-informed legal source: 10; Kerem Altıparmak: 12

<sup>89</sup> A well-informed legal source: 10; Kerem Altıparmak: 12

<sup>90</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 20; A well-informed legal source: 10

<sup>91</sup> A well-informed NGO: 9

<sup>92</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 41; Kerem Altıparmak: 25; A well-informed NGO: 21

QR code will appear on the document, serving as a means of verification. By scanning the QR code, the user is directed to the verification system of the issuing institution, which confirms the authenticity of the document. For example, when accessing criminal records through e-Devlet, scanning the QR code will verify that the document was officially issued by the competent authority.<sup>93</sup>

### 2.1.2 Verification of documents from UYAP

Documents issued through the UYAP system contain a QR code at the bottom, which links to the relevant institution's verification system when scanned. This feature allows users to confirm that a document was genuinely issued through UYAP.<sup>94</sup> However, not all documents can be verified this way. For example, scanned documents uploaded by courts or prosecutors may not include a QR code, and in such cases, verification is only possible by contacting the issuing authority directly.<sup>95</sup> Furthermore, documents issued by the prosecutor's office, civil and criminal courts, or related to certain inquiries may not be verifiable online, despite having QR codes, due to system restrictions that prevent documents issued by these authorities from being accessed through the public verification portal.<sup>96</sup>

According to a legal expert and a professor of law, verification can also be conducted using the "*Evrak Doğrulama*" function in UYAP, where users input the 28-digit code found under the QR code.<sup>97</sup> The professor of law explained that the system does not display the actual document; instead, it may only show metadata such as the name of the court and decision number, which is only visible through the lawyers' portal.<sup>98</sup> In contrast, the legal expert noted that the QR code directs users to the document verification section of the citizens' portal of UYAP, where the 28-digit verification code is entered.<sup>99</sup>

Some types of documents may not be accessible through this tool at all, even if a QR code is present. In practice, if verification through the code fails, it could indicate that the document is fake or that it belongs to a category not publicly verifiable.<sup>100</sup>

The lawyer, Yasin Turhan, also noted that lawyers can use a special USB drive to verify documents. This USB device serves as a secure tool for both accessing UYAP and authenticating documents. After a document is downloaded and signed with this device, the QR code is generated as part of the document file.<sup>101</sup> However, according to a Turkish lawyer, while this USB drive is necessary to access the UYAP system, it does not function as a verification tool.<sup>102</sup>

#### 2.1.2.1 Electronic signatures in UYAP

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<sup>93</sup> A well-informed legal source: 38

<sup>94</sup> Kerem Altıparmak: 16; A Turkish Lawyer: 1; A well-informed legal source: 19

<sup>95</sup> Kerem Altıparmak: 17; A Turkish Lawyer: 2

<sup>96</sup> A well-informed legal source: 19

<sup>97</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 26; A well-informed legal source: 19

<sup>98</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 28

<sup>99</sup> A well-informed legal source: 19

<sup>100</sup> A well-informed legal source: 20

<sup>101</sup> Yasin Turhan: 12

<sup>102</sup> A Turkish lawyer: 3

Electronic signatures in the UYAP system are required for document submission and serve as a security mechanism to ensure authenticity and traceability.<sup>103</sup> Documents must be prepared using the UYAP Document Editor and signed with a special USB device or mobile signature, both of which act as official e-signatures obtained through the bar association or GSM operators.<sup>104</sup> These signatures ensure that documents cannot be altered without removing the original signature and applying a new one with a timestamp.<sup>105</sup>

## 2.2 Digital log

UYAP also includes a digital log system that records which individual (lawyer, judge, or government employee) has uploaded or interacted with a given document.<sup>106</sup> This information is not available to the public or to ordinary users of the system. Only specific officials, such as court clerks and judges, can access this information.<sup>107</sup>

Citizens can, however, see basic metadata in their own cases, such as the date and time a document was uploaded.<sup>108</sup> According to a legal source, to access this log, a citizen must initiate a legal procedure.<sup>109</sup> A lawyer stated that it is possible to determine which party uploaded the document in question to the UYAP system from the digital signature of the party in question.<sup>110</sup> According to a legal source, e-Devlet also has a log, which traces edits, uploaded files and persons who look up a case, but only the relevant authorities have access to the log.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Kerem Altıparmak: 15

<sup>104</sup> Yasin Turhan: 11

<sup>105</sup> A well-informed legal source: 16-17

<sup>106</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 28 A well-informed NGO: 20; A well-informed legal source: 14

<sup>107</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 28; A well-informed NGO: 20

<sup>108</sup> A well-informed NGO: 20

<sup>109</sup> A well-informed legal source: 14

<sup>110</sup> Yasin Turhan: 13

<sup>111</sup> A well-informed legal source: 39

### 3. Fraudulent documents and corruption

#### 3.1 Forged and illegitimately issued Turkish judicial documents

According to the Turkish media outlet Serbestiyet, so-called ‘consultants’ can prepare official documents for individuals in Türkiye seeking asylum in Europe without the necessary justification. This service, priced at approximately 6,000 USD, encompasses the facilitation of clandestine transportation to Europe, and the submission of asylum applications accompanied by fabricated documentation.<sup>112</sup>

Documents such as indictments, which can be verified through UYAP, as well as search and arrest warrants are fabricated for asylum applications, according to the article. The consultants can allegedly create narratives about PKK, FETÖ, LGBT, Alevi and atheist identities according to the asylum seekers' requests.<sup>113</sup>

The media outlet Serbestiyet reportedly spoke to some of these consultants and obtained examples of fraudulent documents. One of these (an example of an indictment) can be found in the article.<sup>114</sup>

According to a consultant interviewed by Serbestiyet, the asylum-specific documents can be verified via barcodes online. Law firms and legal experts contacted by the media outlet have stated that the documents appear to be 'genuine' and 'original' when accessed via UYAP. Serbestiyet states that one of the documents prepared for an individual referred to as 'S.A.' appears to have been issued by a government institution. A video has emerged purporting to show a fake arrest warrant for a person named 'Ö.Ç.', which appears to be verified in the UYAP system.<sup>115</sup>

According to the Swiss regional media outlet Aargauer Zeitung, some Turkish asylum seekers in Switzerland had allegedly used fraudulent arrest warrants obtained from corrupt judicial officials to obtain refugee status in 2023. A Turkish refugee in Switzerland, who had previously worked for the Turkish judicial system, provided information on how people had offered him

<sup>112</sup> Serbestiyet, ÖZEL HABER | TikTok'ta Türkiye'den Avrupa'ya iltica danışmanlığı: “Sahte tutuklama kararı, HDP kimlik kartı, UYAP'ta görünen iddianameler üretilir, FETÖ, LGBT, Alevi hikayeleri yazılır” [EXCLUSIVE REPORT | Asylum consultancy from Turkey to Europe on TikTok: “Fake arrest warrants, HDP ID cards, indictments visible on UYAP are fabricated, FETÖ, LGBT, and Alevi stories are created.”], 19 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>113</sup> Serbestiyet, ÖZEL HABER | TikTok'ta Türkiye'den Avrupa'ya iltica danışmanlığı: “Sahte tutuklama kararı, HDP kimlik kartı, UYAP'ta görünen iddianameler üretilir, FETÖ, LGBT, Alevi hikayeleri yazılır” [EXCLUSIVE REPORT | Asylum consultancy from Turkey to Europe on TikTok: “Fake arrest warrants, HDP ID cards, indictments visible on UYAP are fabricated, FETÖ, LGBT, and Alevi stories are created.”], 19 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>114</sup> Serbestiyet, ÖZEL HABER | TikTok'ta Türkiye'den Avrupa'ya iltica danışmanlığı: “Sahte tutuklama kararı, HDP kimlik kartı, UYAP'ta görünen iddianameler üretilir, FETÖ, LGBT, Alevi hikayeleri yazılır” [EXCLUSIVE REPORT | Asylum consultancy from Turkey to Europe on TikTok: “Fake arrest warrants, HDP ID cards, indictments visible on UYAP are fabricated, FETÖ, LGBT, and Alevi stories are created.”], 19 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>115</sup> Serbestiyet, ÖZEL HABER | TikTok'ta Türkiye'den Avrupa'ya iltica danışmanlığı: “Sahte tutuklama kararı, HDP kimlik kartı, UYAP'ta görünen iddianameler üretilir, FETÖ, LGBT, Alevi hikayeleri yazılır” [EXCLUSIVE REPORT | Asylum consultancy from Turkey to Europe on TikTok: “Fake arrest warrants, HDP ID cards, indictments visible on UYAP are fabricated, FETÖ, LGBT, and Alevi stories are created.”], 19 September 2024, [url](#)

money to obtain such documents that falsely portrayed them as members of the banned PKK or as followers of Turkish preacher Fethullah Gülen and thus persecuted.<sup>116</sup>

These documents were presented as 'evidence' of alleged persecution in the asylum cases of the individuals in question. The documents were obtained through a network of corrupt Turkish lawyers and prosecutors, who fabricated arrest warrants to be used in asylum cases for a significant amount of money. After being used in the applications, the documents had been deleted from the Turkish court database, making verification difficult.<sup>117</sup> In this particular case, it has not been possible to independently verify or corroborate these claims.

