

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 141 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.

March 5: The hospitalization of an 84-year-old retired general, Çetin Doğan, who is in prison for his role in the issuance of a military memorandum against the government in 1997 has led to calls asking President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to use his presidential power to pardon him due to his advanced age and health issues.

March 6: A Turkish court has [found](#) a former university rector, Professor Mustafa Cüneyt Hoşoşkun, innocent after he was subjected to legal harassment including detention and house arrest — all while fighting cancer — on terrorism-related charges due to his alleged links to a faith-based group.

March 6: The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD) has concluded that Cihangir Çenteli, a Turkish air force cadet's trial and subsequent aggravated life imprisonment on coup-related charges violated his rights to liberty and a fair trial.

March 9: Turkish police have [detained](#) 91 people across 30 provinces in the past five days over their alleged links to the Gülen movement, a faith-based group accused by the government of "terrorist activities," Turkey's interior minister, Ali Yerlikaya, announced on X.

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

March 8: The police [intervened](#) the march organized by Istanbul University students in Beyazıt Square in Fatih district of Istanbul on March 8, International Working Women's Day, on the grounds that the banner they were carrying said LGBTIQ+ and detained at least 10 people.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

March 5: The Council of Europe (CoE) commissioner for human rights [appealed](#) to Turkish authorities to change the restrictive framework for freedom of expression and media freedom in a detailed memorandum.

March 5: At least 3 news articles about AKP Sur District Chairman Davut Yıldız and his uncle's son and Sur Municipality Public Works Director Mehmet Yıldız distributing aid parcels prepared by AFAD for the needy in Diyarbakır to their relatives were [blocked](#) from access by Diyarbakır 4th Criminal Judgeship of Peace on the grounds of violation of personal rights.

March 7: A Turkish court has [blocked](#) access to 12 news reports detailing sexual abuse allegations against a staff member in a dormitory affiliated with an Islamic cult.

March 7: An investigative journalist, Metin Cihan, who exposed the extent of ongoing trade between Turkey and Israel amid the conflict in Gaza has said his reports are often not [published](#) by media outlets critical of the government because of the significant amount of self-censorship at play due to some of the more subtle tools wielded by the government, such as advertising bans.

March 7: Turkish authorities [issued](#) censorship decisions to block access to 866 online content primarily involving allegations of corruption and irregularities implicating public officials as well as people and organizations close to the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) last month.

March 7: Journalists in Turkey [appeared](#) at court hearings 207 times in the first two months of 2024.

March 7: 16 social media posts on allegations against the mayor of Hilal town in Uludere district of Şırnak were [banned](#) to access by Şırnak Uludere Criminal Judicature of Peace.

March 8: Academic freedom in Turkey has sharply [declined](#) in the past 15 years, putting the country in 164th place among 179 countries as of December 2023.

March 8: At least 6 news articles about former AKP Nevşehir MP and Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Forestry Ebubekir Gizligider were [blocked](#) from access by the Ankara 2nd Criminal Judgship of Peace on the grounds of violation of personal rights.

KURDISH MINORITY

March 7: Controversial remarks from a mayoral candidate, Burcu Köksal, and senior executive of Turkey's main opposition party targeting a pro-Kurdish party [have](#) caused anger, disappointment and frustration not only among the country's Kurds but also within her party.

OTHER MINORITIES

March 5: The governor of İstanbul's Beyoğlu district has [ordered](#) the eviction of a group of trans women from their apartments on the grounds that they were "leaning out of their windows.

PRISON CONDITIONS

March 4: Prisoner Celal İnedi [reported](#) that Kurdish songs and letters were blocked in Afyonkarahisar T Type Prison.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

March 6: Bülent Zengin, a prisoner in Izmir Kırıklar Prison, was transferred to Antalya S Type Prison, Mesut Koç and Ahmet Çiçek were [transferred](#) to Burdur S Type Prison against their will and their families were not informed about the transfers.

March 6: It is learned that Berzan Güneş, a prisoner in Van High Security Prison had health problems but was not [referred](#) to hospital.

March 6: Tahir Batak, a prisoner in Adana Kürkçüler F Type Prison, could not [get](#) medical treatment because he rejected to be subjected to oral search, and that he has not had dental treatment for 4 years.

March 8: İdban Bahadır and Volkan Bahadır were [subjected](#) to torture and ill-treatment during a house raid in Ceyhan district of Adana and Volkan Bahadır was wounded in his arm.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

March 8: A total of 338 women in Turkey were [murdered](#) by men in the past 12 months, while 248 died under suspicious circumstances, the ANKA news agency reported.