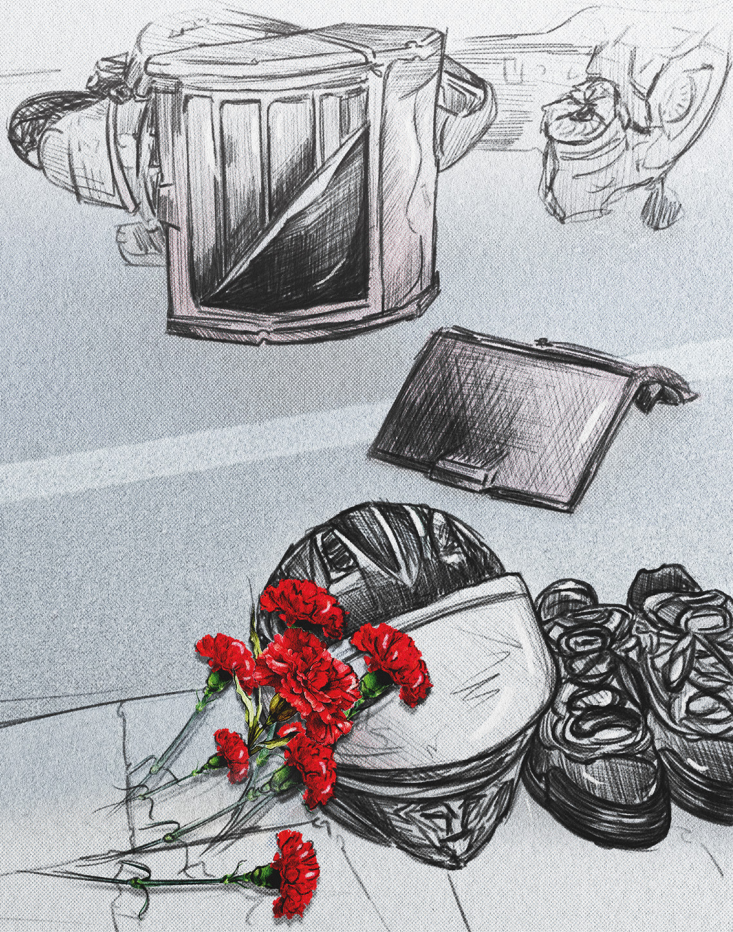


# 2023

## REPORT ON MOTORCYCLE DELIVERY WORKER FATALITIES IN TURKEY



# KURYE HAKLARI DERNEĐİ

## IMPRESSUM

**Publisher:** Kurye Hakları Derneđi (Delivery Worker Rights Association)

**Cover Design:** Güzde Soydan

**Design:** mainpagestudio.com

**Publication Date:** August 22, 2024

**Publication Date of the Original Report in Turkish:** January 5, 2024

**Osmanađa Mah. Serasker Cad. No:33  
(Serasker Han) Kat: 4 Daire: 27 Kadıköy/ İST**

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## Acknowledgments...

We would like to thank Occupational Safety Specialist **Deniz İpek** from the Health and Safety Labour Watch (İSİG). We also appreciate **Berna Özgöl**, the sister of Samet Özgöl, for writing about her family's fight for justice and accountability for his death. We are equally grateful to **Eylem Çalışkan** and **Taylan Deniz Yıldırım**, the cousins of Tevfik Arayıcı, for their tribute to him. Special thanks go to **Başak Kocadost**, who supported us every step of the way in preparing this report. We're also thankful to **Kurye Haber (Courier News)** for sharing their data with us throughout the year, and to all the **delivery workers** who took the time to share their experiences, comments, and observations from the field.

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# FOREWORD

The lack of safe and healthy working conditions results in the most tragic consequence: the loss of workers' lives while they are trying to earn a living. In Turkey, hundreds of workers die each year while on the job, striving to sustain their existence. According to the data from the Health and Safety Labour Watch (İSiG), at least 1,929 workers died on the job in 2023. This alarmingly high number of fatalities is not just a stark indicator of insecurity but also a critical sign of how deeply the problem is entrenched. These deaths, driven by ongoing negligence and a lack of preventive measures, cannot simply be dismissed as accidents. They represent workers who, despite unsafe working conditions, are compelled to continue working, thereby risking their lives.

This year, motorcycle couriers have lost their lives while working in various parts of the world. In Sydney, Australia, the deaths of two Uber Eats couriers within a span of three weeks during July and August sparked significant controversy. In the UK, the death of a 17-year-old child laborer working on a rented account once again brought the operations of delivery platforms into the spotlight. From India to Brazil, couriers have died in traffic accidents exacerbated by per-delivery payment systems and the pressure to work quickly.

As the Delivery Worker Rights Association, we have continued to document the deaths of motorcycle couriers in Turkey, as we did last year. While we recorded at least 58 courier deaths last year, this year we have identified at least 68. This increase highlights the ongoing serious problems related to occupational safety and health in the sector. We publish this report to draw attention to these issues, contribute to examining the factors causing courier deaths, facilitate necessary regulations and precautions, and fundamentally advocate for the value of human life.

Although the report in your hands focuses on motorcycle courier deaths, it is important to note that the factors contributing to these fatalities also impact workers' mental, physical, and emotional well-being daily. Unsafe working conditions endanger their health and lead to numerous diseases. Additionally, these deaths profoundly affect the families and colleagues of the workers, causing significant emotional distress and disruption in their lives. The section "Overview of Motorcycle Delivery Worker Fatalities" emphasizes the need to recognize that

every courier struggles to survive while facing numerous challenges to "bring home the bread." Each courier has a life, dreams, and a future. This section provides data on the 68 couriers who died while working in 2023, detailing their ages, the timing and locations of their deaths, as well as the months, seasons, and companies they worked for. It highlights critical issues such as extremely long working hours, harsh weather conditions, insufficient and low-quality equipment, speed-based bonus systems, payment per package, and low wages. Additionally, it notes that the number of platform delivery workers who have died while working is approaching the number of couriers employed by individual restaurants.

In his article "Precarious Workers in the Extremely Hazardous Sector: Moto Couriers," Occupational Safety Specialist Deniz İpek examines why motorcycle delivery work, despite its precarious conditions, is not classified as a 'highly dangerous profession'. The article highlights that existing laws fail to support the establishment of Occupational Health and Safety Councils or collective worker representation. İpek underscores the urgent need for workers to organize and, through their representatives, oversee the implementation of existing laws and advocate for new legal protections to safeguard worker health and prevent severe injuries and fatalities.

The report focuses on two motorcycle couriers who were also students and died before reaching their thirties. Berna Özgül, whose brother Samet Özgül was stabbed to death by three individuals in traffic in Ankara, provides an in-depth account of her family's quest for justice. Eylem Çalışkan and Taylan Deniz Yıldırım, cousins of Tevfik Arayıcı—who was killed in a minibus accident in Karabük—shed light on the working conditions that led to his death, following his recent social media posts before his passing.

Mesut Çeki's article, "What Do Their Fellow Workers Do When a Motorcycle Delivery Worker Dies?," explores how couriers have expressed their suffering, anger, and responses to the increasingly visible fatalities among motorcycle couriers over the past three years. The piece reflects on press statements made under the slogan "We Don't Want to Die" and the memorial convoys held at funerals. It highlights the couriers' struggles to mourn and assert their right to life, emphasizing their growing intolerance for the hazardous conditions that lead to their deaths.

The "Conclusion and Recommendations" section summarizes the duties and responsibilities assigned to various actors, as detailed in the previous year's report, and outlines the necessary measures, oversight, and regulations needed to prevent further courier deaths.

# OVERVIEW OF MOTORCYCLE DELIVERY WORKER FATALITIES

In this section, we present the data and information about motorcycle couriers who lost their lives while working in 2023. These occupational are directly linked to the couriers' working conditions. They are not mere accidents but indicative of various social and political factors. The exploitation and pressure within the industry, unfair social conditions, and ineffective judicial mechanisms continuously threaten the lives of delivery workers. Long working hours, harsh weather conditions, speed-based bonus systems, per-package payments, and low wages are among the many factors that not only exacerbate exploitation but also create the conditions conducive to these occupational deaths.

In cases of occupational fatalities, responsibility falls on numerous actors, including employers, companies that manufacture motorcycles and equipment, customers, local governments, ministries, the press, and other traffic stakeholders. It is crucial to highlight that working conditions and social justice mechanisms are directly related to the lives of couriers. As we advocate for the rights of motorcycle couriers, we must also consider their labor conditions and lives in our efforts.

In 2023, at least 68 couriers have lost their lives in Turkey. However, neither the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK), which tracks a range of statistics including deaths, nor the Traffic Branch Directorate, which monitors fatal and injury-related accidents, nor any other public institution maintains statistics on courier deaths. As with last year, we have collaborated with Courier News<sup>(1)</sup>, utilizing their archives, conducting daily scans of national

and local press, and reviewing information shared in workers' WhatsApp and Telegram groups. Given this situation, it is essential to emphasize the term 'at least' when reporting on courier fatalities.

Indeed, the fact that motorcycle delivery work is an insecure and unregulated profession—reiterated throughout this report—suggests that even within corporate firms, the number of deaths is likely higher than officially reported. This includes fatalities among young workers riding uninsured, inexperienced, and poorly maintained motorcycles, waiters who occasionally make deliveries, and migrant couriers working for low wages in neighborhood backstreets. The reality likely involves a greater number of deaths than we can currently identify.

In this report, we present data on motorcycle couriers who have died while working, including details such as when and where they died, their ages, the months and seasons of their deaths, and the companies they were employed by. Sharing this data underscores our responsibility to scrutinize the factors leading to courier deaths, with the aim of prompting more comprehensive research and the implementation of necessary measures. Therefore, the report does not claim to fully capture all the issues faced by workers with the provided numerical data; rather, it seeks to highlight the diverse problems couriers encounter and to serve as a foundation for addressing them more comprehensively.

