

# TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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## ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 27 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.

**August 29:** Turkish prison authorities arbitrarily [revoked](#) the parole rights of 313 inmates since 2021.

**September 1:** Police in Muğla [detained](#) 1 person on allegations of links to the Gülen movement.

**September 2:** Turkish police on Saturday [detained](#) 8 people following raids in İstanbul due to their alleged links to the Gülen movement.

## ARBITRARY DEPRIVATION OF LIFE

**August 28:** A vehicle belonging to JIN TV was [hit](#) by an armed unmanned aerial vehicle (UCAV) attack in the area between Qamishli and Amuda in northeastern Syria. The driver of the vehicle, Najmeddin Faisal, died and journalist Dalila Agid was wounded.

**August 30:** Şakir Turan, 70, a Kurdish inmate who was suffering from throat cancer, [passed away](#) while undergoing treatment at a hospital in Turkey's Erzincan province.

**September 1:** Sezgin Tanrıkulu, an opposition lawmaker, [revealed](#) that seven people, including two minors, died in incidents provoked by hate speech, five people died in

custody, 19 died in prison, four died as a result of police or military gunfire or stepping on a mine and 10 died as a result of random gunfire in the first seven months of 2023.

## 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

**August 30:** The police [intervened](#) in the press declaration of the Private Sector Teachers' Union in front of the Turkish Private Schools Association building in Beyoğlu district of İstanbul and detained 30 people including Eren Edebali, chair of the union, and union executives in handcuffs behind their backs.

**September 1:** The rector of the İstanbul-based Boğaziçi University, who was appointed by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, [launched](#) a disciplinary investigation into academics who participate in protests against presidentially appointed rectors at the school.

**September 2:** İstanbul police have [detained](#) 32 people, including activists and family members of the Saturday Mothers, during the group's 962nd weekly demonstration in İstanbul's Galatasaray Square.

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

**August 28:** [Gökhan Özbek](#), a freelance journalist who owns a news platform on X, formerly known as Twitter, and an outspoken critic of Turkey's post-coup human rights abuses, was detained.

**August 29:** Ankara 9th Criminal Judicature of Peace, upon the request of the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), [blocked](#) access to <https://www.voaturkce.com>, the website of Voice of Amerika Turkish, on the grounds that it was broadcasting on the internet without a broadcasting license.

**August 30:** Ömer Çelik who was arrested in southeastern Turkey in June 2022 and indicted on terrorism charges 10 months later [faced](#) another indictment on charges of membership in a terrorist organization due to news reports about his arrest.

**August 30:** It is learned that journalist [Mehmet Karakeçeli](#) was subjected to physical violence of a person alleged to be the bodyguard of the mayor in Viranşehir district of Urfa on August 30, 2023 and was threatened with death by saying "If you write anything about the municipality from now on, you will die".

**September 1:** Activist, writer, and journalist [Celalettin Can](#) was sent to prison to serve a 15-month sentence on conviction of disseminating terrorist propaganda for acting as the symbolic editor-in-chief of a now-closed Kurdish newspaper.

**September 1:** Çanakkale Provincial Directorate of National Education [launched](#) an investigation against a school principal for sharing a photo of him drinking alcohol.

## JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

**August 29:** [Akin Gürlek](#), a Turkish judge, known for convicting dissidents was put in charge of Turkey's Board of Judges and Prosecutors (HSK).

## KURDISH MINORITY

**August 28:** [Amedspor fans](#) who were detained for not standing up during the singing of the National Anthem were referred to the courthouse on charges of "insulting the signs of the sovereignty of the state".

**August 31:** In Şırnak, a 12-year-old boy hit by an armored police vehicle was seriously [wounded](#).

**September 1:** It is learned that Doğukan Yen, a member of Green Left Party Youth Assembly, was [kidnapped](#) and forced into a car by two people claiming themselves to be police officers in Ataşehir district of Istanbul on August 25, 2023. Doğukan Yen was threatened while he was in the car and was released on the same day.

## OTHER MINORITIES

**August 30:** It is learned that a [trans woman](#) named C. B. was attacked with a fire extinguisher while waiting at a bus stop in Bursa and 7 people including 1 child were detained.

## REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

**August 30:** Semra Banko, a woman who was [pushed back](#) to Turkey from Greece, where she fled with her husband, daughter and 18-month-old baby to escape imprisonment on trumped-up charges, was arrested by Turkish authorities.

## TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

**August 29:** The number of people in Turkey who filed [complaints](#) alleging police mistreatment and brutality in 2022 increased by 22 percent in comparison to the previous year.