

Award Ceremony and Discussion with Awardee

Solidarity Award for Journalists from Southeast Europe

Date: Thursday, 16 October 2025, 18:00–19:30
Venue: PLH E.600 (Ausschusssaal), Paul-Löbe-Haus, Deutscher Bundestag, Konrad-Adenauer-Straße 1, 10117 Berlin
Language: English

18:00 AWARD CEREMONY

Welcome: **Manuel Sarrazin**, President of the Southeast Europe Association
Laudation: **Max Lucks MdB**, Speaker for Human Rights Policies and Humanitarian Aid, Faction Alliance 90/The Greens
Acceptance: **Elif Akgül**

18:45 CONVERSATION AND DISCUSSION

Awardee: **Elif Akgül**
Moderation: **Manuel Sarrazin**, President of the Southeast Europe Association
With: **Banu Güven**, freelance journalist and TV presenter

19:30 RECEPTION



Registration / Entrance

To participate in the event, please register at the following link no later than **13 October 2025** and bring a photo ID to enter the Bundestag:

<https://www.sogde.org/de/formulare/solidarity-award-2025/>

THE SOLIDARITY AWARD

The Solidarity Award honors courageous journalists from our partner countries, who often expose themselves to great personal risks due to their critical reporting. It aims to honor their outstanding work and to recognize their contribution to the promotion of democracy, rule of law, and freedom of the press. The award is also intended to contribute to the protection of journalists on the ground through the public attention it attracts and to honor the great achievements of the award winners. With the award, the SOG wants to demonstrate that it stands by those who speak up for European values such as freedom of the press and freedom of expression. The prize is awarded at a specially designed event and is financed entirely through donations.

THE AWARDEE

Elif Akgül has been reporting on freedom of expression and court cases against journalists in Turkey for over 14 years. She monitors and reports on trials for organisations such as the Clooney Foundation and the Media and Law Studies Association. Elif Akgül herself was arrested in February 2025 during raids against the 'Democratic Party of Peoples', an umbrella organisation of pro-Kurdish and left-wing groups. She was held in Bakirkoy Women's Prison in Istanbul until June 2025. After three months in detention, she was released but is currently not allowed to leave the country and is awaiting trial in Turkey.

Elif Akgül has already been recognised for her courageous work in the past, for example with the special prize of the Metin Göktepe Journalism Award for her reporting on the consequences of the murder of Armenian journalist Hrant Dink in 2007 and the subsequent trial.

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