To conclude, it is important to clarify that the purpose of this report is not to quantify the lives of couriers, but to highlight the deaths of these workers and emphasize the value of their lives. It is both crucial and humane to remember and remind others that every worker, in their respective environment, is fighting a daily battle for survival, facing numerous challenges to “bring home the bread,” and that they have futures and dreams to live.

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(1) Courier News is a media outlet that has been broadcasting across all social media platforms for three years and has hundreds of volunteer correspondents nationwide. For more information, visit:

<https://kuryehaber.com>

[https://Instagram.com/kurye\\_haber](https://Instagram.com/kurye_haber)

[https://twitter.com/kurye\\_haber](https://twitter.com/kurye_haber)

<https://www.facebook.com/moto.kurye.haber>

## MOTORCYCLE DELIVERY WORKERS WHO DIED WHILE WORKING IN 2023

	Name and Surname	Age	City/District of the Incident	Date of Death	Company Employed*	Cause of Death
1	Emre Tiftikçi	19	Ankara - Gölbaşı	January 4, 2023	Getir	He lost his life after failing to negotiate a curve and crashing into a pole.
2	Yusuf Uğur Uzunsakaloğlu	20	İstanbul - Kadıköy	January 5, 2023	Trendyol	He lost his life after being struck by a drunk driver who was weaving through traffic.
3	Oğuzcan Aydın	18	Manisa - Akhisar	January 7, 2023	Restaurant	He lost his life because of colliding with a car.
4	Bülent Yahşi	34	İstanbul - Eyüpsultan	January 10, 2023	Yemek Sepeti	He died after crashing into the back of a truck that was parked in the right lane.
5	Oğuzhan Yazıksız	20	Sakarya - Akyazı	January 13, 2023	Domino's Pizza	He died because of a collision with a car.
6	Salih Davut	40	Diyarbakır	January 15, 2023	Restaurant	He died because of a collision with a car.
7	Volkan Kemal Özdemir	45	İstanbul - Sancaktepe	January 27, 2023	Restaurant	He died because of being struck by a car.
8	Mehmet Tekin	26	İstanbul - Ataşehir	January 29, 2023	Trendyol	He died after crashing into a car that suddenly braked.
9	Kulturayev Behruz	25	İstanbul - Avcılar	February 4, 2023	Restaurant	He died because of being struck by a car.
10	Serkan Özdemir	47	Antalya - Kemer	February 27, 2023	Restaurant	He died after being struck by a vehicle coming from the opposite lane
11	Ali	(-)	İstanbul - Beylikdüzü	March 2, 2023	Restaurant	He died after failing to negotiate a curve and crashing into an electric pole.
12	İbrahim Bölükbaşı	40	İstanbul - Ataşehir	March 4, 2023	Restaurant	He lost control of the steering and died as a result
13	Şahin Çakar	28	İğdır - Karakuyu	March 13, 2023	Restaurant	He died after being trapped under a truck that maneuvered without signaling.
14	Özgür Demirer	35	Ordu	March 15, 2023	Restaurant	He died after hitting a pedestrian who suddenly stepped in front of his vehicle and then crashing into a tree.
15	Serhat Erdem	15	Batman	March 19, 2023	Restaurant	He died because of being struck by a car.
16	Hemra Mammedov	26	Bursa - Nilüfer	March 23, 2023	Fiyuu Tıkla Gelsin	While navigating, he lost his life after a car cut in front of him, causing him to fall and then get run over by another vehicle.

## MOTORCYCLE DELIVERY WORKERS WHO DIED WHILE WORKING IN 2023

	Name and Surname	Age	City/District of the Incident	Date of Death	Company Employed	Cause of Death
17	Hakan Yavuz	27	İzmir - Çiğli	April 15, 2023	Restaurant	He died after being hit by a vehicle that was swerving through traffic.
18	Yusuf Kaşıkçı	26	İstanbul - Avcılar	April 25, 2023	Getir	He died after being struck by a truck.
19	Mustafa Alparslan	31	Mersin - Yenişehir	April 26, 2023	Restaurant	He lost control of the steering and died as a result.
20	Adil Cinli	23	Antalya - Merkez	May 2, 2023	Paket Taksi	He died after suddenly noticing a vehicle parked in the right lane, hitting it and then crashing into the guardrail.
21	Serdar Çomak	32	Elazığ	May 17, 2023	Restaurant	He died because of a collision with a car.
22	Gürkan Demir	23	Kocaeli - Gebze	May 25, 2023	Trendyol	He died because of a chain-reaction accident.
23	İbrahim Saygı	40	Manisa - Akhisar	June 12, 2023	Restaurant	He died after being hit by a minibus.
24	Mehmet Akif Zengin	15	Kayseri - Melikgazi	June 24, 2023	Restaurant	He died after being hit by one of two racing vehicles.
25	Durmuş Mert	38	Ankara - Kırkkonaklar	July 3, 2023	Paket Taksi	He died because of a collision with a car.
26	Durmuş Araç	45	Ankara - Emek	July 8, 2023	Getir	He died after being hit by a vehicle making an improper turn.
27	İlker Çalışkan	22	İzmir	July 11, 2023	Trendyol	He died after being struck by a vehicle traveling in the wrong direction.
28	Metin Acun	35-40	İstanbul - Gaziosmanpaşa	July 15, 2023	Restaurant	He died after crashing into a car that pulled out in front of him.
29	Onurhan Ekiz	22	İzmir - Bayraklı	July 19, 2023	Unknown	He died after being hit by a minibus.
30	Batuhan Yakut	18	Tekirdağ - Kapaklı	August 7, 2023	Restaurant	He lost his balance and died on a road under construction.
31	Bedrettin Güler	35	İstanbul - Sultanbeyli	August 13, 2023	Document Courier	He died after crashing into a pickup truck parked in the emergency lane
32	Berat Saraçzade	26	Yalova	August 17, 2023	Fiyuu Tıkla Gel-sin Restaurant	He died after crashing into a minibus.
33	Doğukan Yılmaz	28	İstanbul - Beyoğlu	August 25, 2023	Yemek Sepeti	He died in an accident, the cause of which is still unknown.
34	Şafak Görkem Yeniay	21	İzmir - Karşıyaka	September 8, 2023	Restaurant	He died because of a collision with a car.

## MOTORCYCLE DELIVERY WORKERS WHO DIED WHILE WORKING IN 2023

	Name and Surname	Age	City/District of the Incident	Date of Death	Company Employed	Cause of Death
35	Oğuz Şenol	21	İstanbul - Başakşehir	September 11, 2023	Restaurant	He died after being hit by a pedestrian trying to cross at a red light.
36	Halil Şahin	21	Isparta	September 13, 2023	Restaurant	He died because of a collision with a car.
37	Hüseyin Yeniçağ	57	Kocaeli - Gebze	September 14, 2023	Fiyuu Tıkla Gelsin	He died after being struck by a dump truck.
38	Alper Sevgili	26-27	Konya	September 16, 2023	Restaurant	He died after being struck by a dump truck.
39	Ahmet Kaya	63	İstanbul - Başakşehir	September 20, 2023	Paketle	He died because of being struck by a car.
40	Mustafa Çankıran	27	Antalya - Aksu	September 29, 2023	Restaurant	He died due to an incorrect turn by a truck driver.
41	Yusuf Karaçöl	19	Iğdır	October 1, 2023	Restaurant	He died because of being struck by a car.
42	Mehmet Dalga	23	Van	October 4, 2023	Restaurant	He died after being hit by a pickup truck.
43	Mehmet Efe Altan	22	Aksaray	October 11, 2023	Trendyol	He died due to an improper overtaking maneuver by a car.
44	Batuhan Denli	22-27	İstanbul - Üsküdar	October 19, 2023	Yemek Sepeti	He died because of a collision with a bus.
45	Bilal Şık	20	Mersin - Toroslar	October 22, 2023	Yemek Sepeti	He died when a car door opened while he was passing by.
46	Okan Çakmak	24	İzmir - Buca	October 21, 2023	Document Courier	He died in an accident, the cause of which is still unknown.
47	Name could not be retrieved	(-)	İstanbul - Sultangazi	October 24, 2023	Fiyuu Tıkla Gelsin	He died after losing control of the steering and crashing into a barrier.
48	Güney Ayberk	23	Aydın - Söke	October 30, 2023	Restaurant	He died because of being struck by a car.
49	Olcan Göven	40	İzmir - Buca	November 5, 2023	Yemek Sepeti	He died after being hit by a car coming from the opposite direction.
50	Hilmi Omaca	55	İstanbul - Kadıköy	November 18, 2023	Fiyuu Tıkla Gelsin	He died after a vehicle swerving through traffic rolled over.
51	Fatih Kurşun	22	Manisa	November 20, 2023	Fiyuu Tıkla Gelsin	He died after losing control of the steering.
52	Aykut Caner Birer	34	Mersin - Anamur	November 24, 2023	Restaurant	He died because of a collision with a car.
53	İbrahim Taşkın	30-35	Ankara - Keçiören	November 24, 2023	Unknown	He died after being hit by a drunk driver.

