

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 19 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.

23 April: Three academics from Tekirdağ Namık Kemal University and a doctor working at a private hospital in Keşan were [detained](#) over alleged links to the Gülen movement.

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

21 April: One hundred ten Turkish coal miners marching from Eskişehir to Ankara over unpaid wages were [detained](#) by police after staging a protest outside the energy ministry.

23 April: The İstanbul Governor's Office has for the fourth consecutive year [banned](#) an April 24 Armenian Genocide remembrance event in İstanbul, denying permission for a ceremony planned by the April 24 Commemoration Platform without providing justification.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

20 April: A court in İstanbul [sentenced](#) journalist and teacher Bilge Aksu to 6 years and 3 months in prison on charges of membership in a terrorist organization based on his articles published in Yeni Özgür Politika and PolitikArt and the royalty payments he received for them.

21 April: A Turkish court in Şanlıurfa Province ordered the [arrest](#) of journalist Mehmet Yetim on charges of spreading misleading information over a social media post about a school knife attack, despite his later correction.

22 April: Turkey's media regulator, Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), [fined](#) and imposed program sanctions on broadcasters including TV8, TLC and Kanal 26 over content deemed to violate broadcasting rules related to violence, insulting language and respect for human dignity. (*Critics have long accused the regulator of using its powers selectively, particularly against outlets seen as critical of the government.*)

23 April: A Turkish court in İstanbul again [handed](#) journalist Neşe İdil a suspended 15-month sentence on terrorism propaganda charges over social media posts, despite a prior Constitutional Court of Turkey ruling ordering a retrial for violation of her fair trial rights.

24 April: A Turkish court in Ankara has [begun](#) the trial of journalist Mahir Bağış on charges including insult and spreading disinformation over a report on expenditures by

a government-appointed trustee at the Batman Municipality.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

21 April: Turkish authorities, through the Savings Deposit Insurance Fund, have [put](#) the assets of opposition broadcaster TELE1 up for sale following its takeover and the detention of its editor-in-chief Merdan Yanardağ.

23 April: Twenty elected mayors from Turkey's main opposition Republican People's Party [remain](#) imprisoned and 25 have been suspended, including Ekrem İmamoğlu, following the 2024 local elections.

24 April: A group of 28 lawmakers from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has [called](#) for Magnitsky-style sanctions against Turkish judicial officials over non-compliance with European Court of Human Rights rulings.

KURDISH MINORITY

23 April: Three Kurdish brothers were detained and allegedly [beaten](#) by police in Başkale following a traffic dispute.

24 April: A Turkish court in Batman [gave](#) Kurdish journalist Mehmet Üçar a suspended prison sentence of over one year on terrorism propaganda charges linked to his reporting for pro-Kurdish outlets.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

22 April: A Palestinian woman, Esraa Mohammad Awad Aljamal, was [sentenced](#) in İstanbul for protest-related charges after demonstrating against U.S. support for Israel following remarks by Marco Rubio, and was placed in deportation proceedings upon release.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

21 April: A dismissed civil servant, İdris Ekinci, was [hospitalized](#) after a suicide attempt in Sakarya prison, with lawmaker Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu saying he had been unable to access prescribed depression medication.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

22 April: A Turkish court [jailed](#) former Tunceli governor Tuncay Sonel on charges including evidence tampering in the investigation into the 2020 disappearance of university student Gülistan Doku, in a case that has led to multiple arrests, including his son, amid renewed scrutiny of the long-running probe.