

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 3 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.

ARBITRARY DEPRIVATION OF LIFE

9 June: Yusuf Çetin, a former Turkish military officer dismissed by emergency decree after the 2016 coup attempt, [died](#) from burns sustained in a workplace explosion, highlighting the [ongoing hardship](#) and precarious conditions faced by purge victims excluded from formal employment and legal protections.

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

No news has emerged of [Yusuf Bilge Tunç](#), 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

11 June: A group staged a protest in Kadıköy against trade with Israel at the office of a company allegedly

representing an Israeli logistics firm in Turkey; police quickly intervened and [detained](#) five people.

13 June: In Ankara's Çankaya district, police used physical force and reverse handcuffing to [detain](#) six people during a protest organized by the End the Occupation in Palestine Platform and other political parties and organizations.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

11 June: A Turkish court [issued](#) an arrest warrant for Halk TV CEO Cafer Mahiroğlu, currently abroad, over alleged involvement in a public tender corruption probe linked to opposition-run municipalities, a move critics say is part of the Erdoğan government's broader crackdown on political rivals following the opposition's March 2024 election victories.

12 June: Exiled investigative journalist Erk Acarer's YouTube channel with 253,000 subscribers, along with his "Belgeli Yorum" accounts on X and Instagram, have been [blocked](#) in Turkey on national security and public order grounds.

13 June: Four journalists — Semra Pelek, Ozan Cırık (Sendika.org), Melisa Efe (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung), and freelance journalist Dicle Baştürk — were [detained](#) in Istanbul on Friday over alleged links to an illegal organization, drawing criticism from press freedom advocates amid Turkey's continued crackdown on independent journalism.

13 June: Turkish prosecutors have [charged](#) BirGün newspaper editors İbrahim Aydın, Uğur Koç, and Yaşar Gökdemir with insulting and endangering Chief Public Prosecutor Akın Gürlek, a pro-government judicial figure known for targeting opposition politicians through fast-tracked trials, over a news article.

FREEDOM OF RELIGION

11 June: The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom [recommended](#) Turkey for the State Department's Special Watch List in its 2025 report, citing systemic violations against religious minorities, state favoritism toward Sunni Islam, misuse of blasphemy laws, and the deportation of at-risk refugees, despite constitutional guarantees of religious freedom.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

13 June: The Council of Europe (CoE) has [pressed](#) Turkey to complete the retrial of former teacher [Yüksel Yalçınkaya](#) in accordance with the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) and to address broader legal flaws that have led to thousands of similar prosecutions.

13 June: In Turkey's controversial "Case of Detained Minor Girls," the presiding judge [dismissed](#) the legal opinion of renowned criminal law professor İzzet Özgenç, signaling prejudgment, as teenage defendants face terrorism charges for lawful educational and social activities, with international observers condemning the trial's political and procedural irregularities.

OTHER MINORITIES

12 June: In its sixth monitoring report on Turkey, the Council of Europe's anti-racism body ECRI [warned](#) of worsening hate speech and hate-motivated violence targeting minorities, LGBTI individuals, and refugees, citing state inaction, weak legal protections, and systemic failures in law enforcement and judicial response.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

11 June: Turkish authorities [detained](#) 273 people for migrant smuggling and 1,022 undocumented migrants in nationwide operations across 51 provinces, amid ongoing allegations of abuse, arbitrary detention, and forced deportation of refugees, particularly Syrians, in centers partially funded by the European Union.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

11 June: Dr. İpek Elif Atayman, former general manager of İstanbul's municipal media company, has [alleged](#) abusive treatment and a rights-violating prison transfer following

her arrest in a politically charged corruption probe targeting Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu and opposition figures.

TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

11 June: Germany's domestic intelligence agency [reported](#) that Turkish intelligence continues to conduct surveillance and influence operations in Germany, primarily targeting Gülen movement followers, PKK supporters, and critics of the Turkish government.