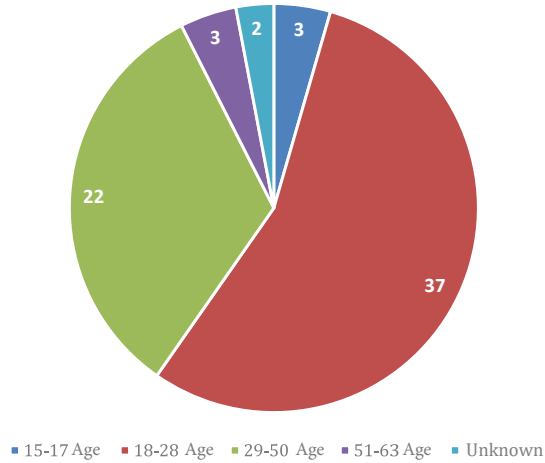


## MOTORCYCLE DELIVERY WORKERS WHO DIED WHILE WORKING IN 2023

	Name and Surname	Age	City/District of the Incident	Date of Death	Company Employed	Cause of Death
54	Muhammed Ela	20	İstanbul - Kağıthane	November 28, 2023	Restaurant	He died when a lighting pole, toppled by a storm, fell on him.
55	Ömer Furkan Ekinci	25	İstanbul - Kartal	November 30, 2023	Fiyuu Tıkla Gelsin	He died after crashing into a service vehicle that suddenly emerged from a side street.
56	Yunus Emre Göçer	38	İstanbul - Fatih	December 7, 2023	Document Courier	He died because of being struck by a car.
57	Mustafa Koç	17	Kocaeli - Körfez	December 8, 2023	Restaurant	He died because of a collision with a car.
58	Tevfik Arayıcı	25	Karabük - Safranbolu	December 9, 2023	Restaurant	He died after being hit by a minibus.
60	Aydogdy Orunav	25	İstanbul - Kadıköy	December 10, 2023	Restaurant	He died in an accident, the cause of which is still unknown.
60	Y.K	47	Ankara	December 15, 2023	Restaurant	He died because of a collision with a car.
61	Diyar Sönmez	24	Bingöl	December 20, 2023	Vigo	He died after being hit by a pickup truck.
62	İsmi Öğrenilemedi.	(-)	İstanbul - Başakşehir	December 22, 2023	Restaurant	He died in an accident, the cause of which is still unknown.
63	Mehmet Şakir Paksoy	21	Gaziantep	December 23, 2023	Restaurant	He died after losing control of the steering.
64	Nevruz Gümüş	30	İzmir - Karşıyaka	December 24, 2023	Restaurant	He died after being struck by a service vehicle running a red light.
65	Mert Huslu	29	İstanbul - Esenyurt	December 26, 2023	Vigo	He died because of a collision with a truck.
66	Feridun Kaplaner	31	İstanbul - Başakşehir	December 27, 2023	Trendyol	He died after being hit by a semi-truck.
67	Mehmet Nazif Yektir	26	Kocaeli - Gölcük	December 28, 2023	Trendyol	He died after being hit by a semi-truck.
68	Feyat Özkan	45	Düzce	December 29, 2023	Restaurant	He died after being hit by a bus running a red light.

**Company Employed:** The term 'Restaurant' in the table refers to delivery workers employed by a single establishment, such as grocery stores, döner shops, pide (Turkish flatbread) shops, snack bars, and water sellers, as opposed to those working for digital platforms. The specific firm employing these workers is not specified. Digital platforms are specified by their names, such as Yemeksepeti and Trendyol. The term 'Document Courier' refers to couriers who work independently, without being employed by a specific business, and deliver documents on request.

### Delivery workers who died while working by age groups

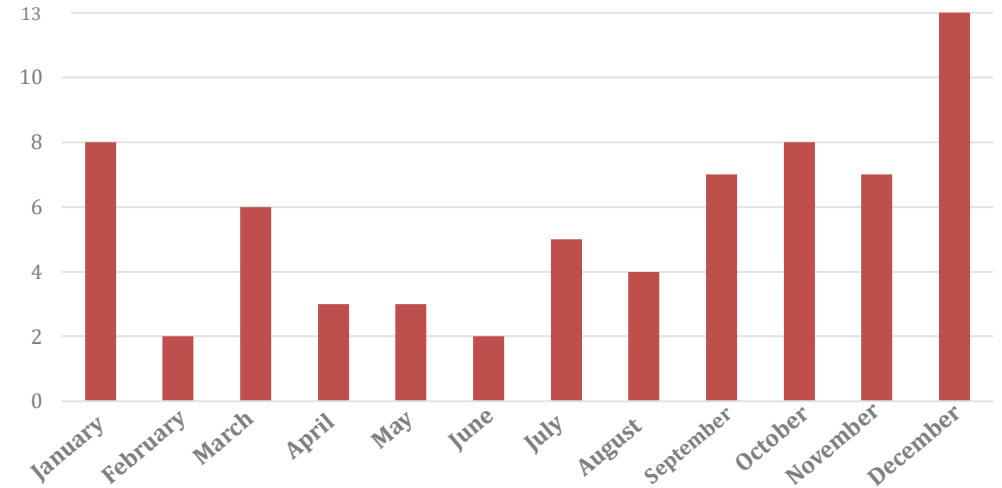


When we look at the data for 2023, a significant proportion of the delivery workers who lost their lives were between the ages of 18 and 28. This includes **three minors, two of whom were 15 years old**, 37 individuals in the 18-28 age range, 22 in the 29-50 age range, and three workers between the ages of 51-63 who **died in occupational fatalities**. The ages of two deceased workers could not be determined.

Considering this data, it is important to note that the 18-28 age range, where the majority of deaths occur, includes young people of university age. With rising inflation, worsening economic conditions, the increasing cost of education, housing issues, tuition fees, and other related problems, it is inevitable that the crisis also affects the youth. The number of university students who must both study and work, or even those forced to drop out of school, is increasing daily. However, there is no clear information or data yet on how many of these couriers are students.

The rising temperatures and the ongoing climate crisis have made it difficult to determine the exact seasons when delivery worker fatalities occur. However, statistical data has been gathered regarding the months in which motorcycle delivery workers tragically lost their lives. Notably, fatalities among delivery workers were higher in the months of October, December, and January.

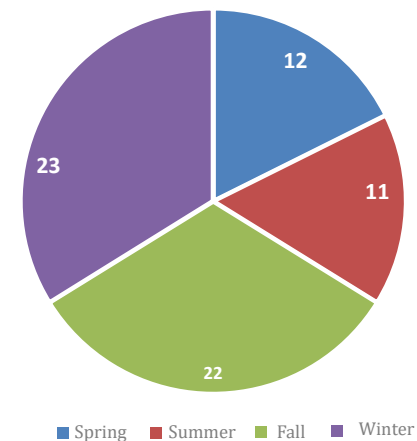
### Which Months See the Most Worker Fatalities?



Analysis of this data, along with other factors, reveals that the lack of adequate equipment during rainy, foggy, and occasionally snowy weather conditions has led to an increase in accidents and fatalities.

According to the collected data, motorcycle delivery workers most frequently lose their lives during the winter months (December, January, February) and the autumn months (September, October, November).

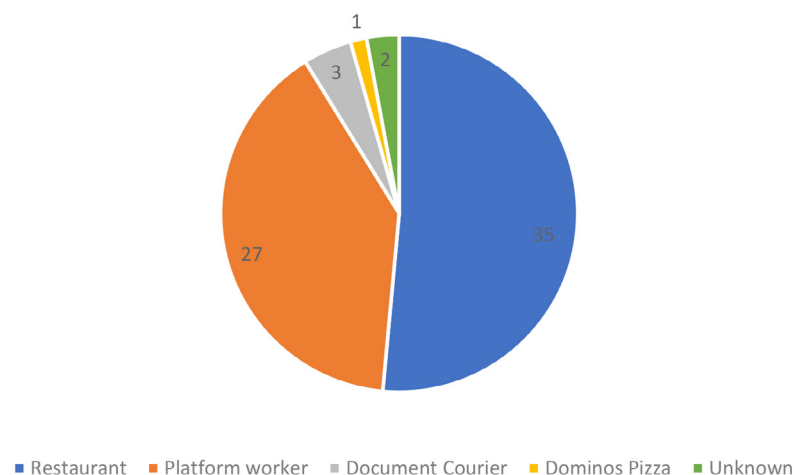
### Which Season Sees the Most Worker Deaths?



When we examine the data on delivery platform workers who died according to the companies they worked for, the numbers are as follows: Trendyol: 7, Fiyuu Tıkla Gelsin: 6, Yemek Sepeti: 6, Getir: 3, Vigo: 2, Paket Taksi: 2, Paketle: 1. Additionally, one worker employed by Domino's Pizza died. Furthermore, three document couriers lost their lives. The companies for which two of the deceased workers worked could not be determined.

Of the workers who lost their lives, 35 were restaurant delivery workers, and 27 were platform workers.

**Delivery workers who died while working by workplace**



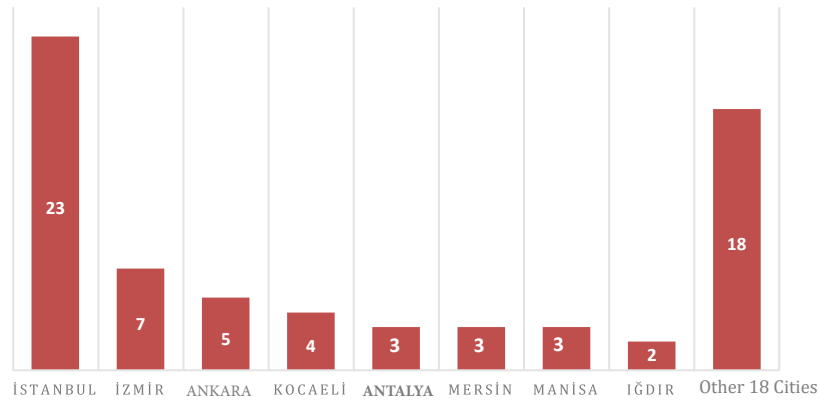
The establishments where restaurant delivery workers are employed include döner shops, pide (Turkish flatbread) shops, water sellers, grocers, and neighborhood bakeries. These are primarily small businesses that generally lack proper monitoring and regulation. Our ability to access detailed information about the working conditions of restaurant couriers remains limited. Field observations and testimonials from the couriers themselves indicate that issues such as working without insurance, using low-quality equipment or failing to provide necessary gear like helmets, neglecting timely motorcycle maintenance, ignoring occupational health and safety measures, and experiencing widespread mobbing are

particularly common in these small businesses within neighborhood areas. As a result, gathering accurate and definitive data on occupational fatalities among restaurant couriers is challenging.

