

# TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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**June 24:** Hundreds of people [gathered](#) in front of the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg to the court's failure to address widespread rights violations in Turkey. The event was supported by European politicians, jurists and academics from several countries.

## ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 138 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.

## 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

**June 21:** An İzmir court [sentenced](#) women's rights activist Meryem Yıldırım to five months in prison over her participation in a demonstration.

**June 21:** The police in İstanbul briefly [detained](#) four people staging a demonstration in front of a courthouse

to protest a lenient prison sentence that was handed down in a case of femicide.

**June 21:** The Muğla Governor's Office [banned](#) all planned LGBT events.

**June 22:** An İstanbul court [sentenced](#) activists Kaan Ünal and Doğukan Akkaya to five months in prison over their participation in protests against the government-appointed rector of Boğaziçi University.

**June 22:** The İstanbul Governor's Office [banned](#) all planned LGBT events.

**June 22:** The Eskişehir Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days, in anticipation of planned LGBT events.

**June 23:** The police in İstanbul briefly [detained](#) six people staging a vigil in front of a courthouse.

**June 23:** The Muğla Governor's Office [interrupted](#) a rap concert and forcibly removed the singer off the stage.

**June 24:** The İzmir Governor's Office [banned](#) planned LGBT events for a period of three days.

**June 25:** The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a demonstration organized by the Saturday Mothers (Cumartesi Anneleri), briefly detaining 16 people.

**June 26:** The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a Pride march, detaining 373 people. The detainees were released the next day.

**June 26:** The police in İzmir [intervened](#) in a Pride march, briefly detaining eight people.

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

**June 21:** An Appeals court [upheld](#) a prison sentence of four years, two months handed down to Porçay, a social media influencer, on charges of encouraging drug use.

**June 21:** A Diyarbakır court [handed down](#) a suspended prison sentence of 10 months to Kurdish politician Sırrı Süreyya Önder on charges of insulting the president.

**June 21:** An Ankara court [ruled](#) to block access to online news stories on 257 websites that covered the dismissal of five prosecutors by the Board of Judges and Prosecutors (HSK) over their alleged affiliation with the Gülen movement.

**June 23:** An İstanbul court [ordered](#) opposition leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu to pay damages to President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his relatives for his allegations that they transferred money to an offshore company based in the Isle of Man.

**June 23:** The police in Mersin briefly [detained](#) a shop owner on charges of insulting the president, for hanging a banner over his shop about the economic situation.

**June 24:** The Justice Ministry [gave](#) its approval for an investigation into 11 executives of the Diyarbakır Bar Association over their statement in April marking the Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day.

**June 24:** A court [ordered](#) opposition politician Erkan Baş to pay damages to a pro-government businessman for criticizing him during a press conference.

**June 24:** An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to news reports about allegations that a public university authorized a private company to access the personal data of its academic personnel, administrative staff, students and graduates.

## JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

**June 23:** The Security Directorate General (EGM) [dismissed](#) from service or canceled the retirement benefits of 1,000 current or retired police officers based on a post-coup government decree.

**June 24:** The police in İstanbul, Ankara and Bursa [detained](#) 17 lawyers due to their alleged links to the Gülen movement.

**June 24:** Reports revealed that Ankara University [used](#) documents received from the National Intelligence Organization (MİT) to justify its purge of more than 100 academics in the aftermath of a coup attempt in 2016.

## KURDISH MINORITY

**June 21:** In a video that sparked outrage on social media, a group of gendarmes were seen [terrorizing](#) civilians in a Kurdish-majority province by firing random shots in the air as they arrived to detain a suspect.

**June 22:** The police in Mersin [detained](#) 20 people, including a local HDP executive, on terrorism-charges.

**June 24:** The Supreme Court of Appeals (Yargıtay) [upheld](#) prison sentences handed down in 2018 to 13 Kurdish politicians, including former Van Mayor Bekir Kaya, on terrorism charges.

## OTHER MINORITIES

**June 23:** Reports [revealed](#) that the police in İstanbul physically assaulted three Roma people who were detained on May 31 during a wedding. The police also used racial slurs against them.

**June 23:** LGBT activists in Gaziantep [canceled](#) their planned Pride Week events due to the threats they received.

## PRISON CONDITIONS

**June 21:** An Adana prison [blocked](#) the hospital visits of inmates who refused to undergo mouth searches.

## REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

**June 21:** The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) [faulted](#) Turkey in the case of a Syrian national who was forced to return to Syria in 2018 despite having a valid residence permit.

**June 22:** Philippe Leclerc, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR) representative in Turkey, [announced](#) that approximately 800 Syrian leave Turkey for Syria every week but that conditions are not suitable for a large number of returns.

**June 26:** The authorities [deported](#) 226 migrants to Afghanistan.

## TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

**June 21:** In a video that sparked outrage on social media, a group of gendarmes were seen [terrorizing](#) civilians in a Kurdish-majority province by firing random shots in the air as they arrived to detain a suspect.

**June 22:** The guards in a Mersin prison [mistreated](#) 20 inmates.

**June 22:** The guards in an Elazığ prison [mistreated](#) inmate Süleyman Göksel Yerdut.

**June 23:** Reports [revealed](#) that the police in İstanbul physically assaulted three Roma people who were detained on May 31 during a wedding. The police also used racial slurs against them.

**June 25:** Soldiers in Mardin [tortured](#) three people who tried to cross the Turkish-Syrian border illegally. Two of the victims were reportedly underage.

**June 25:** The police in İstanbul physically [assaulted](#) a man over an argument. The victim was injured and hospitalized.

**June 26:** Gendarmerie in Hakkari [mistreated](#) 20 people, including minors, who were detained in house raids. Two lawyers who went to meet with the victims were also reportedly mistreated.

**June 26:** The guards in a Diyarbakır prison physically [assaulted](#) six inmates during a ward search.

## TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

**June 22:** A Turkish national who was arrested in Germany last year [admitted](#) in court to spying on members of the Gülen movement and the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).