A human rights lawyer also stated that he had encountered a number of fake documents while representing smaller alternative media outlets. These outlets had received e-mails containing fake court decisions, allegedly from criminal peace judges, ordering content removal. The documents were actually issued by individuals posing as lawyers, not by the courts. Although the fraud was detectable due to various inconsistencies, the authorities chose not to prosecute those responsible.<sup>118</sup>

A legal source was aware of a number of cases involving fraudulent court verdicts containing fake or counterfeit digits and barcodes, which could not be verified electronically or at the courthouse. Furthermore, although the documents appeared to be e-signed, verification could not be completed.<sup>119</sup> However, a Turkish lawyer interviewed by DIS was unaware of cases related to fraudulent documents in the UYAP system.<sup>120</sup>

### 3.1.1 Corruption within the Turkish judicial system

Despite a comprehensive legal framework, both international and domestic observers assess that corruption remains widespread in Türkiye's public and private sectors and has increased in recent years. Türkiye's ranking in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index has declined significantly, from 53rd out of 177 countries in 2013 to 107th out of 180 countries in 2024.<sup>121</sup>

According to the European Commission's 2024 report, Türkiye is not fulfilling its international obligations in the fight against corruption (including the United Nations Convention against Corruption, UNCAC) and should strengthen efforts to limit political influence in corruption cases, address corruption within the judicial system, and enhance the accountability and transparency of public institutions.<sup>122</sup>

<sup>116</sup> Aargauer Zeitung, *Asylschwindel mit Fake-Haftbefehlen: Ein türkischer Flüchtling erzählt, Asylum fraud with fake arrest warrants: A Turkish refugee tells*, 11 December 2023, [url](#)

<sup>117</sup> Aargauer Zeitung, *Asylschwindel mit Fake-Haftbefehlen: Ein türkischer Flüchtling erzählt, Asylum fraud with fake arrest warrants: A Turkish refugee tells*, 11 December 2023, [url](#)

<sup>118</sup> Kerem Altıparmak: 19

<sup>119</sup> A well-informed legal source: 21

<sup>120</sup> A Turkish Lawyer: 4

<sup>121</sup> DFAT, *COUNTRY INFORMATION REPORT TÜRKIYE*, 16 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>122</sup> DFAT, *COUNTRY INFORMATION REPORT TÜRKIYE*, 16 May 2025, [url](#)

The sources consulted by DIS generally agreed that while there are persistent allegations of corruption within the Turkish judicial system, most had not personally witnessed or experienced it firsthand. Several sources mentioned that although they could not confirm specific cases, they were aware of public reports or hearsay suggesting that corruption can involve either monetary payments or political influence.<sup>123</sup>

According to a lawyer, allegations of corruption in the judiciary are frequently reported in the press, and there has been at least one confirmed case involving a corrupt judge in Adana.<sup>124</sup> The lawyer further stated that it is not possible to upload fake documents to the UYAP system, as only the parties involved in a case are able to upload documents, meaning any fraudulent document would have to originate from one of those parties.<sup>125</sup> A human rights lawyer noted that while he had no direct evidence, corruption could occur due to the potential vulnerability of court clerks uploading documents into the UYAP system.<sup>126</sup>

Beyond corruption, sources highlighted broader structural issues in the judiciary, particularly regarding arbitrary investigations<sup>127</sup> and a lack of judicial independence.<sup>128</sup> It is reportedly easy to trigger an investigation for minor acts such as attending protests or posting critical comments against the president on social media.<sup>129</sup>

The Constitutional Court has issued numerous rulings on violations of freedom of expression, but lower courts frequently refuse to comply with its decisions.<sup>130</sup> Although mechanisms exist to investigate judicial misconduct—such as the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors—these bodies reportedly produce limited results.<sup>131</sup>

### 3.1.2 Consequences related to fraudulent UYAP documents

According to a professor of law, there have been reports of certain criminal prosecutions being repeatedly handled by the same public prosecutor's office in a suspicious manner. While the extent of this practice is unclear, he had heard claims that politically motivated investigations can, in some cases, be arranged through lawyers in exchange for payment. However, he emphasised that these accounts are based on hearsay rather than confirmed evidence, and noted that if such practices were uncovered, they could have consequences for those involved.<sup>132</sup>

<sup>123</sup> A Turkish Lawyer: 14; A well-informed NGO: 27; A well-informed legal source: 31; Yasin Turhan: 18; Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 30

<sup>124</sup> Yasin Turhan: 18

<sup>125</sup> Yasin Turhan: 14

<sup>126</sup> Kerem Altıparmak: 20

<sup>127</sup> A well-informed NGO: 27

<sup>128</sup> A Turkish Lawyer: 15-16; USDoS, *2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Türkiye*, 23 April 2024, [url](#); HRW, *World Report 2025 – Türkiye*, 16 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>129</sup> A Turkish Lawyer: 15-16

<sup>130</sup> A well-informed legal source: 32; Yaman Akdeniz: 31; Landinfo, *Tyrkia Gülen-bevegelsen og rettsoppgjøret etter kuppforsøket i 2016*, 12 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>131</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 30

<sup>132</sup> Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University: 29

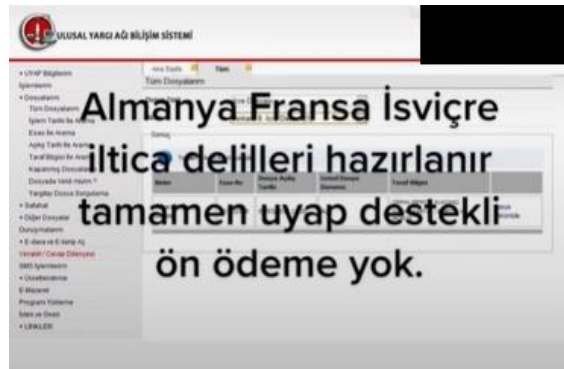
### 3.2 Access to fraudulent documents via social media

The business related to fraudulent judicial documents is also discussed in the Turkish media. In an interview by Turkish presenter Nevşin Mengü, which was uploaded to Youtube in 2023, journalist Ruşen Takva reports on a lucrative business model centered in the province of Ağrı. For a substantial fee, Turkish individuals aspiring to migrate receive fictitious arrest or house search warrants from criminal networks, ostensibly for terrorism or insulting the president.<sup>133</sup>

These documents, tailored to facilitate successful asylum procedures, are then used to facilitate migration to Europe or the USA. The criminal networks advise their clients to pose as Kurdish activists, members of the Gülen movement, or persecuted LGBTQ people.<sup>134</sup>

Through its inexhaustive review of posts and groups on social media conducted in April 2025, the Danish Immigration Service's Centre for Documentation and Counter Extremism (CDE) has identified several posts on different social media platforms where individuals claim to offer services related to the preparation of documents intended for use in asylum proceedings across various European countries. These services include the provision of verified/certified UYAP and e-Devlet documents, such as in absentia arrest warrants, interrogation records, indictments, medical examination reports following arrests and judicial summons.<sup>135</sup>

The searches conducted during the review were carried out using Turkish keywords such as “UYAP belgesi satın al” (buy UYAP documents), “e-Devlet onaylı belgeler” (e-Devlet-approved documents), “tutuklama kararı hazırlama” (preparing an arrest warrant), “iltica evrakları garantili” (asylum documents with guarantee), and variations thereof. The following examples have been anonymised for reasons related to personal security.