On the other hand, platform delivery work also fails to provide safe and secure working conditions. In 2023, the number of fatalities among platform workers came even closer to those working in businesses colloquially known as 'neighborhood' restaurants. In the platform delivery system, earnings are directly proportional to the number of packages delivered, a system that workers describe as a 'wolf's den.' The extensive working hours, which can range from 10-12 hours and even up to 14 hours, force workers to race against time to earn bonuses, subjecting them to harsh conditions. Additionally, couriers are responsible for all job-related expenses (food, cellphone, gasoline, motorcycle equipment and maintenance costs, etc.) and must manage all risks associated with high living costs, including high excise taxes and thus the elevated cost of equipment. They often work with substandard and inadequate gear. Consequently, like many other aspects of their work, platform workers are isolated in terms of safety and health and are left to fend for themselves.

We observe that **most platform workers who lost their lives while working in 2023 were employed by Yemek Sepeti, Trendyol Go, and Fiyuu Tıkla Gelsin.** The high number of courier fatalities associated with these companies should prompt a discussion about their responsibilities regarding the basic human rights of workers, and they should be held accountable. The pay-per-package system, the implementation of bonuses, and the 'peak hours' system, which rewards more deliveries and faster speeds, deserve scrutiny from the perspective of occupational safety and health.

### Distribution of Worker Fatalities by City



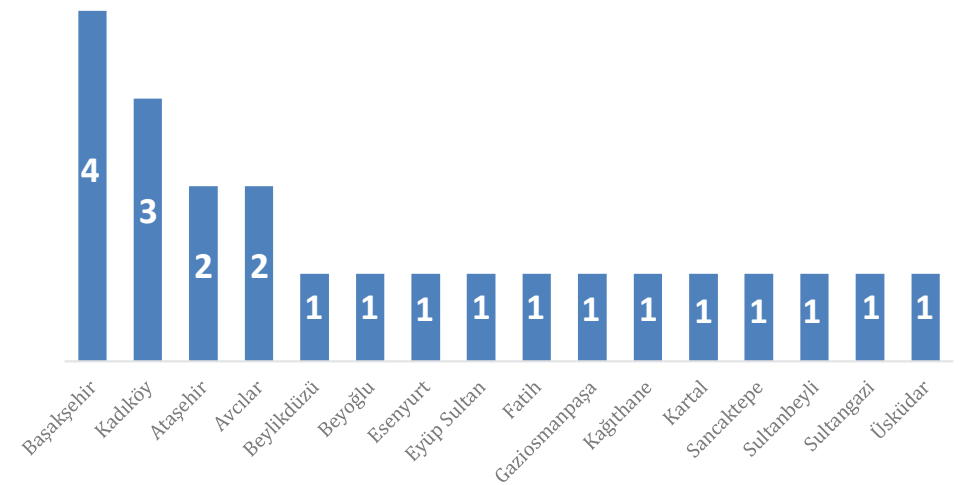
Based on the data obtained, the distribution of delivery workers who lost their lives in 2023 by city is as follows: Istanbul: 23, Izmir: 7, Ankara: 5, Kocaeli: 4, Antalya: 3, Mersin: 3, Manisa: 3, Iğdır: 2, Aksaray: 1, Aydın: 1, Batman: 1, Bingöl: 1, Bursa: 1, Diyarbakır: 1, Düzce: 1, Elazığ: 1, Gaziantep: 1, Isparta: 1, Karabük: 1, Kayseri: 1, Konya: 1, Ordu: 1, Sakarya: 1, Tekirdağ: 1, Van: 1, and Yalova: 1.

Therefore, couriers have lost their lives in at least 26 cities across Turkey. Out of 68 workers, 23 died in Istanbul, with fatalities identified in at least 16 districts of the city. Notably, the Başakşehir and Kadıköy districts report the highest numbers of fatalities.

This year, we have identified that at least five migrant delivery workers died while working. The fact that it took days to determine their names after these deaths highlights the precarious working conditions faced by migrant couriers. Based on the information received and field observations, it is evident that migrant couriers often work without insurance and off the books, receive lower wages, and lack adequate occupational health and safety measures.

Child delivery workers may represent the most heartbreaking section of our fatalities report this year. In 2022, seven child couriers died, with the youngest being 17 years old. This year, although there were three child courier fatalities, the fact that two of them were only 15 years old is especially tragic. Given the economic conditions and the allure of motorcycle riding, it is well-known that many more child couriers operate in neighborhoods with minimal inspections.

### Distribution of Delivery Worker Fatalities by Istanbul's Districts



## PRECARIOUS WORKERS

### IN THE EXTREMELY HAZARDOUS SECTOR:

# MOTO COURIERS

**Deniz İpek** - Occupational Safety Specialist

The transportation sector plays a leading role in sustaining capital accumulation. This sector, which has evolved due to technological transformation, directly impacts the growth of trade volume. The global logistics market size was calculated to be \$10.68 trillion USD in 2022. The development of the e-commerce industry has contributed to the growth of the logistics sector. As the e-commerce industry expands, the demand for logistics services has also increased. In line with this increasing demand, the global logistics market size is expected to reach approximately \$18.23 trillion USD by 2032.

### **"Gig" Economy**

In Turkey, the "gig" economy model is mostly known through platform delivery workers, referred to as the "esnaf-kurye" (tradesman-courier) model. This model transforms the dependent employment relationship, commonly known as "piecework," into a so-called company relationship. While this model is promoted with the motto of giving workers freedom and the luxury of being "their own boss," various examples from around the world have shown that this is not how it works in reality. The gig economy accurately describes economic relationships where short-term, non-guaranteed, and insecure jobs are widespread through digital platforms. By turning the company-employee relationship into a company-company relationship, the system provides capitalism with a new maneuvering space.

In Turkey, there are no legal provisions or articles in the labor law that define the rapidly proliferating platform jobs. Such jobs are described in the Code of Obligations, and that too through a nonsensical precedent set by the Supreme Court, as "merchant representatives." This vague concept, which used to cover traditional street milkmen and yogurt sellers or those who go door-to-door selling a company's products or promoting, advertising, and selling products, is unlawfully applied to platform workers and motor couriers. After obtaining this ruling from the Supreme Court, platform companies began to legally reclassify the tens of thousands of workers they control, no longer considering them as employees but as "tradesmen, merchants, self-employed," and so on.

### **Concept of Hazard Class**

In Article 3/1(r) of Law No. 6331 on Occupational Health and Safety, the concept of hazard class is defined as: "The hazard group determined for the workplace by considering the characteristics of the work performed, the materials used or produced at every stage of the work, the work equipment, the methods and forms of production, the working environment and conditions, and other related factors from the perspective of occupational health and safety." According to this definition, the determination of the hazard class involves factors such as the nature of the work, the materials and equipment used, and the physical working environment and conditions resulting from production. Workplaces are classified into hazard classes as less hazardous, hazardous, and very hazardous.

### **Importance of Hazard Class**

According to Law No. 6331 and related regulations, occupational health and safety obligations are organized based on hazard classes. In this context, determining the hazard class of a workplace is crucial for the following obligations:

- The appointment and working hours of occupational safety experts and workplace physicians.
- The provision of occupational health and safety services by employers or their representatives who have the necessary qualifications and documents

for occupational safety expertise or workplace medicine.

- The appointment of other health personnel.
- Support for employers in occupational health and safety services.
- Determining the number of first aiders and appointing and determining the number of support staff, excluding first aiders.
- The renewal period for emergency plans.
- The scheduling of health examinations.
- The duration and renewal periods for occupational health and safety training.
- Allowing employees from other workplaces to start work without prior occupational health and safety training.
- Determining regular meeting times for the occupational health and safety committee, except in special cases.
- The suspension of work by labor inspectors during workplace inspections.
- The determination of administrative fines to be imposed under Law No. 6331.

### **Determining the Workplace Hazard Class**

Article 9 of Law No. 6331, titled “Determination of Hazard Class,” states: “Workplace hazard classes are determined by considering the premium tariff for short-term insurance branches established according to Article 83 of Law No. 5510 on Social Insurance and General Health Insurance, dated May 31, 2006. This determination is based on the opinions of a commission formed by the relevant parties under the chairmanship of the Director-General of Occupational Health and Safety. The classification is finalized through a communiqué issued by the Ministry. The primary work conducted at the workplace is considered when determining the workplace hazard classes.”

Based on Article 9 of Law No. 6331, the “Regulation on Workplace Hazard Classes Related to Occupational Health and Safety” was published and took effect on December 26, 2012, in Official Gazette No. 28509. According to Article 1 of this regulation and pursuant to Article 9 of the Occupational Health and Safety Law, the hazard classes of workplaces are specified in the “Workplace Hazard Classes List” included in Annex-1 of the regulation. This list is based on the NACE Rev.2 - Statistical Classification of Economic

Activities and details the hazard class assigned to various types of work. Article 2 of the Regulation on Workplace Hazard Classes Related to Occupational Health and Safety states:

- “The hazard class is determined based on the hazard class of the primary activity conducted at a workplace.
- The employer must inform the Ministry of Labor and Social Security of any changes to the primary business activity within one month.
- If there is uncertainty in determining the primary activity, the purpose of the establishment of the workplace is considered. When a workplace engages in multiple primary activities, the one with the higher hazard class is used. If the scope of activities at a workplace, as defined under Law No. 6331, is expanded or modified in a way that continues the primary activity, the hazard class is determined according to the rule specified in this paragraph.”

According to this regulation, when a workplace engages in multiple types of work under Law No. 6331, the hazard class of the workplace is determined based on the hazard class of the primary activity conducted. For workplaces defined under Law No. 6331, if the scope of activities is expanded or continued beyond the primary activity, the hazard class should be determined according to the highest hazard class among the activities performed at that workplace.

In the regulation, under code 53 for “Postal and Courier Activities,” the definition for code 53.20.08 is “Distribution activities related to purchased items such as food, furniture, etc. (excluding city-wide cargo transport and door-to-door moving),” and it is classified as “hazardous.” Courier activities under code 53.20.09 are classified as “less hazardous,” while those under code 53.20.10 are classified as “hazardous.” Courier activities can fall under three different codes, but none are classified as “very hazardous.”

