

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 63 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.

December 10: [Tahir Gürdal](#), a sick inmate who was handcuffed to his hospital bed for 19 days, lost his life only two weeks after the execution of his sentence was suspended.

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

December 5: The Bursa Governor's Office [banned](#) a painting contest about gender equality organized by a labor union.

December 6: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a demonstration against a mining company, detaining seven people.

December 9: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a protest about sick prisoners, briefly detaining seven activists.

December 10: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) a protest staged in reaction to allegations that an underage girl was married off, briefly detaining 12 people.

December 11: The police in Diyarbakır [intervened](#) in a demonstration march about the imprisoned leader of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), detaining two people.

December 11: The Diyarbakır Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a day.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

December 5: İstanbul prosecutors [indicted](#) journalist İbrahim Haskoloğlu, demanding up to 12 years in prison for reporting on allegations that hackers had stolen personal information from government websites.

December 5: The Freedom of Expression Association (İFÖD) [reported](#) that the Twitter accounts of journalists Can Dündar, İsmail Saymaz, Erk Acarer as well as those of human rights activist Eren Keskin were inaccessible in Turkey due to access blocks imposed by Turkish authorities.

December 5: A Kırklareli court [ruled](#) to block access to an opinion column as well as two news reports about an excavation in the province that was allegedly ordered by prosecutors.

December 6: İstanbul prosecutors [indicted](#) journalists Gökem Kınacı and Kürşat Yılmaz due to a news report.

December 6: The Media and Law Studies Association (MLSA) [reported](#) that 67 people in Turkey were handed down 299 years, two months and 24 days in prison in 41 trials over freedom of expression in the period between September 1, 2021 and July 20, 2022.

December 6: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to acquit journalist Hayri Tunç who was standing trial due to his social media posts.

December 7: A court [handed down](#) a suspended prison sentence of one year, eight months to leftist activist Talat Oruç due to his social media posts.

December 7: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports about allegations of nepotism implicating presidential aide Maksut Serim.

December 8: Ankara prosecutors [indicted](#) 11 former HDP executives on charges of insulting the Turkish nation for referring to the Armenian Genocide in a statement last year.

December 8: İstanbul prosecutors [indicted](#) journalists Mehmet Ferhat Çelik and Osman Akın due to their coverage of allegations implicating a Serhat Albayrak, businessman with family ties to the president.

December 8: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to at least six news reports on corruption allegations implicating the president's son.

December 8: An Ankara court [ruled](#) to acquit Fatih Kanar, an executive of the Human Rights Association (İHD) who was standing trial on charges of spreading terrorist propaganda.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

December 8: An Ankara court [ruled](#) to acquit Fatih Kanar, an executive of the Human Rights Association (İHD) who was standing trial on charges of spreading terrorist propaganda.

KURDISH MINORITY

December 7: Deputy parliamentary speaker Haydar Akar [turned off](#) the microphone of HDP MP İmam Taşçier for giving his speech in Kurdish.

December 7: The Supreme Court of Appeals (Yargıtay) [declined](#) to uphold a prison sentence of nine years, four

months and 15 days handed down by a lower court to Kurdish politician Selçuk Mızraklı, stating that the terrorism-related charges against him had not been sufficiently investigated. Yet, the appeals court rejected Mızraklı's request for release from prison.

December 8: Ankara prosecutors [indicted](#) 11 former HDP executives on charges of insulting the Turkish nation for referring to the Armenian Genocide in a statement last year.

December 8: A national railway company officer in İzmir was [reassigned](#) to a post in eastern Turkey after his superior told the police he possessed a book authored by jailed Kurdish politician Selahattin Demirtaş.

December 9: A Diyarbakır court [sentenced](#) former HDP executive Ramazan Dengiz to six years, three months in prison on terrorism-related charges.

PRISON CONDITIONS

December 6: The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) ruled in a [case](#) that Turkish authorities violated the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) by not allowing prison visits on weekends as weekday visits conflicted with children's school schedule and interfered with prisoners' family life.

December 6: Latest data from the Directorate General of Prisons and Detention Houses [showed](#) that Turkish prisons are holding 49,518 more prisoners than their overall capacity, representing an overcapacity of 15.9 percent.

December 7: Reports revealed that an Aydın prison was [holding](#) 46 prisoners in a ward designed for 12 people.

December 9: Sick inmate Emre Abalak [lost](#) his life in a Şırnak prison. The prison administration announced the cause of death as falling down in the bathroom.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

December 9: Reports [said](#) that migrants arriving in Bulgaria were mistreated, denied the right to claim asylum and returned to Turkey.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

December 6: The guards in an İstanbul prison [strip-searched](#) inmate Güneş Akan as she was being taken to

court for a hearing. The prison authorities also reportedly censored Akan's letter where she told about the incident and prevented her from sending a fax to the Human Rights Association (İHD).

December 8: The guards in an Antalya prison [strip-searched](#) inmate Ümit Tamur.

TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

December 7: The Human Rights Watch (HRW) [said](#) in a statement that Turkish airstrikes in northern and northeastern Syria were inflicting damage on densely populated areas and critical infrastructure.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

December 7: A monthly report released by Bianet [said](#) that men killed at least 28 women and inflicted violence on at least 53 women in November.