Example 1: TikTok, 9 April 2025, [url](#)

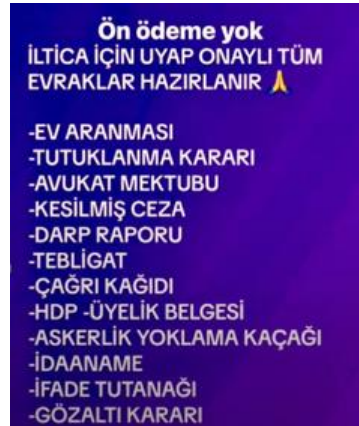
Example 1 translation: “Evidence is prepared for use in asylum cases in Germany, France, and Switzerland. Fully supported in the UYAP system. No advance payment required.”

<sup>133</sup> Nevşin Mengü, [Youtube ID: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NuMdndCHq2o>] *Karadenizliler Kürtçe öğreniyor, Black Sea people learn Kurdish*, 13 October 2023, [url](#)

<sup>134</sup> Nevşin Mengü, [Youtube ID: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NuMdndCHq2o>] *Karadenizliler Kürtçe öğreniyor, Black Sea people learn Kurdish*, 13 October 2023, [url](#)

<sup>135</sup> Facebook, 9 April 2025, [url](#); TikTok, 9 April 2025, [url](#)





Example 2: TikTok, 9 April 2025, [url](#)

Example 2 translation: “All UYAP-certified documents for use in asylum cases can be prepared, including: - Search warrant - Arrest warrant - Lawyer’s letter - Sentencing decision - Assault report - Service of documents - Court summons - HDP membership certificate - Desertion from military conscription – Indictment - Interrogation report - Detention order”

Ön Ödemesiz Profesyonel Şekilde İltica Evrakları Yapılır...  
%100 Orjinal UYAP Onaylı İltica Belgeleri  
Özel Mühürü Kaşesi İmzası Herşeyi Yerindedir...  
(İDDAANAME, EV ARAMA TUTANAĞI, DARP RAPORU, HDP ÜYE KARTLARI, YAKALANMA EMRİ,  
GAZETE HABERİ)  
SİZDE İLTİCA ETMEK İÇİN BİR DELİL ARIYORSANIZ ÖZENLİ BİR ŞEKİLDE BELGE YAPILIR...  
Detaylı Bilgi İçin Mesaj Atabilirsiniz...  
(Sadece Ciddi Alıcılar Yazsın Vaktimizi Boş Yere ÇALMAYIN....)

See Translation



Like



Send



Share

Example 3: Facebook, 9 April 2025, [url](#)

Example 3 translation: “Professionally Prepared Asylum Documents Available...  
100% Original and UYAP-Certified Asylum Documents  
All Special Stamps, Seals, and Signatures Are Included...  
(Indictment, Search Report, Assault Report, HDP Membership Card, Arrest Order, News Articles)  
If you also require supporting evidence for an asylum application, we can prepare documents with the utmost care.  
Feel free to send a message with detailed information.  
(Serious inquiries only—please do not waste time unnecessarily.)”

As part of the review, it was observed that a number of active and prominent profiles offering or facilitating access to UYAP/e-Devlet documents are often removed from social media, presumably once identified as violating platform guidelines. Several monitored profiles were shut down during the course of the inquiry.<sup>136</sup> Potential clients are referred to private messaging apps such as WhatsApp.<sup>137</sup>

<sup>136</sup> Facebook, 9 April 2025, [url](#); TikTok, 9 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>137</sup> Facebook, 9 April 2025, [url](#)



The administrator of a social media group claiming to facilitate irregular migration to Europe for Turkish citizens has, in a group chat, offered to provide members with various seemingly official documents—such as a court-issued detention order, a prosecutor’s arrest warrant, a local police search report, and a medical certificate documenting violence. He claimed the documents can be tailored to reference issues such as Kurdish separatism or affiliation with the Gülen movement, and presented as original and UYAP-verified. The administrator also stated that no payment is required upfront. Clients can verify the documents via a QR code linking to UYAP’s official website, where an access restriction message should appear as proof. The administrator invited potential clients to continue communication via WhatsApp.<sup>138</sup>

DIS underlines that while the identified social media posts suggest that certain individuals facilitate irregular migration to Europe by providing fraudulent judicial documents, the authenticity of these posts cannot be independently verified. Due to the inherent limitations of social media platforms - particularly the difficulty of tracing the original sources and verifying the accuracy of user-generated content - these findings should be interpreted with caution. In brief, the presented information reflects indications of possible fraud, but does not constitute conclusive evidence.

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<sup>138</sup> Facebook, 9 April 2025, [url](#)

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## Annexes 1 – Meeting minutes

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### Online meeting with a Turkish lawyer

18 March 2025

#### Verification of UYAP documents

1. All documents issued in UYAP have a QR code, which can easily be used to verify all official documents issued in UYAP via QR code applications. When a person scans the QR code, it leads to the institution's website where it will show if the document has been verified.
2. There may, however, be scanned documents uploaded in UYAP by the courts or the prosecutor's office, which do not have a QR code. It is not possible to verify such documents without contacting the issuing authority.
3. All lawyers have a so-called UYAP USB stick. Without the USB stick, the lawyer cannot access UYAP as it works as their e-signature. The USB stick, however, does not work as a verification tool for documents in UYAP.
4. The source had not heard of cases of fake or fraudulent documents in the UYAP system.

#### Access to documents in UYAP

5. From the UYAP citizen portal, an individual can access all documents in his or her file. However, a lawyer can have limited access to those documents. Sometimes, a client can access documents in UYAP, which their lawyer cannot access. The president of the court can limit the access to some documents for lawyers, but the documents can be accessed physically in the courthouse.
6. In theory, access to documents in every case can be limited by the president of the court, but it depends on the margin of appreciation of the president in question. Normally, it would apply to cases regarding organised crime.
7. If a court issues a restriction to access to file for confidentiality reasons on a case, it would not be possible to access the documents in the case physically at the courthouse either. Only the president of the court would have access to those documents in such a case.
8. Usually, if there is a restriction to a case file, it is only possible during the investigation stage. Normally, the restriction should be lifted if the prosecutor submits the indictment. If the court accepts the indictment, the restrictions should be lifted, as it is mandatory under the criminal procedural code. Generally, there is no restriction on any documents in the trial stage. However, the court can decide to place a secrecy order in the trial stage due to, for instance, state secrecy or security of the state.
9. The source has experienced cases where a restriction to access to file has been used, but a challenge against this arbitrariness of this order is always unsuccessful. There are also some cases before the administrative court concerning deportation orders, where the concerned foreigner applied to the court for the cancellation of the deportation order. In some of these cases, a secrecy order was issued, which means that the

plaintiff did not have access to the documents in the case, which were the basis for deportation order.

### Procedure to open an investigation in UYAP

10. If a complainant submits a complaint directly to the police, and not the prosecutor's office, it takes a very long time to open a case because the police have to transfer the file to the prosecutor's office. It could take a few weeks or months, depending on the workload of the police authority.
11. If the complainant, however, submits their complaint directly to the prosecutor's office, the prosecutor issues the complainant number of the investigation immediately. Therefore, the investigation is opened immediately or within one week at the latest, depending on the workload of the prosecutor.
12. The complainant cannot see the criminal investigation file on UYAP Vatandaş (citizen); however, her/his lawyer can see the investigation number in UYAP. To access the documents in the file during the investigation phase, the lawyer is required to submit a written request to the prosecutor, as access is not automatically granted to the lawyers in this stage. Normally, the prosecutor will accept the request within a couple of days after which the documents become accessible.
13. Asked how long the investigation phase can last before there has to be an official indictment, the source said that it depends on the nature of the specific case. It could be a couple of months or sometimes years depending on the case.

### Corruption in the judicial system

14. The source has not encountered corruption personally in the judicial system.
15. The source has not heard of cases where a person has paid money to have a case opened against them in UYAP. The source added that it is possible, however, it is not an issue related to money. For example, if a person attends a protest and is arrested, the prosecutor would initiate an investigation. In Türkiye, it is very easy to have an investigation initiated, as the threshold is very low.
16. Another example is if a person has an investigation opened against them for insulting the president. If a person writes something against the president or against a public official on social media, that person would immediately have a criminal investigation initiated against them. This is the problem with the justice system in Türkiye – there is no balance with the courts and the prosecutor's office in respect of freedom of expression.