### **Appealing the Workplace Hazard Class**

The commission responsible for determining Workplace Hazard Classes related to Occupational Health and Safety includes representatives from the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (ÇSGB), the Ministry of Health,

the Ministry of Industry, the Social Security Institution (SGK), the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK), the Ministry of Industry and Technology, the Turkish Confederation of Tradesmen and Craftsmen (TESK), the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), Türk-İş, TİSK, Memur-Sen, the Turkish Medical Association (TTB), and the Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (TMMOB).

The legal procedure for evaluating appeals regarding workplace hazard classes is established by the ÇSGB. According to the “Regulation on Workplace Hazard Classes Related to Occupational Health and Safety,” which is based on the NACE Rev.2 Statistical Classification of Economic Activities, workplaces must submit their hazard class-related requests through their respective upper employer organizations (TİSK, TOBB, TESK, Kamu-İş).

Upper employer organizations establish their own internal procedures for handling applications and communicate these procedures in writing to their subordinate units. Requests from public officials or labor unions are forwarded to the Directorate-General of Occupational Health and Safety by the relevant confederations. For requests related to hazard classes affecting specific sectors, these organizations ensure that sector representatives participate in the Commission meetings. In cases where public officials make appeals, the Directorate-General arranges for representatives from the relevant public employer side to attend the Commission meetings.

As stipulated by the procedure, workers’ participation, representation, and voting rights are limited; only one representative from the confederations of public officials and workers is allowed to participate in the commission. Additionally, the commission meets once a year, in January.

### **58 Workplace Fatalities in 2022 and 68 in 2023**

Reports published by Kurye Haber and İSİG (Health and Safety Labour Watch) for 2021 identified at least 32 motor couriers who lost their lives in workplace accidents. According to the “2022 Report on Motorcycle Delivery Worker Fatalities in Turkey” by the Delivery Worker Rights Association,

the number of fatalities was recorded as 58, though it is estimated that the actual number is higher. The report you are reading also indicates that at least 68 motor couriers lost their lives in workplace accidents in 2023.

One of the most significant indicators of the lack of oversight and security in motorcycle courier work is the inability to maintain accurate statistics on fatalities and serious injury accidents. Observations from delivery worker organizations suggest that the number of deaths is much higher than reported, particularly among couriers working without insurance and equipment in neighborhood businesses and smaller firms. These fatalities are often underreported to the public.

### **Risk Factors: Working Long Hours with Unprotected Vehicles**

Motor couriers operate vehicles that are inherently risky and lack protection. The use of these vehicles requires specialized safety equipment. The job is not suitable for prolonged and continuous execution, as it demands constant attention and focus. Additionally, motor courier work is directly affected by seasonal conditions. Considering all these factors, courier work carries a high risk of fatal workplace accidents. Given the lack of protection in the vehicles used and the inherent risks of the job, motor courier work should be classified as a very hazardous occupation, but it is not currently classified as such. Field studies by international and national labor organizations reveal that some motor couriers lack even the legally required M, A1, A2, and A class driving licenses. The increasing interest in the sector is also rapidly raising the proportion of motor couriers who lack driving experience. Although a national competency standard for motorcycle couriers was enacted in 2017 by the vocational competency institution, the lack of binding standards has hindered its implementation in the sector. Additionally, there is a need to develop a more comprehensive definition of professional equipment in these standards.

### **Worker Participation Essential for Worker Health**

One critical aspect of ensuring worker health and safety is participation by the workers themselves. The involvement of workers and their organizations

is fundamental to achieving effective health and safety measures in the workplace. This has been confirmed by both historical evidence and contemporary research. In his article “A Brief History of Occupational Health,” published in the Journal of Public Health Policy, Professor Herbert Abrams of the University of Arizona underscores that organized labor has been a key factor in many workplace health and safety improvements from the Industrial Revolution to the present day. Abrams notes that while professional experts such as occupational safety specialists and doctors contribute valuable insights through measurements, diagnoses, and hazard identification, it is the collective power of workers’ struggles and participation that has driven significant progress in worker health.

### **Only 1% of Workplaces Have the Conditions to Establish Occupational Health and Safety Committees!**

Demands for worker health and safety, especially following large-scale workplace fatalities in mines, often become prominent in public and worker discourse. However, these demands are not sufficiently recognized by unions and labor organizations. The Law No. 6331 on Occupational Health and Safety, enacted on June 20, 2012, along with the Regulation on Occupational Health and Safety Services derived from it, was a response to the rising number of workplace fatalities. This legislation was largely shaped by international labor pressures but has not yielded positive outcomes. Instead, it has shifted the responsibility for worker health entirely to the market and safety companies, institutionalizing a “give-and-take” approach.

In collective labor agreements (TLAs), worker health and safety issues are often among the first topics addressed. These issues are considered “non-problematic” and are typically passed with minimal discussion or practical implementation. Moreover, the effectiveness of Occupational Health and Safety Committees, which are mandatory for workplaces with 50 or more employees, has been lackluster. According to SGK data, these committees can only be established in workplaces with more than 50 employees, which represent just 1% of all registered workplaces. As a result, establishing these committees is not feasible in 99% of workplaces.

### **Market-Driven Practices and Tokenism**

If an inspection were conducted to determine whether the committees required for workplaces with 50 or more employees are functioning, the inspector would likely find that, on paper, every workplace has a committee and has made some decisions. However, if you ask the workers, the overwhelming majority would respond, “What committee? I have no idea!” Despite the market-driven approach and tokenism, the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation still assigns these committees several responsibilities. These include “preparing and monitoring a draft internal occupational health and safety guideline appropriate to the nature of the workplace, reporting monitoring results, determining necessary measures,” and “training workers on matters related to the committee.”

However, these committees face significant issues, particularly regarding their composition and working style, which often have little connection to the workers themselves. Primarily, all committee members, except for the worker representative, workplace physician, and occupational safety specialist, are selected by the employer. Moreover, both the workplace physician and the occupational safety specialist are employees paid by the employer. Consequently, labor organizations advocate for the occupational safety specialist and workplace physician to be independent of the employer, ideally funded through contributions from employers rather than being directly paid by them. Militant unions argue that the number of worker representatives on the committee should exceed that of employer representatives, and that the committee chair should be a worker representative, not the employer or their representative. They also propose that in the event of a tie, the chair’s vote should count as two.

### **There Is No Collective Representation!**

In Turkey, worker participation in occupational health is ineffective due to both the lack of prerequisites for worker involvement and the extreme inadequacy of the mechanisms outlined in Law No. 6331. This law primarily structures worker participation as direct individual involvement, with collective representation tools, such as worker representation or



occupational health and safety committees, being either limited or excluded where possible. This inadequacy is most evident in the functioning of occupational health and safety committees. Furthermore, the duties and authorities assigned to worker representatives under Law No. 6331 often reduce workers to passive recipients of information regarding health and safety management, rather than active participants.

According to the regulations, a worker representative is authorized to participate in and monitor occupational health and safety activities, request measures to eliminate hazards or reduce risks arising from those hazards, and make suggestions on related matters. However, the representative's powers are limited to participation, monitoring, requesting, and suggesting. They do not have the means to influence outcomes through implementation, supervision, or enforcement.

### ***Motor Couriers Can Only Survive by Organizing***

All delivery worker organizations seek to have their profession classified as a "Very Dangerous Occupation." In the face of inadequate, employer-biased, and excessively liberal labor laws, motor couriers need to establish collective mechanisms to counteract capitalists who aim to create a labor system devoid of worker protections. For occupational health and safety measures to be effective in the lives of motor couriers, there must be opportunities for representation in the Commission Authorized to Determine Workplace Hazard Classes. Ensuring that motor courier work, which has seen increasing fatality rates each year, is classified as a "Very Dangerous Occupation" would be a crucial starting point.

As seen in other sectors, Law No. 6331 on Occupational Health and Safety and classification as a "Very Dangerous Occupation" alone are not enough to prevent workplace fatalities. Ensuring worker health, preventing serious injuries and deaths requires workers to organize, monitor the enforcement of laws through their representatives, and secure additional legal protections.





# SAMET ÖZGÜL

**Berna Özgül** (Samet Özgül's Sister)

## Who is Samet Özgül ?

Samet was born on March 3, 1994, in Kırıkkale but lived with his family in Ankara. His mother is a housewife, and his father is retired. Samet has one brother and four sisters. He was studying in the History Department at Gazi University and the Occupational Health and Safety Department at Istanbul University. To support himself, he worked as a motorcycle courier for the platform company Trendyol Go. He was both studying and working. Samet was a very cheerful and calm person, dedicated on self-improvement and passionate about learning new things. His favorite activities were doing sports and riding his Bws motorcycle. He was also quite successful in Capoeira and Muay Thai. In fact, if he had lived, he would have represented us in the ring. On the day of the incident, Samet wanted to ride his Bws motorcycle for leisure, and it was his last ride for pleasure. After returning home, he changed clothes and began preparing to go to work. His mother and sister saw him off at the door. As he was leaving the building, he glanced back at his mother, as if to say his final goodbye before heading to work.

## How Did the Murder of Samet Özgül Occur?

The incident occurred on November 5, 2022, in the Yenimahalle district of Ankara. While Samet was riding his motorcycle, he got into an argument with the driver of a light commercial vehicle over a right-of-way issue. After Samet had warned the driver for running a red light, the driver blocked Samet's path, forcing him to stop. Three people got out of the vehicle and attacked Samet. He was beaten and severely injured by a stab wound to his throat. The attackers got back into their vehicle and left the scene as if nothing had happened.

After the incident, Samet went to a nearby hospital on his own. Following initial treatment there, he was transferred to Gülhane Training and Research Hospital. However, despite all medical interventions, he passed away on November 7, 2022. The three individuals who were detained were taken to the courthouse after processing at the police station. The suspects who stabbed and killed Samet were taken to the magistrate court with a request for their arrest after being questioned by the prosecutor. Halil İbrahim Demirci was arrested, while Mustafa Demirci and Bülent Açıkgöz were released under judicial control.

