

# TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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## ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 177 people over alleged links to the Gülen movement. Since 2017, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD) has issued 26 [opinions](#) concerning arbitrary detentions based on alleged membership in the Gülen movement, in which it has expressed grave concern that the widespread or systematic imprisonment of individuals linked 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.

13 February: Turkish police [detained](#) 93 former and current tax inspectors across 11 provinces in an İstanbul-based investigation into alleged Gülen movement links.

## 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

13 February: Police [detained](#) at least three people at İstanbul's Boğaziçi University as authorities closed the campus and moved classes online ahead of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's visit for a dormitory opening, amid ongoing tensions over university autonomy following his controversial rector appointments.

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

11 February: Turkey's media regulator RTÜK [fined](#) Halk TV 2 percent of its monthly revenue over allegedly vulgar language used by journalist Uğur Dündar during a live broadcast and fined NOW TV 3 percent over a drama series said to violate national and moral values.

12 February: A Turkish court [ordered](#) the arrest of CHP Adalar youth leader Ramazan Yıldız over a social media post criticizing Justice Minister Akın Gürlek.

16 February: A draft Turkish government bill would [require](#) mandatory identity verification for social media users, impose age restrictions and enable rapid administrative content removals without court orders, expanding state oversight of online platforms.

## FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

11 February: Uyghur rights activist Dolkun Isa, a German citizen and president of the Uyghur Center for Democracy and Human Rights, said Turkish authorities [barred](#) him from entering the country during a transit stop at İstanbul Airport, describing the long-standing entry ban as a politically motivated measure linked to pressure from China.

## JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

9 February: Turkey's Savings Deposit Insurance Fund (TMSF) has [put](#) the seized Maydonoz Döner fast-food chain up for sale for \$74 mln following a terrorism-financing investigation over alleged Gülen movement ties that led to nationwide detentions and the appointment of state trustees to manage the company.

10 February: The ECtHR [ruled](#) in Kaya and Others v. Turkey that Turkey violated Article 6 of the Convention by denying four senior judges any effective judicial review to challenge the automatic termination of their mandates during the 2016 judicial restructuring, ordering compensation of €3,000 to each applicant.

11 February: An İstanbul court [sentenced](#) talent manager Ayşe Barım to 12 years and 6 months in prison for aiding an alleged attempt to overthrow the government during the 2013 Gezi Park protests, reducing an initial aggravated life sentence while allowing her to remain free under a travel ban, in a case linked to broader Gezi prosecutions including Osman Kavala.

11 February: President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has [appointed](#) pro-government İstanbul Chief Public Prosecutor Akın Gürlek, who initiated prosecutions against CHP figures including İstanbul Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu, as Turkey's new minister of justice.

## **OTHER MINORITIES**

13 February: The European Parliament [adopted](#) a resolution condemning Turkey's alleged targeted expulsions of foreign Christians and journalists on national security grounds and urged Ankara to end administrative entry bans and harassment measures.

## **REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS**

12 February: Three migrants [died](#) and four were missing after an inflatable boat began sinking off Turkey's Foça coast in the Aegean Sea, where 38 people were rescued.

## **TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT**

12 February: Imprisoned Gezi Park defendant Tayfun Kahraman was [hospitalized](#) following an acute multiple sclerosis relapse as his wife renewed calls to implement a Constitutional Court ruling ordering his retrial, which lower courts have refused to enforce despite findings of a fair trial violation.

13 February: A Turkish opposition MP [told](#) parliament that a 16-year-old girl arrested on terrorism propaganda charges over a social media video was strip-searched and allegedly mistreated at Şakran High-Security Prison, raising concerns about proportionality and children's rights.