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FOUNDATION
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (MFHR)
ΙΔΡΥΜΑ ΜΑΡΑΓΚΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ
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ΤΟΥ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΥ (ΙΜΔΑ)

PRESS RELEASE
of the Marangopoulos Foundation for Human Rights
ECtHR Judgment in the case
Antonopoulos and Others v. Greece
(27 August 2026)

On 27 August 2026, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) published its judgment in the case of *Antonopoulos and Others v. Greece*,¹ adding to a series of ECtHR judgments highlighting the longstanding problems associated with conditions of detention in Greek prisons.

The applicants, who had been detained between 2016 and 2019 at the Avlonas Juvenile Detention Centre, complained before the ECtHR of a violation of Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment). Their complaints concerned, in particular, severe overcrowding in the cells combined with a lack of adequate personal space, arguing that they had less than 3 sq. m. of space per detainee.

The Court, recalling the principles established in its case-law, in particular those set out in the Grand Chamber judgment in *Muršić v. Croatia*, stressed the importance of the personal space available to each detainee when assessing conditions of detention under Article 3 of the Convention.

In the present case, the Court took into account both the applicants' submissions and the official tables submitted by the Greek Government, which recorded the number of detainees based on inspections carried out twice a month. These tables showed that, in four out of the nine recorded instances, the number of detainees exceeded the official capacity of the facility. In the absence of convincing evidence to the contrary, the Court accepted that, during the relevant period, the Avlonas Juvenile Detention Centre had been operating beyond its designated capacity, resulting in an obvious lack of personal space.

¹ *Antonopoulos and Others v. Greece*, (Application no. 13353/18), 27 August 2026.

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The Court further found that this lack of space could not be regarded as short-lived, occasional or minor within the meaning of its case-law and, accordingly, held that there had been a violation of Article 3 of the Convention, without considering it necessary to examine separately the applicants' other complaints concerning their conditions of detention.

The judgment in *Antonopoulos and Others v. Greece* is not, however, an isolated case in the ECtHR's case-law. Conditions of detention in Greek prisons continue to present serious shortcomings, with overcrowding and the lack of personal space remaining among the most pressing concerns. Greece remains subject to enhanced supervision by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe concerning the execution of judgments relating to this issue (the *Nisiotis* group of cases), while the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) has also repeatedly expressed serious concerns regarding conditions of detention in the country.²

Against this background, the Marangopoulos Foundation for Human Rights (MFHR), in cooperation with the Laboratory of Penal and Criminological Research of the School of Law of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA), organised a scientific conference in October 2025 on "Conditions of Detention in Greek Prisons". The event focused, among other issues, on overcrowding, access to healthcare, education and the social reintegration of detainees, as well as the reforms necessary to ensure dignified conditions of detention. Almost a year later, the Court's judgment serves as a further reminder of the continuing relevance of these concerns and of the need for meaningful action to address the longstanding shortcomings of the Greek prison system.

² CPT, Report on the periodic visit to Greece carried out from 20 to 31 January 2025, CPT/Inf (2026) 09, 4 March 2026, paras. 6 and 19–30.

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