## The Process of the Samet Özgül Case

The case process began in June when the prosecutor prepared the indictment. The trial was held at the 11th High Criminal Court of Ankara Sıhhiye Courthouse. In the first hearing, the detained defendant Halil İbrahim Demirci claimed that Samet had insulted them, which is why he used a knife. The released defendant Mustafa Demirci stated that he did not take Samet Özgül's condition seriously, saying, "He didn't look like he had taken a blow; he was standing upright, and I only found out later that he had died." Witness Tayfun K., who had gone out in his vehicle to work at a party congress at Ankara Sports Hall that night, described the incident as follows: When he reached the traffic light, a motorcyclist with a helmet stopped in front of him. Then a dark-colored panel van also approached, and the people in the vehicle signaled for them to stop. The witness said he saw a crowd at the scene and heard people shouting, "Run towards the gas station." He saw the injured person running towards the gas station. The individuals got into their vehicle and quickly left the scene. The witness stated that he did not see the exact moments of the incident and did not hear any exchange of insults. The witness said he saw a crowd at the scene and heard people shouting, "Run towards the gas station." He saw the

injured person running towards the gas station. The individuals got into their vehicle and quickly left the scene. The witness stated that he did not see the exact moments of the incident and did not hear any exchange of insults.

In the second hearing, the prosecutor presented his opinion. He requested a life sentence for the defendant Halil İbrahim Demirci for the crime of 'premeditated murder' and up to 20 years in prison for Mustafa Demirci for 'aiding and abetting premeditated murder.' The prosecutor also requested the acquittal of Bülent Açıkgöz, stating that there was no conclusive evidence beyond reasonable doubt to convict him of 'aiding and abetting premeditated murder.' In the third hearing, the presiding judge stated that the trial would conclude, and the case would be decided. He asked the defendants for their final statements. The detained defendant Halil İbrahim Demirci, as well as Mustafa Demirci and Bülent Açıkgöz, expressed their remorse for the incident. Announcing the verdict, the court sentenced the detained defendant Halil İbrahim Demirci to life imprisonment without reduction for the crime of 'premeditated murder.' The court also sentenced the released defendants Mustafa Demirci and Bülent Açıkgöz to 12 years in prison each for 'aiding and abetting premeditated murder.' Following the verdict, the previously released defendants were also taken into custody.

The court determined that Halil İbrahim Demirci's guilt was established and sentenced him to life imprisonment. Considering the defendant's personal history, criminal tendencies, social relationships, and behavior during the trial, no discretionary reduction in the sentence was applied. It was also emphasized that during Halil İbrahim Demirci's knife attack, the other defendants continued their physical assaults on the victim. Defendants Mustafa Demirci and Bülent Açıkgöz were each sentenced to 12 years in prison for aiding and abetting the murder of Samet Özgül. During the appellate review by the 1st Criminal Chamber of the Regional Court of Justice, various deficiencies were identified.

The appellate chamber indicated that Halil İbrahim Demirci and the other defendants should each be represented by separate defense attorneys. In addition, the decision was reversed due to the lack of sufficient justification of the court's decision in a manner suitable for supervision and the defendants Mustafa Demirci and Bülent Açıkgöz were released. The local court would conduct a re-examination and issue a new ruling.



### ***The Fight for Justice by the Family and Friends of Samet Özgül***

Samet's sister, mother, family, and close friends embarked on a battle for justice. The incident was widely reported by the media from the very beginning. Following the news coverage, Samet's family quickly organized press statements in front of their home and at the scene of the incident. During the press conference, his mother, Hacer Baran, expressed her anguish, stating, "Liters of my son's blood were shed," and demanded justice as a citizen. The family sought justice for their son before they could even mourn him. Their sole wish was for the perpetrators to face the harshest penalties, hoping to prevent other families from experiencing similar suffering. They created accounts on Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube under the name "Justice for Samet Özgül" to raise awareness about the incident on social media. The first to amplify their voices were Courier News and TEHİS Union, who stood by the family throughout the legal proceedings and on social media platforms.

In the subsequent process, they joined BaBaLa TV, which greatly supported their cause by providing a platform to voice their story. Despite facing numerous challenges, they traveled to Istanbul, where Samet's sister spoke about her

brother's case, calling for justice and asking, "When will families like ours, who are grieving and in tears, see justice?" The issue was also raised in the Turkish Grand National Assembly, with Mersin MP Perihan Koca addressing it in a speech and offering support during the trial processes. Lawyer Feyza Altun, upon learning about Samet's case, promptly recorded a video on her social media, protesting against the 'impunity' and stating, "Killing a person should not be this easy!"

After his death, his coaches and fellow athletes held a moment of silence and commemorated him at their Capoeira events. In September 2023, the Mot Ankara Group, Couriers, the Capital Motorcycle Couriers Assistance and Solidarity Association, and many other motorcycle clubs in Ankara obtained permission from the governorate to organize a procession. They rode their motorcycles to the site of the incident, placed carnations on Samet's helmet, and held a press conference with his family. Their unified call was for 'justice.' Many media outlets covered the procession, and the hashtag '#JusticeForSametÖzgül' was used extensively on Twitter. His mother and sister participated in a live broadcast on Courier News via Instagram to raise awareness about the issue. Additionally, rapper Elham wrote a rap song titled 'In Memory of Samet Özgül' in response to the case. The situation garnered close attention from artists, lawyers, delivery workers, motorcycle clubs, motorcyclists, media, and members of parliament.

Tragically, a 28-year-old young man was taken from his dreams for no reason and lost in the prime of his youth. The most recent verdict provided some solace to his family and loved ones, but it remains incomplete. Previously, two individuals who had been released spent only 2.5 months in custody and were freed again following an appellate court decision. Mustafa Demirci, a taxi driver, may still be endangering others by continuing in this profession. Bülent Açıkgoz, after the incident involving Samet, committed another assault and was imprisoned. There is no guarantee that these individuals will not harm others in the future. His family will continue to fight and do everything in their power to ensure that all three individuals are prosecuted with the harshest penalties. They hope to prevent other tragedies like Samet's so that no more lives are lost... The criminals must receive the punishment they deserve, and no crime should go unpunished!





# TEVFİK ARAYICI

**Eylem Çalışkan - Taylan Deniz Yıldırım**  
(Tevfik Arayıcı's Cousins)

Tevfik Arayıcı, was born on July 9, 1998, in Izmir. Throughout his life, he was always beloved by everyone due to his unique, fun, and charitable nature, which set him apart from his peers.

Having lost his father at a very young age, Tevfik Arayıcı faced life's hardships early on. Despite the absence of a father figure, he never saw this as a deficiency but instead strived throughout his life to achieve better conditions. Little did he know that this struggle would ultimately cost him his life...

During his childhood, Tevfik Arayıcı developed an interest in martial arts and was involved in kickboxing for many years. However, due to financial constraints and various life challenges, he eventually had to give up the sport. During his high school years, Tevfik Arayıcı gained a variety of experiences and continually strived to improve himself in different areas.

He crowned his efforts by participating in an Erasmus exchange to Spain during his sophomore year of high school. This trip played a significant role in shaping his outlook on life, and he always shared this experience with others, radiating the joy that sparkled in his eyes.

It was time for Tevfik to go to university. Although he did not achieve the results he wanted on his first attempt at the entrance exam, he succeeded on his second try and gained admission to the Actuarial Science and Risk Management program at Karabük University. This marked the beginning of his cherished final years in Karabük, where his story would unfold.

In his early years at university, Tevfik started living in a state dormitory. Eventually, he found the dorm room too confining and wanted more freedom, so he moved out to live in his own apartment with friends. Naturally, this newfound freedom came with a cost. He needed more money and had to start working. Not wanting to financially burden his mother, Tevfik began a two-year adventure with his motorcycle around this time.

Tevfik started working day and night, and although he did not particularly enjoy the job, he knew it was the only way to achieve his dream of opening an internet café. This awareness also led him to sacrifice the social life he desired but could not enjoy. For example:



**Tevfik**  
@MrTefo35

Hayatıma birisi girdi, onunla beraber kendime iyi davranmadığım kadar güzel davrandım. Hasta olduk ilaçlar, vitaminler, sütler vs içtik. 1 haftada atlatamadığım hastalığım 2 günde geçti.

ÖÖ 4:28 · 27 Eki 2023 · 1.035 Görüntülenme

*\* Someone came into my life, and I started treating myself better than I ever have. We got sick, so we took meds, popped vitamins, drank milk, and more. The illness that knocked me out for a week cleared up in just two days.*

Ignoring these issues and continuing to work, Tevfik faced numerous problems related to his job. Weather conditions or other uncontrollable factors, such as heavy traffic, led to accidents in his efforts to deliver orders on time. He also endured psychological and physical abuse from customers, which took a significant toll on him. He expressed his feelings about these experiences on social media, using his own words as follows:



**Tevfik**  
@MrTefo35

Siparişi götürdüm kapıya açtı şaşkın ifadeyle kanka siparişleri sen getirince hızlı geliyo başkası getirince gelmiyo dedi :D canımın kıymeti yok kardeşim açıyorum gazi dedim gülüyo :D şaka sanıyo gerçekten canımın kıymeti yok

ÖS 10:36 · 9 Eyl 2022

*\* I delivered the order, and the customer opened the door with a surprised look and said, 'Bro, when you bring the orders, they get here fast; when someone else does, they don't show up.' I replied, 'I don't value my life, brother, so I floor it.' He laughed thinking it was a joke. But honestly, I don't value my life.*



**Tevfik**  
@MrTefo35

Yol tarifini bile yapamayan insanlara yemek götürmek çok zor. Bu tarafa dön ordan bu tarafa dön diyo. Abla o taraf nere diyom "bu taraf işte ya" diyo abla o taraf sağ mı sol mu ne taraf diyorum köprü'nün ordayım diyom köprü'nün ordan bu tarafa gir diyo. Sağ sol yok ablada

ÖS 7:22 · 2 Nis 2023 · 397 Görüntülenme

*\* I delivered the order, and the customer opened the door with a surprised look and said, 'Bro, when you bring the orders, they get here fast; when someone else does, they don't show up.' I replied, 'I don't value my life, brother, so I floor it.' He laughed thinking it was a joke. But honestly, I don't value my life.*



**Tevfik**  
@MrTefo35

Temmuz ayının ortasına geldik bu neyin sağnak yağmuru. Kafayı yicem yağmurun hızından yağmurlukla canımı acıtıyor. Mük yemin ediyorum mük.