## Online meeting with a well-informed NGO

4 March 2025

### UYAP - Background and structure

1. The Ministry of Justice is responsible for the UYAP-portal, which was developed to integrate the national judicial system, and make it possible for Turkish citizens to follow

their legal cases in judicial and administrative courts electronically. It is possible to login to UYAP via e-Devlet.

2. Citizens and foreign residents login to UYAP via the Vatandaş Portal using their citizen identification number and password, and lawyers login to UYAP via the Avukat portal. There are a number of different portals used to access UYAP for different parties, such as witnesses or experts.
3. The UYAP front page contains the personal information of the person who has logged in. It also includes sections displaying the user's actions in UYAP, such as payment (court fees), document verification, and case initiation procedures. Additionally, there is an inquiry section where litigation files for different areas of law, including private law, administrative law, and criminal law, can be accessed. Cases heard in higher courts (supreme courts) are also available in this section. This is also where a citizen can review and access cases they are involved in.
4. From this section it is also possible for the citizen in question to review or send documents related to the case.

### Documents in UYAP

5. Citizens can upload documents in formats such as UDF, PDF, and JPG. UDF (Uyap document editor) is a format used for judicial documents (such as petitions and court decisions) and is integrated with UYAP. Citizens can use UDF to upload petitions. Annexes to petitions can be submitted in PDF-format or other formats. The main purpose of the UYAP Document Editor is to enable electronic signatures. Additionally, the files are relatively small, making it convenient for lawyers to work with.
6. It is possible to change information in documents created in UYAP document editor, but the electronic signature will be removed/deleted when the document is saved after the changes have been made, as it is no longer valid. It is not possible to edit a document in UYAP-document editor and keep the original electronic signature.
7. When the legal proceedings are complete and the case is closed the files will be archived. This is also the case for the physical files. This applies to cases that have been tried at the court of appeals as well as the first instance.
8. Judicial case files are permanent records and cannot be erased, even if the case is still ongoing. Every action is logged. Making changes in a submitted document is also not possible. Criminal records cannot be completely removed; rather, they may first be transferred to the judicial record and later to the archive record. This process results in changes regarding who can access these records.
9. Technical issues can occur, but in general, the state party is not able to delete documents from UYAP.

10. Almost all documents related to a criminal case are uploaded to UYAP after the investigation phase is concluded and the court hearing phase begins. Citizens have no access to investigation files, reflecting the confidentiality of legal proceedings. Lawyers can request access by submitting a file examination request through UYAP. Once approved by the prosecutor, they can view documents not subject to a restriction order, such as arrest warrants, search and seizure orders, forensic reports, and witness statements. During the prosecution phase, defendants can access their case files via UYAP, including arrest warrants issued against them. However, if an arrest warrant was issued as in absentia detention due to the defendant's failure to appear in court, it may not have been formally notified to them, thus would not be visible in UYAP.

### **Parties with access**

11. Not all individuals can access all parts of the UYAP-portal. Lawyers use it to keep track of their litigation cases, send petitions, initiate litigation, as well as attend electronic hearings in private law courts.
12. Turkish citizens and foreign residents in Türkiye have access to UYAP and can send files if they have an electronic signature. They can only upload documents to cases that they are involved with.
13. Lawyers have access to cases in which they have a power of attorney. Lawyers do not have electronic access to cases in which they do not have a power of attorney, but they are able to see them in the system and can request access by sending the document Power of Attorney (PoA) provided by the citizen to the case file through the UYAP system.
14. Lawyers are no longer able to access a case when they have resigned from it. After notifying the client they are responsible for 15 further days after which they do not have access to the case.
15. Lawyers are also able to access all physical cases at the courts. Some documents can have a confidentiality order, such as documents related to public security i.e. intelligence reports. Lawyers are able to access all documents in the case file as a rule. However, if access to certain documents would jeopardize the purpose of the investigation, a judge may restrict access upon the prosecutor's request.
16. Judicial cases generally remain confidential during the investigation phase, at which time files from the case will not be visible in UYAP. The documents and case become accessible to the parties involved in the case when a criminal investigation has been filed with the court. Court hearings and proceedings are public, but criminal investigations are mostly not open to the public.



17. Defence lawyers and public defenders can get access to a criminal case during the investigation phase, but certain files pertaining to national security, such as intelligence reports or witness statements, may remain confidential. However, lawyers can challenge this.
18. Access to certain files may remain restricted, such as anonymous witness statements. However, the evidentiary value of this type of document is limited, because in principle it should be able to be challenged. Certain files may also be restricted from media coverage by court order, and the state uses this restriction too liberally. However, it is difficult to maintain these restrictions due to social media.
19. Law enforcement officials and members of the judiciary such as prosecutors and judges have access to their own separate portals in UYAP.
20. There is a log in UYAP which tracks which person/government employee is responsible for a specific document. The log also keeps track of what time a specific document has been uploaded or sent. These logs are not accessible to the public and can only be viewed by authorized officials, such as the relevant court clerk and judge. Citizens can view records such as the date a document was submitted to the system in cases they are involved in.

#### **Control procedures and irregularities in UYAP documents**

21. UYAP documents can be verified electronically in e-Devlet using a QR-code or link.
22. Investigations can be opened based on a simple suspicion threshold. At this stage, the prosecutor may not be directing the investigation against a specific individual, or in fact, a suspect may not have even been identified yet. The authorities can also decide not to open an investigation if the allegation does not make sense, is impossible or does not constitute a crime. The threshold for the prosecution to open a criminal case against a suspect is sufficient suspicion, which is a higher threshold than to open an investigation. The threshold for conviction is even higher, as it needs to be proven beyond reasonable doubt that the individual is guilty.
23. A statement made by an informer would be enough to initiate an investigation into the suspect of a crime. The length of investigations can depend on the crime in question. Investigations where it has not been possible to determine suspect is reach a period of expiration before being archived. However expiration period depends on the severity of the crime, and the lowest expiration period is eight years according to article 66 of the criminal code. Investigations into serious crimes such as murder also have a statute of limitation. However, it is regulated that for some crimes committed abroad these regulations will not apply.
24. In cases with multiple suspects the authorities are able to divide the case allowing them to pursue investigations against multiple suspects simultaneously.

25. According to the source's assessment, investigations may be initiated arbitrarily, particularly in cases related to freedom of expression. In Türkiye, freedom of speech is a problematic area, and investigations can be initiated into this type of alleged crime quite easily.
26. Criminal detention and travel bans can be imposed during an investigation if there is a suspicion that the suspect can conceal evidence or escape. However, these measures cannot proceed indefinitely through both the investigation and hearing phase of the case, and the threshold of suspicion for imposing these measures is "strong suspicion" For instance, if a person is charged with a crime that would lead to three years imprisonment, the travel ban cannot be imposed for longer than the sentence that would be imposed upon conviction.
27. There have been allegations in the media regarding corruption in the judicial system, but the source has not personally seen examples of this. The source was not aware of cases where people deliberately have given the authorities cause to initiate an investigation into them, but it is widely known that investigations can be launched arbitrarily for minor infractions related to liking certain things or giving derogatory remarks against the national assembly on social media.

### **3. Syrians in Türkiye and their access to UYAP and e-Devlet**

28. Foreigners with e-Devlet are also able to access UYAP. Foreign residents, including Syrian citizens, have access to UYAP, and obtain a password to the platform by applying for one at the post office using their foreigner's identity number.
29. This also applies for Syrian citizens residing in Türkiye under temporary protection. If their temporary protection registration has been canceled or ceased, it is deactivated, preventing them from accessing e-Devlet and, consequently, UYAP.

#### **e-Devlet**

30. e-Devlet is the overall access point for any interaction between the citizen and the public authorities in Türkiye. It is not possible for the citizen to upload documents in e-Devlet, but they are able to apply for many different types of files/documents related to the health authorities or social security. You can for instance apply for documents stating that you do not owe money to the state.
31. E-Devlet documents can be verified using the codes at the bottom.

## **Online meeting with a well-informed legal source**

6 March 2025

The legal source provides services in a wide range of areas to both domestic and foreign clients.

