

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 329 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.

April 5: Şeyma Alıcı, the wife of Veysel Alıcı who was arrested in February on charges of links to the Gülen movement despite his lymphoma, [said](#) her husband's health is deteriorating by the day in jail.

April 7: Social media users [conducted](#) a hashtag campaign calling on authorities to release Sabriye Dağdeviren, the mother of 11-year-old leukemia patient Hakan, who is battling the disease alone in a hospital. Both of Hakan's parents were arrested in 2018 for alleged links to the Gülen movement.

April 8: A [report](#) published by the Council of Europe said that Turkey has the highest incarceration rate among member states, with a rate of 3572 inmates per 100,000 inhabitants.

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

No news has emerged of [Yusuf Bilge Tunç](#) and [Hüseyin Galip Küçüközyiğit](#), former public sector workers who were sacked from their jobs by decree-laws during the 2016-2018 state of emergency and who were reported missing respectively as of August 6, 2019 and December 29, 2020, in what appear to be the latest cases in a

string of suspected [enforced disappearance](#) of government critics since 2016.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

April 6: The authorities [deported](#) four Iranian refugees for joining protests against Turkey's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention.

April 6: The police in Ankara [detained](#) four people while hanging banners in support of Boğaziçi University protests.

April 6: The Mardin Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 30 days.

April 7: The İskenderun District Governor's Office in Hatay [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of seven days.

April 8: The police in Kocaeli [blocked](#) a workers' protest, briefly detaining 36 people.

April 8: The police in Hatay [blocked](#) an environmental protest against the construction of a quarry, briefly detaining four people.

April 10: A monthly report by opposition MP Sezgin Tanrıkulu [said](#) that the police intervened in at least 25 demonstrations in March, detaining at least 324 people.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

April 5: The police [detained](#) 10 retired admirals after they released a joint statement criticizing government officials' remarks questioning Turkey's commitment to the 1936 Montreux Convention.

April 5: The police in Diyarbakır [detained](#) journalist Beritan Canözer from the Jinnews agency.

April 5: The Presidential Communications Directorate [refused](#) to renew the press cards of 1,371 journalists.

April 5: A Diyarbakır court [ruled](#) to block access to a news report involving video footage of an alleged act of bribery during an expropriation.

April 5: A Tokat court [ruled](#) to block access to a news report about a local municipality that faced legal action due to failure to pay its debt.

April 6: A Diyarbakır court [ruled](#) to block access to three websites used by the Jin news agency to publish news. The news agency was previously banned on terrorism charges.

April 6: The Ministry of Interior [announced](#) that in March 2021 a total of 5,478 people were investigated over their social media messages, 261 were detained and 11 were arrested.

April 8: Van prosecutors [drafted](#) a new indictment against journalist Oktay Candemir, charging him with spreading terrorist propaganda.

April 8: A Kars court [acquitted](#) journalist Selda Manduz of terrorism charges.

April 9: A new regulation published in the Official Gazette [banned](#) students convicted of insulting the president from state dormitory facilities.

April 9: Image-sharing platform Pinterest [announced](#) that it will appoint a local representative to Turkey in line with a controversial social media law bringing more restrictions on platforms.

April 9: The police in Artvin [raided](#) the offices of the Left Party due to a banner protesting Turkey's withdrawal from the İstanbul Convention and briefly detained five party members.

April 9: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to a news report and tweets about a previous access ban, which was imposed on news reports about the alleged involvement of former finance minister Berat Albayrak in the "Paradise Papers" scandal.

April 9: Bursa prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into the installation of banners on billboards by an opposition party about central bank reserves, alleging the insult of the president. Prosecutors in Bursa,

Kastamonu and Edirne ordered the removal of the banner.

April 10: A monthly report by opposition MP Sezgin Tanrıku [said](#) that five members of the press faced investigations; eight journalists, authors or publishers were convicted; six members of the press were detained in March. The report also found that authorities blocked access to 129 URLs, which included links to news reports.