ÖS 12:12 · 9 Tem 2023 · 518 Görüntülenme

*\* We're in the middle of July, and what is this torrential rain? I'm losing my mind over how intense it is; it even hurts through my raincoat. Seriously, I swear, it's just perfect.*



**Tevfik**  
@MrTefo35

7 kilo vermişim. Allah bereket versin aldığımda üstüme olmayan motor pantolonu ve montu şimdi cuk oturuyor.

ÖÖ 6:47 · 4 Kas 2023 · 1.339 Görüntülenme

*\* I've lost 7 kilos. Thank God for the blessings. The motorcycle pants and jacket that didn't fit me before now fit perfectly.*



**Tevfik**  
@MrTefo35

Son 2 haftadır parça parça uyku. Günde Max 4-5 saatlik uyku. Fiziksel yorgunluğa alışkın vücudun mental olarak paramparça olması

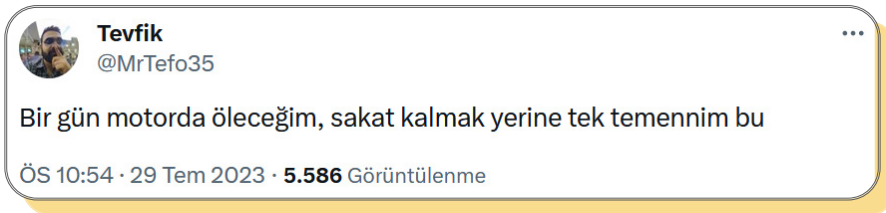
ÖS 1:54 · 14 Kas 2023 · 1.712 Görüntülenme

*\* For the past two weeks, it's been broken sleep, just 4-5 hours a day. My body, which is used to physical exhaustion, is falling apart mentally as well.*



*\* My food arrived late, so I'm giving 1 star. Blah blah blah*

Tevfik was aware of the risks associated with his job due to the accidents he had previously experienced, but he was also acutely aware of another fact: he did not have a father to support and stand behind him. Being sensitive and tender-hearted, Tevfik must have felt these risks intensely, as his recent posts often conveyed a sense of weariness and thoughts of death.



*\* One day, I'll die on the bike; that's my only wish instead of ending up injured.*



*\*My heart is breaking, friends.*

On Saturday, December 9, 2023, around 10:30 PM, Tevfik went out in the rainy weather just to earn an additional 200 TL. A reckless drunk driver, who had consumed so much alcohol that he could barely see in front of him, hit Tevfik while making a dangerous overtaking maneuver, then fled the scene, leaving him to die. This criminal was captured and arrested a few hours later, but by then, our beloved Tevfik was already gone...

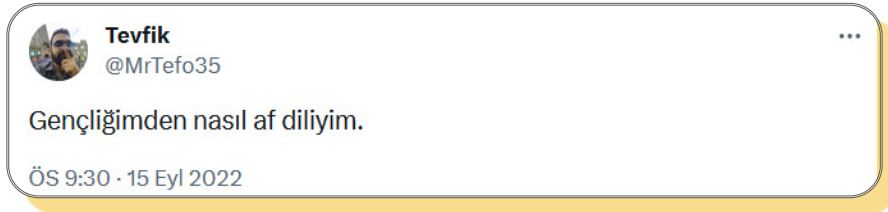
On the day of the accident (between 8:00 and 9:00 PM), during his last conversation with his mother, Tevfik said, 'Mom, I'm really soaked; I'm going to change my clothes and go to work, then we can talk.' Neither his mother nor Tevfik could have known that this would be their final conversation...

Upon receiving the news of her son's accident around midnight, his mother Bahar Arayıcı hastily traveled from İzmir to Karabük. She set out hoping to make her son a bone broth soup, thinking it would help him recover quickly. As Bahar Arayıcı embarked on her journey, hopeful of healing her son and bringing him home, could she have ever imagined that she would end up transporting him in a coffin to be buried beside his father?"

After the accident, when Bahar Arayıcı went to Tevfik's house, she was met by his clothes, still soaked from the rain and not yet dried. What a heart-wrenching sight for a mother... Tevfik, who had been taken from us by a reckless drunk driver, lay in the hospital morgue while his clothes remained exactly where he had left them.

All that we have written is not mere sensationalism, but the true stories

of lives senselessly lost. Tefvik and many other wonderful individuals, young people brimming with dreams and aspirations, were taken from their families, friends, and loved ones. They left their dreams unfinished and their loved ones in tears. We will continue to seek justice until the perpetrators of this crime are sentenced to the harshest penalties. There must be consequences for prematurely ending the dreams of a young person. The lives of those earnestly striving for their livelihood should not just fade away for the sake of fleeting pleasures.



*\* How do I ask for forgiveness for my youth?*

***Don't ask for forgiveness, Tefvik. Let us be the ones to apologize. Let those who forced you to work under these conditions and took your life be the ones to seek forgiveness...***

***We hope you are peacefully resting in the arms of your beloved father. We will always remember you with a smile, Tefo. We love you deeply and will never forget you...***

## WHAT DO THEIR FELLOW WORKERS DO WHEN A MOTORCYCLE DELIVERY WORKER DIES?

**Mesut Çeki** - President of the Delivery Worker Rights Association



Delivery worker deaths have become more visible over the past three years. A brief review of the press shows that, prior to the pandemic, there was little information available beyond occasional reports of delivery worker fatalities. This, of course, does not mean that workers were not losing their lives in workplace accidents.

Although the history of motorcycle delivery services in Turkey dates back 30 years, their prevalence has increased significantly in the last 4-5 years due to the rise of new marketing strategies by online food delivery companies and the growing habit of online shopping. With the pandemic, delivery services, particularly in the food sector, have become an indispensable part of daily life, extending to nearly every sector and business. Thus, it would not be incorrect to say that the visibility of motorcycle delivery workers in society and the media truly began with the Since April 2021, statements



by some politicians began circulating in the media claiming that “190 motorcycle couriers lost their lives during the pandemic.” As these figures were not based on any official report, the number continuously changed.

Courier News, established in March 2021, began reporting on the deaths of motorcycle couriers on its platform. In early 2022, Courier News announced that they were sharing the ‘2021 Motorcycle Delivery Worker Fatalities Report,’ compiled through daily press and social media reviews, examination of statements from motorcycle courier associations and unions, and monitoring of workers’ WhatsApp and Telegram groups. The report listed the names, ages, and cities of at least 30 motorcycle couriers who died in 2021. In January 2023, the Delivery Worker Rights Association, in collaboration with Courier News and the Health and Safety Labour Watch (İSİG), released Turkey’s first comprehensive ‘Motorcycle Delivery Worker Fatalities Report’ (2022). This report included statistical data on delivery worker deaths, reasons for these fatalities, the couriers’ mental state in response, the chain of responsibility, media representation of these deaths, their presence in the Turkish Parliament, and proposed solutions. While the reports received extensive media coverage, they were frequently cited as the basis for numerous parliamentary questions and research proposals by members of parliament. Additionally, other courier organizations, unions, conscientious journalists, and media outlets began to regularly reference these reports.

### **Delivery Workers Report Their Deaths**

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### **Workers Issue Press Statements Saying “We Don’t Want to Die”**

Prior to the pandemic, press releases concerning delivery worker deaths and the issues faced by couriers were rare<sup>(1)</sup>. Instead, we mostly saw occasional interviews with some heads of courier associations.

Prompted by the statement from the ‘Union of Tourism, Entertainment, and Service Workers’ (TEHİS) on March 24, 2021, while some pandemic measures were still in place, press statements were subsequently made in Istanbul, Izmir, Adana, Mersin, and Hatay, demanding that ‘Motorcycle couriers should not die, and we want secure jobs and secure lives!’

On April 15, 2021, delivery workers, along with the Workers’ Solidarity Association, highlighted the issues of courier fatalities and unsafe working conditions by displaying a banner in Istanbul/Levent that read, “Which should we deliver first? Our orders or our lives?”

On October 9, 2021, couriers who are members of the Istanbul Motorcycle Couriers Association gathered in front of the Çağlayan Courthouse in

(1) One exceptional example is the press statement made by friends and family of 16-year-old courier Burak Demir, who died on August 17, 2019, after being trapped under a truck on his way back from a delivery. One exceptional example is the press statement made by friends and family of 16-year-old courier Burak Demir, who died on August 17, 2019, after being trapped under a truck on his way back from a delivery. <https://www.birgun.net/haber/kuryelerden-burak-demir-icin-eylem-kaza-degil-cinayet-266175>



Istanbul, declaring that the “speed pressure and scoring system” were driving couriers to their deaths and calling for necessary reforms.

On April 17, 2022, in Istanbul/Kadıköy, courier associations affiliated with the Couriers Federation displayed the slogan “Products Should Arrive Safely, Not Quickly. We Carry Lives, Not Just Packages. NOTICE US”. They called out to authorities and the public, striving to make their voices heard.

Additionally, starting in December 2021, cities such as Istanbul, Ankara, Bursa, Izmir, and Manisa saw increased focus on courier deaths through

demonstrations and convoys advocating for pay increases. In public discussions surrounding the February 2022 Yemek Sepeti protest and the January 2023 Trendyol Go protests, concerns about the dangerous nature and insecurity of delivery work were raised, alongside demands for higher wages due to the rising cost of living.