### **UYAP – Background and structure**

1. UYAP started as a project in relation to Turkish Decree no. 2992 having the force of law. In 2001, there was an addition in the law's article 22/A. When the UYAP information system was first initiated, it was separated in two phases. UYAP 1 provided automation of central units of the Ministry of Justice, which was completed in 2001. UYAP 2 covered the automation of judicial and administrative judicial units 4 and 6, as well as prisons and detention houses. It was completed and put into operation in 2005. The court of appeals also adapted the UYAP software.
2. As of today, UYAP is in operation in approximately one hundred percent in all judicial units in Türkiye.
3. All judiciary related administrative activities are carried out electronically through this system. The authorised personnel of the Ministry of Justice, such as judges, prosecutors and clerks at the courts, are the main users of UYAP. Administrative officials and law enforcement use their own systems, separate than UYAP.
4. There are six UYAP portals. Vatandaş is the portal for citizens. There are also separate portals for lawyers, private and public institutions, experts appointed by the courts, mediators and conciliators in criminal cases. The portals are all specifically structured for the ability to check files, send documents, initiate proceedings, file examinations or other submissions through UYAP.

### **Documents in UYAP**

5. Every document related to a court case is uploaded to the UYAP system.
6. Even though it has not been implemented in all of Türkiye, in some cases it is possible to attend online hearings through UYAP as a lawyer. E-hearing is specific for lawyers. There is another system called SEGBIS. Through its integration to UYAP, SEGBIS allows the court to obtain testimonies and defences for convicts and detainees in criminal cases.
7. All documents in UYAP are also stored in a system at the courts, but in order to access these, the person in question needs to have a password.
8. After a case has been closed or after a final verdict has been issued, the documents and files uploaded to UYAP remain in the portal. It is also possible to access them physically at the courts. Once a document has been uploaded to UYAP, such petitions from a lawyer or a party to the case, expert reports or final verdicts, they are all stored in the UYAP system.
9. There is a 10-year prescription period to enforce any judgment from the courts, which means that you can see the files or the documents within the first ten years after the finalisation of the verdict. After this period, the physical files from the case will be stored in the Ministry of Justice's archives.
10. It is not possible for a citizen to delete files or documents in UYAP. The courts, on the other hand, do have the authority to delete documents. However, there is a trace and since the parties or the lawyers of the parties would have access and keep the physical part, it is not that feasible or easy to delete something without the knowledge of the

other parties. Without a court decision, any deletion would be illegal. The source had not heard of instances where the state has deleted files or documents on a case in UYAP. If a document was deleted by the court, it would simply cease to appear on UYAP. Even in that case, necessary explanations should be made by the logging officer.

11. For some criminal investigations at the first stage, confidentiality is principle which would prohibit lawyers' access to the documents in UYAP. For the attorney filing a request, prosecutors can introduce a permission to examine the file, to the extent of display of documents chosen by the prosecutor for access.
12. Additionally, confidentiality (restriction) orders, whether in compliance with the law or not, are mostly used in terror cases and crimes against the safety of the country. It can also be used in criminal cases regarding abuse of children or rape. In practice, for past years, whenever an investigation starts regarding politicians or NGOs, who allegedly are against the benefit of the country, the authorities can use this provision. Technically, this could involve ordinary citizens, but it is not as common. Normally, once the indictment is prepared and the prosecutor files a case, the parties of the case should have access to the files and documents in UYAP. However, they are not public, which means that lawyers who do not have a power of attorney from the parties cannot access them through UYAP or physically.
13. The source has witnessed that confidentiality orders have been used arbitrarily. However, it depends on the subject of the case and even the parties of the case.

#### **Verification of documents in UYAP**

14. There is a log in UYAP that traces information about who have uploaded or deleted a document in the portal. However, to access this log, a citizen has to start a legal procedure.
15. UYAP document editor is a processing program integrated with the UYAP system. It was developed by the Ministry of Justice and helps to upload documents to UYAP in the specific UDF format, for instance by changing it from a PDF file to a UDF file.
16. In order to verify a document through the UYAP document editor, it must be e-signed. This e-signature is not like DocuSign or other common e-signature facilities. It is a special signature obtained from the e-government, which means that it is officially registered. Therefore, lawyers use the UYAP document editor to upload any document with this verification.
17. Once a document has been prepared in UYAP document editor and uploaded to UYAP with an e-signature, the documents will remain there in its original form. In order to edit or revise the document, you have to upload a new document, as you cannot use the original document with the original e-signature. The edited document would then need a new e-signature always with time stamp.
18. If the judiciary issues a document for a specific person, this document should have an electronic signature on it.
19. Documents in UYAP have a QR code, which can be used to verify the document. The QR code directs users to the document verification section of Vatandaş UYAP, where the 28-digit verification code below the document is entered. However, documents from the Prosecutor's Office, Civil and Criminal Courts, as well as various business and inquiry files, are not displayed. Documents issued by these authorities contain a QR code

- but cannot be verified, as the system does not allow enquiry regarding certain documents.
20. The source has witnessed some court documents where persons changed the links written right underneath the verdict. If you cannot access a document through the verification of 28 digits, that may mean that the document is fake, or it is among the documents that are not open for verification. In practice, it may not be possible to verify a document by using 28-digits code, whereas the individual can access the document from the Vatandaş Portal itself through “file inquiry” section.
  21. The source is aware of a number of cases regarding fraudulent court verdicts containing fake/counterfeit digits and barcodes, which could not be verified electronically or at the courthouse. Furthermore, the documents appeared to be e-signed, however, the verification could not be made.
  22. The source had not heard about cases where a person paid money to have a criminal case initiated against him or her in UYAP.

#### **Procedure to open a case in UYAP**

23. The first stage of a criminal case is the investigation by the authorities, which can be initiated by the prosecutor or a complaint by a third party. Once the prosecutor has started the investigation (before prosecuting a case), there should be an entry into the UYAP system based on an investigation file number. This does not mean that the involved person would be able to access it, but if they were summoned for a statement or defence, they may be aware of it. The person in question would only be able to see that they have a case against them in e-Devlet, at the prosecution stage, this is not possible for investigation phase.
24. For criminal cases, the second stage is the criminal court case filed by the prosecutor. At that stage, the person involved should have access to all documents and files in UYAP.
25. The length of the investigation phase depends on the nature of the case and the parties to the case. For the last two or three years, the source has witnessed cases that have been filed as a criminal case very quickly. In other cases, mostly related to allegations of terror or crimes against the state, the preliminary investigation by the prosecutor continues for a long time. During this phase, the prosecutor can send the suspects to a criminal court in order to have them arrested during the investigation, as such decisions would be made by judgeship.
26. From the press, the source has heard about cases where a criminal investigation has been initiated arbitrarily or without cause.
27. According to the criminal procedure act, the threshold for initiating cases related to national security is not applied to highest scrutiny. Based on allegations or complaints, the authorities can start an investigation. This does not mean that every investigation will lead to the prosecution of a criminal case. In recent years, however, it has become more usual that prosecutors begin an investigation with or without any solid evidence and subsequently file the case with the courts. It is a universal rule that a person is innocent until the final verdict, meaning that the prosecutor and the court should prove that the person is guilty. Now, however, it has been switched around, so that people try to prove that they are innocent.

28. In a recent case, the head of a pro-opposition TV news channel/newspaper was arrested because the reporters recorded an interview with an expert who provided many expert reports against the opposition, particularly a mayor from main opposition. The head of the news channel was arrested during the investigation phase at the request of the prosecutor. The prosecutor filed the case, but in the first hearing the court found him and other reporters not guilty. The head of the newspaper, however, had stayed in prison for about 34 days.
29. The source was aware of several cases where liking the wrong page on social media or commenting on a post belonging to a politician could be enough to initiate an investigation. In some of these cases, the court accepted the indictments and ruled for a suspended sentence. This means that if the person does not commit another intentional crime within the next 5 years, they will not serve the sentence.
30. In cases based on a complaint by a neighbour or a friend, the prosecutors, without collecting any evidence, can prepare the indictment and file a criminal case. It was relatively frequent 7-8 years ago, due to anonymous tips and complaints for terror cases and crimes against the safety of the country.

### **Corruption in the judiciary**

31. The source has heard of corruption in the judiciary from the press. These cases involved payment of money or using political power. The source has not personally witnessed such cases, but there are continuous allegations in the press regarding corruption.
32. The Constitutional Court is the highest court in Türkiye. There have been some disagreements between this court and the court of appeals, where the court of appeals have not accepted the rulings of the Constitutional Court. However, Article 153 of the Constitution states that rulings or verdicts issued by the Constitutional Court are binding for everyone, including other higher courts.

