

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 52 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.

July 29: A journalist [revealed](#) that Sedat Laçiner, an academic jailed for his alleged links to the Gülen movement, was given a disciplinary punishment of four months on the day of his release.

July 30: [Şükrü Tuğrul Özşengül](#), an academic incarcerated in an İstanbul prison despite his health problems, died of a heart attack. Özşengül was jailed over his alleged links to the Gülen movement.

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

July 25: The Mersin Governor's Office [banned](#) pride events in the province for a period of 15 days.

July 25: The police in Antalya [intervened](#) in a demonstration organized by the HDP, briefly detaining seven people.

July 27: Gendarmerie in Ordu [intervened](#) in a demonstration organized to protest the granting of a spring water source to a private company, briefly detaining 11 people.

July 29: The police in İstanbul [detained](#) three people who protested the İstanbul mayor during a mosque visit.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

July 25: The police in Mardin [removed](#) a banner hung by the HDP on its provincial headquarters.

July 25: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports about allegations that 43 publicly funded tenders were awarded to a company owned by the sons of the head of a pro-government religious association.

July 26: The police in İstanbul [detained](#) leftist politician Selvinaz Göçmez on charges of spreading terrorist propaganda.

July 26: Mahmut Mirkelam, a district mayor in Şanlıurfa, physically [assaulted](#) local journalist Kerem Kırpaç.

July 26: The Constitutional Court [found](#) no rights violation in a disciplinary punishment given to 22 teachers for staging a protest about the freedom to use one's mother tongue.

July 26: A Diyarbakır court [ruled](#) to block access to a website used by the pro-Kurdish Etkin news agency (ETHA).

July 26: Customs police in Antalya [denied](#) entry to Turkish-Cypriot journalist Aysu Basri Akter from entering

Turkey on the grounds that she was a threat to national security.

July 27: Two local journalists in Adana were [detained](#) and mistreated by the owners and workers of a recycling factory that they visited to make an investigative report.

July 27: The police in Manisa briefly [detained](#) four people, three of whom members of the HDP, over their social media messages.

July 28: The police in Antalya [detained](#) six people on charges of spreading terrorist propaganda.

July 28: The Supreme Court of Appeals [reversed](#) the aggravated life sentences handed down to four people, including former media executive Hidayet Karaca, on charges of attempting to overthrow the constitutional order due to their alleged links to the Gülen movement.

July 28: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to eight online articles about bribery allegations implicating the president's former lawyer.

July 28: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports about a land purchase made by a company whose administration involves executives running companies that received public municipal tenders from the ruling party.

July 28: A Bursa court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports about a child abuse scandal in the province.

July 28: The Ministry of Trade [banned](#) the broadcast of an LGBT themed commercial film on the grounds that it disrupts morality.

July 28: A court [ordered](#) journalist Fuat Uğur to pay damages to a government minister over a column he penned about a ministerial project.

July 28: Prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into opposition politician Eren Erdem on charges of insulting the president on social media.

July 29: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to six news reports about a ruling party MP who participated in an attack on the building of a pro-opposition newspaper in September 2015.

July 29: The Constitutional Court [ruled](#) that a monetary fine imposed on activist Nursel Tanrıverdi over her one-person sit-in protests violated her freedom of expression.

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

July 26: Customs police in Antalya [denied](#) entry to Turkish-Cypriot journalist Aysu Basri Akter from entering Turkey on the grounds that she was a threat to national security.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

July 25: The Board of Judges and Prosecutors (HSK) [disbarred](#) prosecutor Aykut Aydoğan on account of his alleged links to the Gülen movement.

KURDISH MINORITY

July 25: Esat Atabay, a Kurdish seasonal agricultural laborer, was [targeted](#) in a racist attack and was injured in his head.

July 25: The police in Antalya [intervened](#) in a demonstration organized by the HDP, briefly detaining seven people.

July 25: The police in Mardin [removed](#) a banner hung by the HDP on its provincial headquarters.

July 26: The police in Kars [detained](#) HDP member Gülcan Alp on terrorism-related charges.

July 26: A parliamentary committee [lifted](#) the parliamentary immunity of Kurdish MP Salihe Aydeniz.

July 26: The Constitutional Court [found](#) no rights violation in a disciplinary punishment given to 22 teachers for staging a protest about the freedom to use one's mother tongue.

July 27: The police in Manisa briefly [detained](#) four people, three of whom members of the HDP, over their social media messages.

July 28: The police in Mersin [detained](#) 21 people, including local HDP executives, on terrorism-related charges.

July 29: The police in İstanbul [detained](#) seven members of the HDP. During the house raids, the police [mistreated](#) the family members of HDP executive Livan Orman who was detained as part of the operation.

July 30: Opera singer Pervin Çakar [announced](#) that a university in Mardin refused to give her a hall for a

concert on the grounds that there were Kurdish-language songs in her repertoire.

OTHER MINORITIES

July 26: A mob in Diyarbakır verbally [threatened](#) three people after visiting a church.

July 28: The Ministry of Trade [banned](#) the broadcast of an LGBT themed commercial film on the grounds that it disrupts morality.

July 30: Assaultants [attacked](#) several Alevi places of worship (Cemevi) in Ankara. The attacks took place in the first day of the Alevi holy month of Muharram and resulted in the physical injury of two people.

PRISON CONDITIONS

July 25: An Adana prison frequently [cut](#) water supply to prisoner wards.

July 25: A Van prison [rejected](#) the requests to visit hospital of four inmates who tested positive for Covid-19.

July 26: Reports [indicated](#) that a Van prison has been keeping six inmates in one-person cells for 67 months, restricting their social and cultural rights and confiscating their petitions to the Ministry of Justice.

July 28: A Giresun prison [denied](#) hospital visits to inmates who refused mouth searches.

July 30: An Aksaray prison [rejected](#) the requests to visit hospital of inmates who tested positive for Covid-19.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

July 27: Three Turkish political asylum seekers were [arrested](#) by Turkish authorities after they were pushed back by Greece while attempting to cross the border.

July 28: Media reports and a leaked internal review [revealed](#) that Frontex, the European Union's border agency, routinely covered up illegal pushbacks of migrants by the Greek coastguard.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

July 28: The police in İstanbul physically and verbally [assaulted](#) a person during an ID check. The İstanbul

police department announced afterwards that an investigation was launched into the officers involved.

July 29: The police in İstanbul [mistreated](#) family members of HDP executive Livan Orman during a house raid to detain him.

TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

July 29: The Austrian interior ministry [confirmed](#) that three Austrian Turks were detained in June on suspicion of spying on dissident for Turkey's intelligence and were released pending trial after questioning.