

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 1 people over alleged links to the Gülen movement. In October 2020, a UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD) [opinion](#) said that widespread or systematic imprisonment of individuals with alleged links to the group may amount to crimes against humanity. Solidarity with OTHERS has compiled a detailed [database](#) to monitor the Gülen-linked mass detentions since a failed coup in July 2016.

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

No news has emerged of [Yusuf Bilge Tunc](#), a former public sector worker who was sacked from his job by a decree-law during the 2016-2018 state of emergency and who was reported missing as of August 6, 2019, in what appears to be one of the latest cases in a string of suspected [enforced disappearance](#) of government critics since 2016.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION

7 March: A district governor's office in İstanbul has as in previous years [declared](#) the central Taksim neighborhood and surrounding area off limits for demonstrations or marches to mark International Women's Day, March 8.

9 March: Police [detained](#) some 200 demonstrators in İstanbul late on Saturday after more than 3,000 women marched peacefully through the city center under tight security to mark International Women's Day.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

3 March: A retired man in Turkey, Halil Küpeli, has been [summoned](#) by police for questioning over alleged "insulting the president" charges after criticizing government policies and economic hardship in a viral street interview.

6 March: A Turkish journalist, Kazım Güleçyüz, has been [handed](#) down a suspended 15-month sentence on conviction of disseminating "terrorist propaganda" for conveying condolences for the late Fethullah Gülen.

6 March: A proposed cybersecurity law granting Turkey's Cybersecurity Directorate broad surveillance powers has [raised](#) concerns among opposition lawmakers, who warn it could be used to suppress dissent and limit press freedom.

7 March: The Turkish government [launched](#) an investigation into famous food critic Vedat Milor after he praised a low-cost restaurant run by İstanbul's opposition-governed municipality.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

4 March: A Turkish court ruled for the [release](#) of Nimet Tanrıkulu, a prominent human rights activist, after she had spent 94 days in pretrial detention at an Ankara prison on terrorism-related charges.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

4 March: The European Court of Human Rights [ruled](#) that Turkey violated the right to liberty of 51 judges and prosecutors arrested after the 2016 coup attempt, ordering the government to pay each applicant €5,000 in damages.

4 March: Turkey's Interior Ministry has [removed](#) Beykoz Mayor Alaattin Kösele, the third opposition CHP mayor in İstanbul to be arrested in four months, amid growing judicial pressure on the party.

KURDISH MINORITY

5 March: Three Kurdish writers, Mevlüt Aykoç, Sami Tan, and Ronayi Önen, were [detained](#) in early-morning police raids in İstanbul, Şanlıurfa, and Diyarbakır amid an ongoing government crackdown on dissent.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

5 March: A severely disabled Afghan refugee in Turkey, who requires dialysis three times a week, [lost](#) access to medical treatment after authorities revoked his protected status and confiscated his ID, putting his life at risk.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

4 March: Turkish prison authorities have [denied](#) parole to Saadet and Emre Bulun, a couple imprisoned since 2018 over alleged links to the Gülen movement, despite their good behavior scores of 66 and 64 meeting eligibility criteria, with their appeals also rejected by an execution judge at Kütahya T Type Prison.

5 March: The İstanbul governor has [blocked](#) an investigation into allegations of mistreatment against pro-Palestine activists who were detained last year after protesting President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan over his government's ongoing trade with Israel.

6 March: Esengül Demir, a General Assembly member of the Peoples' Democratic Congress (HDK), was [subjected](#) to strip search torture after being taken to İstanbul Bakırköy Women's Prison following her arrest.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

5 March: According to Bianet's "Male Violence Tally" published, at least 17 women and 9 children were [killed](#) by men across Turkey in February, while men also subjected at least 51 women to violence, harassed 8 women, abused 5 children, and forced 110 women into sex work.