### **Syrians' access to e-Devlet and UYAP**

33. If a Syrian has a residence permit, they have a foreigner's number, which starts with 99. Once they have it, they can access the e-government website and UYAP by visiting the PTT Universal Postal Service Provider, where they can apply and receive an e-government password.
34. This also applies to Syrians staying in Türkiye under temporary protection, as long as they are in possession of a 99-foreigner's number.

### **Documents in e-Devlet**

35. In e-Devlet, a person can access information about themselves, such as social security status, civil status, residential status, document generating services and payment transactions.
36. If a person is a shareholder of a company, a manager or a director of a company, they can access data about this as well.
37. Before e-Devlet, one had to apply to different institutions to obtain copies of their personal records such as the birth registry, criminal record or even the trade registry. With

access to e-Devlet, it is possible to reach all those institutions in one portal. It is a portal for any interaction between the individual citizen and the government authorities.

38. Once a person downloads a document from e-Devlet, they should be able to see a bar-code on each document, which is the verification of the document. If they scan the QR code, it should lead to the verification system of the relevant institution. For instance, a person can access their criminal records through e-Devlet, and by scanning the QR code, they will be able to see that it was issued by the relevant authority.
39. E-Devlet also has a log, which traces edits, uploaded files and persons who look up a case, but only the relevant authorities have access to the log.

## Online meeting with Yasin Turhan, lawyer

17 March 2025

### Introduction to source

Yasin Turhan is a lawyer with 15 years of experience and a founding partner of Turhan & Bilge Law and Mediation Office, based in Istanbul, which specialises in various areas of law, including criminal law.

### UYAP

#### Background and structure

1. The Turkish Ministry of Justice is the government authority responsible for UYAP.

#### Documents in UYAP

2. All documents related to a civil, administrative or criminal case are uploaded to the UYAP system. These include civil actions, petitions, drafts of verdicts and evidence. The documents are uploaded by the parties and the judges involved in the case.
3. The documents from a criminal case are uploaded when the prosecution decides to open the case and file it with the courts. At this point, the documents become visible to the lawyer, which has a power of attorney for the case. During the investigation phase, prior to the prosecution phase, the documents and evidence are not visible to the lawyer if there is a confidentiality decision by the prosecutor.
4. There are two sections in UYAP. One for open cases and one for closed cases. When a final verdict has been issued following an appeal, the case would move from the open case section to the closed case section. However, the documents from the case would always be visible to the parties involved with the case, but not to third parties. As a lawyer, it is always possible to access the documents in a case regardless of whether the case is closed or open if they have a power of attorney regarding the case.

5. It is not possible to delete documents from the UYAP system.
6. The UYAP-document editor is a special program, which enables the parties to open Word processing documents in the UYAP system. It is not possible to upload Word documents, but documents in pdf. and tiff. format can also be submitted as attached documents to documents created using the UYAP document editor. But you can use tif or pdf when you attach the evidences or supplying documents. All petitions or documents must be in UYAP document form (UDF).
7. According to Yasin Turhan, there are no cases where certain documents from the prosecution will not be made available to the defendant's attorney when the case has reached the prosecution stage. A defendant has the right to access all the documents connected to a case, and there are no restrictions to this. During the investigation phase, access to documents which may compromise the investigation may be restricted if a confidentiality decision made by the prosecutor is taken. It would then not be possible to see the documents in UYAP or physically. This could happen in crimes regarding child abuse or crimes against the state.

#### **Parties with access**

8. Third parties do not have access to the documents connected to a specific case in UYAP. It is only the parties involved in the case that have access to the case files. Documents can be uploaded to the UYAP case by the lawyer attached to the case in question, the prosecution, as well as experts providing testimony to the case. Judges are also able to upload final verdicts.
9. Lawyers have access to cases in UYAP to which they hold a power of attorney. A lawyer gains access to the case by forwarding a power of attorney through the UYAP system, which is then approved by a judge. Lawyers do not have access to the case files prior to the judge's approval in UYAP.
10. According to attorney law in Türkiye, lawyers are able to search physically for cases without a power of attorney, but access to the physical files of a case in UYAP requires power of attorney.

#### **Control procedures and irregularities in UYAP documents**

11. Documents in UYAP can be signed using an e-signature or a mobile signature. Lawyers obtain the e-signature from the bar association in Istanbul. The mobile signature is obtained through the GSM-operator. These are both valid as formal signatures.
12. Documents in UYAP can be verified using a special form of USB-drive, which enables lawyers to type in their code, and will then provide them with the relevant details about the document from the case in question. After downloading the document, QR code will be created in the document.



13. When asked whether the UYAP system has a log that makes it possible to track which person or government employee had uploaded a document, Yasin Turhan informed DIS that there is a large underlying IT-system, and it is possible to obtain technical assistance if something goes wrong. However, this rarely happens. When any document is uploaded to the system it is possible to determine which party added the document from the digital signature of the party in question.
14. It is not possible to upload fake documents to the UYAP system because only the parties of the case are able to upload documents to the case. This means that if any fraudulent documents are uploaded to the system it would have to be done by the parties of the case.
15. When there are technical issues with the system, lawyers are required to go to the court physically to serve petitions. This happens once or twice a year.

#### **Criminal cases**

16. Every case in Türkiye has a specific time limit. Applications to authorities generally have a limit of around 30-60 days, whereas for criminal cases the time limit varies depending on the case type. Some are six months and the longest is eight years.
17. Sometimes cases are initiated against individuals by the authorities arbitrarily. In these cases, the person in question is entitled to compensation if they are found innocent. However, there have been cases, where an innocent person has been found guilty of a crime.

#### **Corruption in the judicial system**

18. There are continuous allegations of corruption within the judicial system in Türkiye, but Yasin Turhan has not observed cases of it in person during the fifteen years which he has practiced law. There was a case concerning a corrupt judge two years ago in Adana.

#### **Syrians in Türkiye and their access to UYAP and e-Devlet**

19. Foreign residents, including Syrian citizens with official residence permits, have the right to access e-Devlet, and obtain a password to the platform by applying for one at the post office using their foreigner's identity number, which begins with 99.

#### **e-Devlet**

20. e-Devlet is the overall access point for any interaction between the citizen and the public authorities in Türkiye. Citizens can find all their information related to land, property, car, social security and school numbers for their children.

## Online meeting with Yaman Akdeniz, Professor of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University

4 March 2025

Yaman Akdeniz is a Professor of Law at the Human Rights Law Research Center, Faculty of Law, Istanbul Bilgi University.

### UYAP portal

1. The UYAP portal is primarily managed by the Ministry of Justice, also in terms of maintenance and updating.
2. There are two interrelated UYAP systems; one is used by lawyers as well as the judiciary in Türkiye and another rather limited version is available for ordinary citizens.
3. Ordinary citizens can only access their own cases in UYAP. The same applies to lawyers; they can only access the cases they are working on. UYAP is not a database in which a person can access all cases and decisions. It is a permission based, closed and controlled system. Not even judges and courts can access everything in UYAP.
4. Lawyers can only access cases to which they have power of attorney. They can also access a case if a lawyer grants permission to another lawyer with an authorisation document ("yetki belgesi"). This is usually done when more than one lawyer is involved in a given case.
5. The main purpose of the UYAP portal is for lawyers to send and receive documents to and from the courts and to follow up on their cases.
6. In certain cases (usually civil court cases), electronic court hearings take place from the UYAP system.
7. To sign into UYAP, it is necessary to have an e-Devlet account (username and a password).

### Documents in UYAP

8. Asked about the types of documents, which the government uploads to UYAP in connection with a criminal case, the source said that it is technically all documents. This includes subpoenas, indictments and other documents related to court hearings .
9. Sometimes, however, there are several defendants in a particular case. In these cases, it can happen that large dossiers are not scanned and uploaded to UYAP. When this happens, it is necessary to make photocopies from the physical courthouse.
10. When a user signs into UYAP, it is possible to access documents in relation to their own cases – this includes cases that the person has initiated themselves or cases that others have initiated against them. Citizens and/or their lawyers make submissions to the courts for public law and/or administrative cases. The relevant court then issues a number for

the dossiers and therefore creates the initial UYAP dossier. In the case of criminal cases, the investigation dossiers are created by the public prosecutors and the prosecution dossiers are created by the relevant criminal courts.