April 10: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to a freedom of expression monitor's report on a previous access block imposed on news reports about public tenders awarded to a friend of the president's son.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

April 5: An Ankara court [ruled](#) to release activist Nazan Bozkurt who has been arrested pending trial since August 2020, while keeping behind bars activists Alev Şahin and Mehmet Dersulu who are standing trial on the same charges related to their protests.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

April 6: The brother of Nadira Kadirova, a young woman from Uzbekistan who was found dead in the home of a ruling party deputy, [called](#) on the authorities to investigate the circumstances surrounding the death of his sister. Ankara prosecutors has deemed Kadirova's death a suicide and an appeal that the family filed with the Constitutional Court has been pending for 10 months.

April 6: A report by the Diyarbakır Bar Association [said](#) that at least 69 lawyers faced investigations and prosecutions over their professional activities in 2020.

April 7: Amnesty International released its [annual report](#) reviewing the situation of human rights around the world, which said that Turkey continued to apply broadly defined anti-terrorism laws to punish acts protected under international human rights law in 2020, disregarding fair trial guarantees and due process.

KURDISH MINORITY

April 5: The police in Diyarbakır [detained](#) 26 members of the Rosa Women's Association on terrorism-related

charges. Six of the detainees were arrested by a court on April 9 and one was placed under house arrest.

April 5: The police in Diyarbakır [detained](#) journalist Beritan Canözer from the Jinnews agency.

April 5: The police in Tunceli [detained](#) three local HDP members.

April 6: A Kars court [sentenced](#) former co-mayor Şevin Alaca to six years, 10 months, 15 days in prison on terrorism-related charges. Alaca was released pending appeal.

April 6: The police in Adıyaman [raided](#) the provincial HDP office, briefly detaining executives Bekir Gündüz and Hasari Oğuz.

April 6: A Diyarbakır court [ruled](#) to block access to three websites used by the Jin news agency to publish news. The news agency was previously banned on terrorism charges.

April 7: A Diyarbakır court [sentenced](#) local HDP member Halide Türkoğlu to six years, three months in prison on terrorism-related charges.

April 7: A Diyarbakır court [sentenced](#) local DBP member İsmail Bardakçı to six years, three months in prison on terrorism related charges.

April 8: The police in Tunceli [detained](#) local HDP executive Aydın Köse.

OTHER MINORITIES

April 7: A Mardin court [sentenced](#) Assyrian priest Sefer Bileçen to 25 months in prison on charges of aiding a terrorist organization, on the grounds that his monastery was visited by alleged members of terrorist groups.

PRISON CONDITIONS

April 7: A sick inmate at an Afyon prison was [denied](#) hospitalization and medication.

April 9 : A [report](#) drafted by the parliament's Sub-committee on Prisoners Rights found that inmates in Ankara's Sincan prison are suffering from freezing temperatures, foul drinking water, poor treatment and the negative effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

April 9: The ruling party [tabled](#) a bill in the parliament that grants prison administrations the right to record all inmate visitations.

April 10: A sick inmate at a Diyarbakır prison has not been [referred](#) to a hospital for three months.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

April 6: The authorities [deported](#) four Iranian refugees for joining protests against Turkey's withdrawal from the İstanbul Convention.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

April 6: The police in Diyarbakır [inflicted](#) violence on İbrahim Halil Ercan during a house raid to detain him.

April 6: Reports [revealed](#) that the police in İstanbul battered a man due to an argument in traffic.

April 6: The guards at an Elazığ prison physically [assaulted](#) three inmates, one of whom was injured.

April 9: Two men in İstanbul [reported](#) that they were tortured for two days during their detention by the police.

April 9: Reports revealed that 14 members of the special operations police in Ağrı [battered](#) a person due to an argument on April 2.

April 9: The guards at an İzmir prison [assaulted](#) an inmate.

April 9: The police in Şanlıurfa physically [assaulted](#) two people due to an argument in traffic.

April 10: The guards at a Diyarbakır prison [battered](#) an inmate.

April 10: A monthly report by opposition MP Sezgin Tanrıkulu [said](#) that 371 incidents of torture took place in March.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

April 5: The police in Diyarbakır [detained](#) 26 members of the Rosa Women's Association on terrorism-related charges. Six of the detainees were arrested by a court on April 9 and one was placed under house arrest.

April 6: A monthly gender-based violence [report](#) compiled by Bianet found that men killed 36 women and inflicted violence on at least 68 others in March.