### **Workers Hold “Memorial Convoys” at Funerals**

Recently, on May 10, 2022<sup>(2)</sup>, the funeral procession for Kubilay Aydın, a Trendyol courier who died after being hit by a car in Istanbul/Pendik, was marked by a convoy of hundreds of motorcycle couriers. The workers first gathered in front of Kubilay’s home and then conducted a collective ride following the hearse.

On November 5, 2022, in Ankara, Samet Özgül, a Trendyol delivery worker, was stabbed by three road hooligans and passed away in the hospital on November 7. Over a thousand motorcycle couriers attended his funeral. On November 10, workers also gathered in front of the Özgül family’s home, declaring “We Want Justice.” Throughout the Samet Özgül case, couriers closely followed the proceedings.<sup>(3)</sup>

On November 19, 2022, Bünyamin Berker, a student at Malatya İnönü University who was working as a courier, was severely injured and later died in the hospital after falling into a hole left unmarked and inadequately lit by the municipality. Following the incident, couriers from Malatya gathered on the dark street where the accident occurred, lit candles, and demanded the prosecution of those responsible.

(2) Before the onset of funeral convoys, on January 16, 2022, in Denizli, a drunk driver struck and killed 19-year-old Yemek Sepeti worker Necati Yasin Batır. During the legal proceedings, courier associations, along with the Batır family, held press statements and group rides in the city center on February 25 and March 24, 2022.

(3) Throughout the Samet Özgül case, group rides were held in front of the courthouse on July 12, September 13, and September 27, 2023, to draw attention to the case and mark the anniversary of Samet’s death. Awareness campaigns were also conducted on social media.

As images of convoys spread through Courier News, WhatsApp groups, and various media outlets, the trend of couriers collectively attending their colleagues' funerals has become more prevalent. Gürkan Demir was honored with a convoy in Kocaeli/Gebze, Durmuş Mert in Ankara, İlker Çalışkan in Balıkesir/Bandırma, and Batuhan Denli in Istanbul/Üsküdar, all accompanied by their fellow workers.



The funeral of Tefvik Arayıcı, who died after being hit by a road hooligan in Karabük, was held in Izmir with a courier convoy. Many workers displayed banners on their motorcycle baskets reading 'Don't Let Couriers Die/ Justice for Yunus Emre Göçer.' Similarly, large convoys were observed in Izmir for Zeynep Demir, who died after being struck by a driver on her day off, and in Istanbul/İkitelli for Feridun Kaplener, who died after being hit by a truck and was sent off to his hometown of Gaziantep. These convoys also featured motorcycles with banners demanding justice and bearing the slogan 'Don't Let Couriers Die.'"

### **Workers Mourn and Fight for Their Right to Life**

On the night of September 7, 2023, 21-year-old Yemek Sepeti courier Şafak Görkem Yeniay was killed by a road hooligan in Izmir/Karşıyaka. The following day, his friends gathered in the Karşıyaka marketplace and issued a press statement, saying, 'We are dying! Hear us!' The workers then conducted a group ride to the location where Şafak lost his life, honking their horns in protest against courier deaths.

On October 21, 2023, in Mersin, the death of 20-year-old Yemek Sepeti courier Bilal Şık—who was thrown into the road when a parked car door opened and then run over by a truck—caused outrage among the city's couriers. Hundreds of motorcycle couriers attended Bilal's funeral collectively. After the funeral, they protested the precarious working conditions and fatalities among workers in platform companies by reading a press statement under the banner 'Work Model Fed with Blood.' Following the statement, the workers blocked Toroslar Kuvvayı Milliye Street, where Bilal lost his life, honking their horns and chanting 'Don't Let Couriers Die.' This protest was recorded as the first to occur following a courier's death and funeral.

In Izmir, couriers participated in a convoy for the funeral of 24-year-old Yemek Sepeti worker Okan Çakmak, who was severely injured by a car on October 21 and passed away on October 23. Afterwards, they gathered at Alsancak Station Square, displaying a banner that read "Which should we deliver first? Our order or our life? Motorcycle Courier Workers Are Not

Slaves.” They issued a press statement protesting speed pressure, the lack of worker health and safety measures, and long working hours.

On November 30, at the Aksaray exit of the Istanbul/Eurasia Tunnel, courier Yunus Emre Göçer was severely injured after being hit by a car driven by Mohammed Hassan Sheikh Mahmoud, the son of the Somali President. He passed away on December 5. Hundreds of couriers attended his funeral in Maltepe. To protest the injustices in the case,<sup>(4)</sup> workers conducted a “Justice Ride for Yunus Emre” from Zincirlikuyu to Çağlayan Courthouse on December 10. On the same day, another form of protest began in Izmir and quickly spread throughout Turkey. Couriers created and attached banners to their bikes reading ‘Don’t Let Couriers Die/Justice for Yunus Emre Göçer’ and shared photos on Courier News social media accounts and WhatsApp groups. This ‘Justice’ protest expanded to many districts in Istanbul, as well as to cities including Ankara, Adana, Mersin, Düzce, Sakarya, Samsun, Antalya, and Muğla. A massive ‘Justice Ride’ was held in Antalya, and a ‘We Want Justice’ press statement was issued in Sakarya for Yunus Emre Göçer.

On December 26, in Kocaeli/Gölcük, Trendyol courier Mehmet Nazif Yektir was severely injured after being hit by a truck and passed away on December 28. As his funeral was being sent off to his hometown Şanlıurfa, his colleagues conducted a collective memorial ride on December 29, leaving carnations on his motorcycle at the spot where he lost his life.

### ***The Changing Mood of Workers’ Comments***

In the “2022 Report on Motorcycle Delivery Worker Fatalities in Turkey”, there was a section on comments from couriers in Courier News regarding the rising fatalities.<sup>(5)</sup> These comments were predominantly filled with condolences and a pervasive fear of death, with a common sentiment being, “One day, they will comment on my death”.

(4) <https://www.evrensel.net/haber/505383/kaza-susu-verilmis-cinayetin-kronolojisi-artiktum-turkiye-biliyor>

(5) <https://kuryehaklari.org/2022-report-on-motorcycle-delivery-worker-fatalities-in-turkey/>

Examining comments on news of fellow workers’ deaths published on the Courier News page reveals a shift. In addition to condolences and fear, there is an increasing sentiment of frustration: ‘Every day, one of us says goodbye in some way; we must put an end to this!!!’ Many workers, expressing their intolerance, have suggested that if all workers—regardless of which company they work for—gathered and protested not just for one day but for three days, it would make everyone understand their value.

This sentiment is also evident in many social media comments. To give the final word to one of these comments: “When will we be heard? Every day, one of us is gone. One day, all of us will be gone. Look at our ages - we are dying before we even reach 30. They need to see us and hear our voices. If necessary, let’s go on strike and stay off our bikes for two days and see if they will understand us.”

# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The deaths of delivery workers are rooted in various economic, political, and social issues. To prevent these fatalities, comprehensive research and an integrated approach to addressing these problems are essential. Numerous actors at different levels have roles and responsibilities in this effort.<sup>(1)</sup>

First and foremost, the profession of motorcycle delivery work should be classified as a “Highly Dangerous Profession,” with stringent monitoring of working conditions. Workers should only be employed if they possess professional competency and safe driving certificates. It is crucial to prevent practices such as excessive working hours beyond legal and humane limits, child labor, and unregistered employment.

Additionally, improving road and traffic conditions for motorcycle riders is of utmost importance. Ensuring that motorcycles are visible to other drivers is critical. Efforts should be made to replace dangerous barriers, often called “killer barriers” by riders, with “Motorcycle-Friendly Barriers.” Stricter inspections for road maintenance, lighting, and warning signs are necessary. Implementing and expanding special lanes for motorcycles in pilot areas is also crucial for delivery worker safety.

(1) We have outlined the duties and responsibilities of institutions regarding delivery worker fatalities in the “Conclusion and Recommendations” section of our 2022 Report on Motorcycle Delivery Worker Fatalities in Turkey. These issues remain unresolved and require practical steps from the relevant parties this year. <https://kuryehaklari.org/2022-report-on-motorcycle-delivery-worker-fatalities-in-turkey/>

It is vital to ban advertisements that promise fast delivery, emphasize safe delivery practices in the media, and include news content that raises awareness about delivery worker deaths. Customers should prioritize safety over speed.

Companies and businesses must ensure that workers receive a living wage and abandon practices that compromise safety, such as incentives, bonuses, and peak hour pressures. Delivery workers should not be employed without proper insurance or licenses. Contracts between platform delivery companies and their workers should avoid clauses that undermine worker security. Essential steps include implementing hourly wages instead of per-delivery payments, holding platform companies accountable for workers’ health and safety, and establishing transparent contracts with worker input. Thorough investigations must be conducted in cases of motorcycle delivery worker deaths. The tendency to issue lenient sentences for “causing death by negligence” and the rarity of arrests must be addressed. Legal regulations should prioritize justice, ensuring outcomes that provide solace to the public conscience.

All motorcycle delivery worker organizations—federations, associations, unions, and chambers—should highlight delivery worker deaths, investigate their underlying causes, and publicize the precarious working conditions involved. These organizations must also apply greater pressure on institutions responsible for these fatalities.

Motorcycle delivery workers should exercise their right to refuse work under serious and dangerous conditions, as outlined in Article 13 of the Occupational Health and Safety Law No. 6331, especially when facing employer pressure to make deliveries in adverse weather conditions.

Workers must defend their rights against a working regime that jeopardizes their safety. They should resist low wages that force them to work excessively long hours, develop collective stances against workplace pressure and harassment, and unite through organization to achieve a safer and more humane working environment.

# 2023

## REPORT ON MOTORCYCLE DELIVERY WORKER FATALITIES IN TURKEY

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**Report:** Moto Kurye Ölümleri Raporu 2023

**Publication Date:** August 22, 2024

**Publication Date of the Original Report in  
Turkish:** January 5, 2024