11. In the past, citizens could not access these files. In theory, they could access their own dossiers at a physical courthouse, but in practice, it was not straightforward. It was easier with a lawyer.
12. Once a case initiates and goes to trial, documents related to the case appear in UYAP. If a person, however, is under criminal investigation, the documents do not appear in UYAP. Only after the indictment is prepared and a new trial begins, the documents in relation to the criminal prosecution will become available.
13. The investigation phase can last up to 7 years. Usually, they do not last that long, but it could if there is a criminal investigation where the authorities are trying to find the perpetrator. For some crimes, e.g. social media related crimes, the investigation phase is usually very short, e.g. a couple of months, if the perpetrator has been located.
14. The authorities fast track cases, which might attract media attention, such as cases involving well-known journalists. In bigger cases involving many people, there might be delays.
15. Prosecutors, judges and courts have target numbers, which they need to reach before the end of each year. Reaching these numbers affects their promotions. The cases are assigned to them automatically. Depending on the field they are working, they could be bombarded with criminal complaints. For example, those working in the field of press related crimes, terror propaganda or cybercrimes and/or defamation usually have higher loads of dossiers.
16. In some cases, a person's lawyer can access the documents before the trial phase. Firstly, the lawyer needs to get in touch with the prosecutor's office and request access. However, that would only be possible if the case is not bound by a secrecy order.
17. Article 153 of the Code of Criminal Procedure<sup>139</sup> limits "secrecy orders" to certain crimes. However, in practice we often see "secrecy orders" issued arbitrarily in relation to criminal investigations with regards to crimes other than those listed in article 153.
18. Secrecy orders during the investigation phase are used arbitrarily. It depends on the nature of the investigation. In some cases, the authorities add a secrecy order to delay access to the information for the lawyers. Sometimes, the source's colleagues attend statement taking sessions at the public prosecutor's office. They are informed about the crime, which the defendant is facing, but the authorities do not reveal the evidence and the dossier. Therefore, in some cases, the dossier and the full evidence are only accessible once the prosecution phase of the case begins.

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<sup>139</sup> Türkiye, *CEZA MUHALEMESİ KANUNU* [Code of Criminal Procedure], 2004, [url](#)

19. The files and documents remain in UYAP after a case has been closed or after a final decision has been made. In UYAP, finalised cases are marked as “case closed”, but the user can still access the information in the case. As such, it works like an archive.
20. It is not possible for an individual to delete a document in UYAP. The source has not seen cases in which the state has deleted information from the portal. As far as the source knows, the files remain in UYAP forever.

#### **UYAP document editor**

21. UYAP uses a very specific file format called UDF, which has not been adopted by any other application or system. It is not possible to open UDF files without the UYAP document editor. It often requires the Java system to be installed as well. For example, if you try various file converters online, they do not work with UDF files. However, the UYAP editor is freely available for both windows and mac OSX systems.
22. According to the source, not many people use the UYAP document editor program. Some people use it for drafting short documents. In short, it is primarily used by the lawyers and the judiciary.
23. In practice, the source prepares everything in Word and then copies it into the UYAP document editor. Then, the file is saved in UDF format before it is uploaded to the UYAP system.
24. The UYAP editor is, however, not compatible with complex documents, for example defence statements with photos or graphics. Instead, the source converts those files to PDF, which can be uploaded to the UYAP system. It is necessary to include a cover page in UDF format to the PDF statement.
25. Another issue with the UYAP document editor is that it does not accept certain characters, such as the paragraph mark used by the European Court of Human Rights and the Constitutional Court. In these cases, it is not possible to copy paste the content as the formatting will be mixed up.

#### **Verification of UYAP documents**

26. UYAP has a function called “*Evrak Doğrulama*” through which it is possible to verify documents. In the bottom of real court documents, there is a code consisting of numbers and letters, which a person can enter into this UYAP function to verify it.
27. The source has seen fake court orders and fake court decisions. In the past, the source has seen real codes belonging to another court issued document on a fake court document. However, the source has also seen codes, which appear to be UYAP codes but are completely fake as the UYAP verification system cannot find those codes. There were also other signs to indicate that the document was fake. The name of the judges were different and there were other suspicious circumstances. Therefore, the source did not just rely on UYAP to confirm that the document was fake.

28. The UYAP verification tool does not show the document itself when you enter the code. As far as the source knows, the lawyers can at least see the name of the court and the decision no when they use the verification system. However, this is not available through the citizens' UYAP. As far as the source knows, there is a log in the UYAP system which logs which government official is responsible for the preparation and sending of a document. Lawyers, however, cannot access this log. As has been mentioned, there is limited access to some files in UYAP. Officials working in the ministry, on the other hand, do have wider access.

### **Corruption in the judicial system**

29. The source had heard about instances where certain criminal prosecutions have been suspiciously handled by the same public prosecutor's office. The source was unaware of the extent of this. As far as the source understands, if you pay a fee, criminal investigations of a political nature can be arranged by some lawyers. This is hearsay though rather than confirmed. If this is found out, then there could be consequences for all those involved.
30. There are allegations of corruption within the Turkish judiciary. The high board of judges and prosecutors is a body that investigates such allegations, but the investigations usually lead to nothing.
31. Some Turkish judges do not comply with the Constitutional Court's decisions. The source has filed complaints about judges based on a considerable number of infringement decisions from the Constitutional Court. The Constitutional Court found violations in approximately 350 cases related to freedom of expression and other cases with regards to internet blocking. The Constitutional Court sent the violation decisions back to the original courts, which issued the blocking decisions. However, majority of the judges refused to comply with the decision of the Constitutional Court. The source then objected to this, however, the complaint was rejected.

### **Threshold for cases in UYAP**

32. Asked about the threshold for cases going from an investigation phase to an indictment, the source answered that it is entirely the decision of the relevant public prosecutor's office. If the public prosecutor decides to prepare an indictment for the crime of defaming the president of Türkiye, they need to obtain a permission from the Ministry of Justice. For any other crime, such as propaganda or disinformation, the public prosecutor only needs to prepare the indictment and send it to the relevant criminal court. Once the criminal court accepts the indictment and issues a hearing date, the documents usually become available in the UYAP system.
33. Courts and judges rarely reject indictments because of irregularities. In almost 99.9 percent of the cases, the indictments, whether problematic or not, are accepted by the courts in Türkiye.
34. A considerable number of the cases involving political speech in Türkiye result in criminal prosecution. This is not only valid for cases regarding defamation of the current president

of Türkiye, but also defamation of public officials, ministers, mayors and members of parliament. If a person has mentioned more than one name on a social media post, they could be charged with defaming the president, a public servant or official or terror propaganda.

35. There is a crime of disinformation, which usually targets journalists.
36. In one case, the source defended a nearly 80-year-old person because they liked a post on Facebook. Such cases are being prosecuted arbitrarily.
37. According to the source, the majority of such cases should not have gone on trial, but they did due to arbitrariness. The threshold for initiating a new case of this type is very low. Here, the source refers to any politically motivated criminal investigations and/or prosecutions, but they are more evident in relation to political speech cases, especially those involving the social media.

### **E-Devlet**

38. There is some legal information in e-Devlet, albeit more limited than in UYAP. It is possible to see a person's own cases, for instance the parties to a specific case, but it is not possible to download judicial documents from e-Devlet.
39. Through e-Devlet, it is possible to download certain documents, such as university graduation documentation, a birth certificate or official documents related to military service.
40. E-Devlet also contains information about where a person lives and who lives with them on the same address.
41. Like in UYAP, it is possible to verify documents from e-Devlet. The documents contain a code or a QR code. If a person prints a document and brings it to any public authority, they can verify it.

### **Foreigners' access to e-Devlet and UYAP**

42. If a foreign citizen is registered as a resident in Türkiye, they can access e-Devlet and UYAP. It is possible to apply in person and get access from PTT Central Directorates, a post office or authorised branches in Türkiye by presenting an ID with a Turkish Republic Identity Number on it (national identity card, passport, driver's license, blue card, residence permit for foreigners, work permit or temporary protection card). Basically, if you have an ID number starting with 99 for foreigners, then you can use it.
43. Once you have an e-Devlet account, then you can use UYAP too. So, UYAP is fully integrated with e-Devlet.
44. It is not compulsory to have e-Devlet, and older generations generally do not use the platform.

