







Human Rights session

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Some figures

REPORTED ATTACKS ON HIGHER EDUCATION		
SEPTEMBER 1, 2017 – AUGUST 31, 2018		
	Killings, Violence, Disappearances	79
	Imprisonment	88
	Prosecution	60
	Loss of Position	22
	Travel Restrictions	15
	Other	30
Total		294

77 students, scholars, staff killed.

source: [Free to Think 2018](#)

Ayşe Erzan (Turkey)



- **Theoretical physicist** from Istanbul Technical University (retired).
- Former editor of the Journal of Statistical Physics.
- Currently being tried in Turkey for “**propagandizing for a terrorist organization**”.

Turkey - Peace Petition

- July 2015: [PKK rebellion](#).
- January 10, 2016: As an act of protest *Academics For Peace* circulated a petition: “[We will not be a party to this crime](#)” (signed by [2212](#) academics).
- As of December 17, 2018, [429](#) of the signatories have had a court hearing. [62](#) of these have been sentenced to prison sentences exceeding one year and three months (the sentences were suspended in all but 7 cases).
- Erzan was [sentenced](#) on December 12 to 1 year 3 months in prison. Her sentence was not suspended: “*on the ground that there has formed no conviction that the defendants will abstain from committing offence considering their personalities showing no remorse.*”

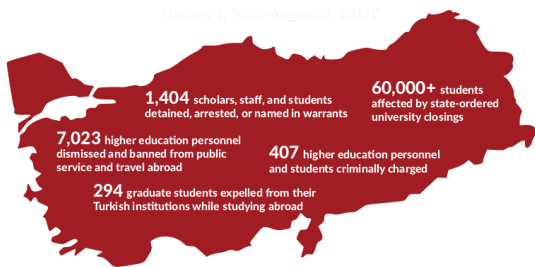
Serkan Gölge (Turkey)



- Research scientist at [NASA's Johnson Space Center](#) in Houston.
- Condemned to [7.5 years in prison](#), reduced to [5 years](#).

Turkey - Purge

- July 15, 2016: [Attempted coup d'état](#).
- Blamed on the followers of [Fethullah Güllen](#).
- The Turkish government has dismissed [over 100 000](#) people, and arrested [over 50 000](#).

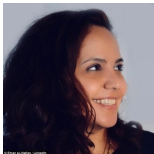


Turkey - Purge

- The arrests often seem arbitrary
 - ▶ some were arrested for using a [secure messaging app](#),
 - ▶ the Altan brothers were arrested for [\[giving\] subliminal messages suggesting a military coup](#) on television,
 - ▶ Gölge, according to his wife, was [denounced as a Güllen supporter by a relative](#) with whom he was involved in an inheritance dispute.
- In many cases, dismissed scholars (and, more generally, people) [cannot find new work, and are barred from travel](#).

Many more cases

- Ahmadreza Djalali (Iran): [sentenced to death](#).
- Xiyue Wang (Iran): [sentenced to 10 years in prison](#).
- Aziza al-Yousef, Eman al-Nafjan, Hatoon al-Fassi (Saudi Arabia): [imprisoned and tortured](#).
- Muhammad Salih Hajim (China, Uyghur): [died in custody](#).



A person wearing a dark coat and a headscarf with a yellow and blue pattern is shown in a dynamic, expressive pose with their right arm raised in a fist. The background is a hazy, greyish-white, suggesting a smoky or tear-filled atmosphere. The overall mood is one of protest or defiance.

2018

Free to Think

Report of the Scholars at Risk
Academic Freedom Monitoring Project

Scholar Rescue Fund



- Awards fellowships to at-risk Scholars. They are 1 to 2 years long. SRF provides up to \$25 000 a year, and requires a matching donation from the host institution.

Scholar Rescue Fund - history

- Run by the [Institute of International Education](#), founded in [1919](#).
- Its first success was to [lobby the US government](#) to create a non-immigrant student visa that would bypass the stringent quotas imposed in 1921.
- In 1933, it founded the [Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced German Scholars](#), which brought [330](#) European scholars to the USA, among which [Felix Bloch](#), [Richard Courant](#), [James Franck](#), [Emmy Noether](#) and many others.
- The SRF was [founded in 2002](#).

Scholar Rescue Fund

- So far, 1228 awards have been granted to 777 scholars.
- 2007-2014: Iraq Scholar Rescue Project. Helped 280 scholars. 40% have returned to Iraq.
- Syria: 103 scholars since 2011.

Local initiatives

- UK: [Council for At-Risk Academics](#).
- Germany: [Philip Schwartz Initiative](#) of the [Alexander von Humboldt Foundation](#).

Further reading

- Scholar Rescue Fund: <http://scholarrescuefund.org>
- Council for At-Risk Academics: <https://cara.ngo>
- Schwartz: <https://www.humboldt-foundation.de>
- Scholars at Risk: <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org>
- Committee of Concerned Scientists: <http://concernedscientists.org>