

# TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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## ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 463 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.

19 November: Turkish police [detained](#) 459 individuals across 66 provinces for alleged links to the Gülen movement, accusing them of propaganda and using ByLock and payphones for communication.

## 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

20 November: On November 20, 2024, police [intervened](#) in a march and press statement planned at Ankara's Kolej Metro for Transgender Day of Remembrance, detaining 4 individuals, including a lawyer.

20 November: On November 20, 2024, during a press statement held in front of Istanbul Çağlayan Courthouse advocating for the closure of Y and S type prisons, police

[intervened](#) and detained an individual named Ferdi Sarıkaya.

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

18 November: Diken's news article titled 'Court's "illegal" decision: Access ban on "profiteering in AKP municipality"', which featured the statements of Prof. Dr. Yaman Akdeniz was [banned](#) from access with the decision of the Midyat Criminal Judgeship of Peace.

20 November: Nasuh Mahruki, co-founder of the Turkish Search and Rescue Association (AKUT), was [arrested](#) for allegedly disseminating misleading information and insulting judicial authorities through social media posts.

20 November: Turkey's disinformation law, upheld in 2023, has [prompted](#) 4,590 investigations, imprisoned 33 individuals, targeted 56 journalists in 66 cases, and drawn international criticism for stifling free speech, as the country ranks 158th in the 2024 World Press Freedom Index.

21 November: Journalist Gökhan Özbek was briefly [detained](#) in Ankara on Thursday due to a prison sentence he was handed down for criticizing an indictment against jailed businessman Osman Kavala.

22 November: Turkey's Supreme Court of Appeals has [upheld](#) a prison sentence of almost two years for a journalist, Beritan Canözer, in southeastern Turkey who was convicted of disseminating terrorism propaganda in her articles and social media posts.

## JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

20 November: On November 20, 2024, summaries of proceedings seeking to lift parliamentary [immunity were](#)

[submitted](#) to the Turkish Grand National Assembly for Ayten Kordu, Cengiz Çiçek, Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu, Yılmaz Hun, Nejla Demir (DEM Party); Tuncay Özkan, Özgür Karabat, Turan Taşkın Özer, Türkan Elçi, Süleyman Bülbül (CHP); Bülent Kaya (Saadet Party); and Cemal Enginyurt (Independent).

22 November: Two opposition mayors in eastern Turkey were [removed](#) from office after being convicted of “terrorism” for belonging to a banned Kurdish militant group, the interior minister said.

## KURDISH MINORITY

19 November: Following a police raid on the Istanbul Esenyurt office of the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party), district co-chairs Rojda Yılmaz and Abdullah Arınan were [detained](#) at the police station where they had gone to give their statements.

20 November: Turkish courts have [sentenced](#) three Kurdish mayors to prison on terrorism-related charges. Mehmet Sıddık Akış, the ousted co-mayor of Hakkari, received a nine-year sentence for “committing crimes on behalf of a terrorist organization” and violating public demonstration laws. Cevdet Konak, co-mayor of Dersim, and Mustafa Sarıgül, mayor of Ovacık in Tunceli province, were each sentenced to six years and three months for “membership in a terrorist organization.”

## REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

18 November: In Istanbul, some landlords are [accused](#) of exploiting refugees by demanding large upfront rents and orchestrating their deportation to retain the money, as highlighted by the case of an Iranian business owner.

## TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

21 November: Despite her multiple health issues, 78-year-old Melek İpek was [hospitalized](#) shortly after starting her prison sentence over alleged Gülen links but was brought back to prison following treatment.

22 November: A Turkish court has arbitrarily [denied](#) conditional release to former teacher Talip Ekmekçi, imprisoned since 2018 for alleged links to the Gülen movement, citing insufficient evidence of his disassociation from the group.

## TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

18 November: The United Nations Committee against Torture (CAT) has determined that Sweden's decision to deport a Turkish national affiliated with the Gülen movement to Kosovo would violate the Convention against Torture, citing the [risk of his subsequent rendition](#) to Turkey and potential exposure to torture.