## Online meeting with Kerem Altıparmak, human rights lawyer and academic

20 March 2025

Kerem Altıparmak is a human rights lawyer and academic who previously taught at Ankara University and directed its Human Rights Centre. He co-founded the Freedom of Expression Association and has worked extensively on freedom of expression, digital rights, and the implementation of ECtHR judgments in Turkey. Altıparmak currently serves as a legal consultant to the International Commission of Jurists and has received several national and international awards for his contributions to human rights.

### UYAP

#### Background and structure

1. The Turkish Ministry of Justice is the government authority responsible for UYAP.
2. The UYAP system consists of several portals, including one for citizens and one for lawyers.

#### Documents in UYAP

3. Almost all relevant documents related to a particular legal case are uploaded to UYAP. This includes court decisions, petitions from the various parties involved in the case, and expert reports. However, the UYAP system does not support video files, as the file size limit is 10 megabytes. Documents larger than 10 megabytes cannot be uploaded to UYAP and must be compressed in order to be accepted.
4. Video recordings of demonstrations from police cameras, for instance, can be requisitioned physically from the courthouse but are not accessible through the UYAP system. Photographs under 10 megabytes can be uploaded to UYAP, while larger photos must be obtained physically at the courthouse.
5. While all documents related to a specific case should be uploaded to the UYAP system to ensure an effective legal defence, there is a risk that a court clerk may forget to upload a particular document. It is therefore advisable for lawyers to visit the courthouse and check the physical files if they suspect that a document is missing from the system.
6. There are two levels in the UYAP system: one for open cases and one for closed cases. Pending cases are listed in the open section, while closed cases appear in the closed section. Cases are moved from the open to the closed section when a final verdict has been issued and all avenues of appeal have been exhausted. All documents from a case

remain visible and accessible even after it has been closed. Even a file is closed after all appeals have been exhausted, the file can be reopened after a violation judgment of the ECtHR or Constitutional Court.

7. During the investigation stage of, for instance, anti-terrorism cases, evidence is not uploaded to the UYAP system. It is therefore necessary to formally request the prosecution to upload the relevant documents during this phase.
8. Certain petitions submitted to the criminal peace judge are also not visible as case files in UYAP. For example, in cases concerning website bans, petitions are submitted to the criminal peace judge through UYAP, but the response time can be very long, and the remaining case documents are not visible in the system. While the prosecution and the judge can view the submitted petition, the lawyer is unable to access it once it has been sent through UYAP.
9. Secrecy orders can be imposed on certain case documents during the investigation stage of security-related crimes, before an indictment is issued. Once the prosecution begins, all documents should be made available in UYAP. However, an important exception to this is reports prepared by the intelligence services, which in administrative cases may remain confidential despite legal challenges and are only accessible to the judge and the prosecution in the case in question. Generally information, documents, data and records of an intelligence nature and analyses made by the National Intelligence Organization cannot be requested by judicial authorities, except for certain crimes.
10. Secrecy orders are used arbitrarily to deny access to documents for lawyers and their clients. In a recent case where 34 people were killed by the Turkish Air Force, an investigation was launched against the military personnel involved, but the case was subsequently dropped. Following an application to reopen the investigation based on new evidence, a secrecy order was imposed the day after the application was submitted, and the case files were no longer accessible to the claimant after the decision not to prosecute.
11. If the prosecution decides not to pursue the case, the documents from the investigation will, as a general rule, not be made available to the subject of the investigation or their lawyer.
12. Citizens and lawyers are unable to delete documents from UYAP. However, court officials have the authority to remove or modify documents that have been uploaded to the system.
13. It is possible to track every action performed in the UYAP system, but this information is not accessible to citizens or lawyers; it is only available to the authorities. The Constitutional Court can access a log in UYAP that records when a specific document has been viewed by the individual in question or their lawyer. This poses a problem



when submitting appeals to the Constitutional Court, which must be filed within a specific timeframe that begins as soon as the document is seen in UYAP by the individual or their lawyer.

### Verification of documents in UYAP

14. Without the UYAP Document Editor, it is not possible to use the system, as it is required for submitting documents. The UYAP system does not accept documents in Word format. However, it is possible to draft documents in Rich Text Format (RTF) before submission. Documents can also be submitted in PDF format, but only by attaching them to a page in UDF format, which must be electronically signed by lawyers using a special USB drive. This USB drive is also used to access UYAP and is available through the website of the tax office.
15. TA digital (electronic) signature is required to submit any document in UYAP, as the system does not accept unsigned documents. This ensures that documents cannot be altered by others. It is possible to modify finalised documents—for instance, to correct minor errors—but before submitting the revised version to the court, the previous digital signature must be removed and a new one added.
16. Physical documents from UYAP can be verified using a QR code located at the bottom of the document. By scanning the QR code, it is possible to confirm that the document was downloaded from the UYAP system. However, the file itself cannot be viewed in the system, as third parties are not permitted to access case files. All UDF documents created in the UYAP Document Editor include a QR code for verification.
17. PDF documents submitted physically to the court can also be uploaded to an UYAP case. Scanned PDF documents will not contain a QR code, and can therefore not be verified. Lawyers can sign physical documents, which then are scanned and uploaded to the system, which makes it possible to trace the provenance of the document. Official documents which have not been downloaded from the UYAP system using the QR code, which will identify the issuing state authority.
18. Lawyers request access to case files by submitting a power of attorney to the court.
19. When asked whether he had encountered fake or fraudulent documents in the UYAP system, the source stated that he had come across a few such cases while representing smaller alternative media outlets. These outlets had received emails containing purported decisions from the criminal peace judge, ordering the removal of content from their websites. Upon closer examination, the decisions were found to have been issued by individuals posing as lawyers rather than by the courts, and were thus fraudulent. Nevertheless, the authorities chose not to pursue prosecution against the individuals responsible. The fraudulent nature of the documents was identifiable through a number of inconsistencies.

### **Corruption in the judicial system**

20. The source does not have first-hand knowledge of fake or fraudulent documents in the UYAP system but cannot rule out the possibility, as most official documents are uploaded by court clerks, who could potentially be susceptible to bribery. Similarly, the source has no direct knowledge or examples of corruption within the judiciary but does not exclude the possibility that such incidents could occur.

### **Criminal cases**

21. Investigations are initiated if the evidence is not discredited at the outset, but it is difficult to determine how long they may take. A large number of case files are submitted to the prosecution each year, and the source has first-hand knowledge of defamation cases against multiple individuals that have been ongoing for over a year. It is therefore difficult to make general statements about the duration of investigations.
22. There are two different provisions in the Criminal Procedure Law relevant to the investigation phase: one is the decision not to prosecute, and the other is the decision not to investigate. If there is no supporting evidence, the prosecutor should decide not to initiate an investigation. The prosecution issues a substantial number of these decisions annually. In such cases, no UYAP report of the complaint will be generated.
23. The threshold for initiating an investigation is very low, including in social media cases involving defamation of the president or alleged support for terrorist organisations. It is possible to submit a complaint about an individual through a state-run complaint system (CIMER). The authorities will then review the person's social media activity and prepare a report, which is submitted to the prosecutor's office. These types of investigations and subsequent prosecutions are relatively easy for the authorities to initiate. Even liking certain content on social media can result in a person losing their job.

### **E-devlet**

24. Any Citizen–state interaction can be conducted through the e-Devlet portal, which provides an efficient interface for routine administrative procedures. However, the system also presents data privacy concerns, as all user activity is logged and subject to monitoring
25. It is possible to verify documents from e-devlet using a QR-code.

### **Foreign citizens and their access to UYAP and e-Devlet**

26. Foreign citizens are able to access e-Devlet, if they have been issued with a foreigner's number.

## Annex 2 – Terms of Reference (ToR)

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### **1. UYAP**

- 1.1 Background and structure
- 1.2 Documents in UYAP
- 1.3 Parties with access
- 1.4 Control procedures and irregularities in UYAP documents
- 1.5 Consequences related to irregularities in UYAP documents

### **2. e-Devlet**

- 2.1 Background and structure
- 2.2 Documents in e-Devlet
- 2.3 Parties with access
- 2.4 Control procedures and irregularities in e-Devlet documents

### **3. Availability of counterfeit/fraudulent Turkish documents on social media**

### **4. Syrians in Türkiye and their access to UYAP and e-Devlet**