TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR

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As a human rights advocacy organization, we closely monitor human rights violations in Turkey. As part of this effort, we publish a weekly bulletin documenting the human rights violations that occur throughout the week. In addition, we regularly share up-to-date statistics and categorized sources related to these cases. The Turkey Rights Monitor report has been published consistently for 335 consecutive weeks and is being shared with institutions, organizations, and relevant stakeholders engaged in human rights. You can access updated information and statistics via our website: https://turkeyrightsmonitor.com/

ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 101 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.

20 November: Turkish courts jailed 47 people pending trial over alleged links to the Gülen movement after police detained 83 people in operations across 28 provinces over 10 days, according to the Interior Ministry.

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

17 November: A court accepted an indictment charging two university students with “incitement to commit a crime” for distributing leaflets in İzmit calling for Education Minister Yusuf Tekin’s resignation; their first hearing is scheduled for 15 June 2027.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

16 November: A Turkish court ordered opposition parliamentarian Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu to pay Defence Minister Yaşar Güler 150,000 lira in damages over parliamentary remarks concerning the 2016 coup attempt; the precise judgment date was not independently established.

17 November: Turkish authorities placed Sözcü TV and its associated news website under trustee administration following a court decision, while police detained executives in an investigation concerning financial allegations that had not been adjudicated.

18 November: Ankara's 2nd Criminal Judgeship of Peace blocked access to six news articles published by BirGün, Evrensel, 12punto, dokuz8haber, Doğru Haber and İlke TV about the justice minister's criminal complaint against opposition MP Ahmet Şık.

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19 November: A Turkish court acquitted BirGün journalist İsmail Arı of charges over posts about an investment-fund scandal and ordered his release after approximately 29 days in custody.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

17 November: The European Court of Human Rights ordered the release of imprisoned opposition parliamentarian Can Atalay, ruling that his continued detention and treatment of his parliamentary status breached Convention protections; implementation in Türkiye was not established.

18 November: An Ankara court sentenced Istanbul Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu and eight others to two years and one month in prison and imposed political bans over alleged voting irregularities at the opposition Republican People's Party's (CHP) 2023 congress; three other defendants were acquitted, and the rulings are subject to appeal.

19 November: A Turkish administrative court upheld the annulment of İstanbul Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu's university degree in a separate case affecting his eligibility to stand for president; his lawyers said the decision had not yet been formally notified.

KURDISH MINORITY

16 November: A Turkish court sentenced Kurdish journalist Rabia Önver to an 18-month suspended prison term over her social-media posts concerning her reporting and public commentary.

19 November: United Nations experts urged Türkiye to strengthen judicial safeguards and accountability in legislation concerning the peace process with the PKK, in a communication dated 16 November and reported publicly on 19 November.

PRISON CONDITIONS

20 November: Kayseri City Hospital issued a report stating that seriously ill prisoner Evin Zapsu was medically unfit to remain in prison, according to information relayed by another prisoner's family; the report was reportedly forwarded for forensic-medical review, and her release was not confirmed.

20 November: The wife of 73-year-old imprisoned theologian Mustafa Özönder appealed for his release on medical grounds, citing deteriorating health during his detention over alleged Gülen movement links.

20 November: Newly reported figures showed that 5,121 children aged 12–17 were held in Turkish detention facilities, including 3,809 awaiting trial and 1,312 convicted; the figure describes the prison population, not new detentions during the week.

20 November: The husband of Şükran Yıldız reported that she was being held in a single-person cell at Alanya Prison despite suffering from neuralgia and psychological distress; her conviction over alleged Gülen movement links remains under appeal.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

19 November: Yusuf Ahmet Özçiçek reported that police beat and threatened him in Istanbul on 8 November when he tried to film officers allegedly assaulting another person, and forced him to delete the footage; he subsequently filed a criminal complaint.

WOMEN’S RIGHTS

17 November: A Kocaeli court sentenced a man who had stabbed his former wife in February 2025 to two years and four months in prison and ordered his release; the assault itself occurred before this week.

21 November: A Turkish Journalists' Union survey reported that 70.9 percent of women journalists responding had experienced gender discrimination, with respondents also describing barriers to reporting violence or harassment at work.

GENDER RIGHTS

20 November: Police in Adana detained approximately nine people during a banned gathering associated with LGBTQ+ rights and demonstrations ahead of 25 November, according to a report published 21 November; a lawyer alleged that police fractured one detainee's hand, an allegation not independently confirmed.

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