

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 199 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 7: [Huriye Acun](#), a seven months pregnant former teacher, was arrested in Konya and sent to prison to serve the sentence she was handed down due to alleged links to the Gülen movement, despite the relevant laws which stipulate that the execution of prison sentences are delayed for women who are pregnant or have given birth within the last year and a half.

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 AND ASSOCIATION

July 5: The police in Ankara violently [intervened](#) in a demonstration held to demand the release of prominent

rights defender Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu, briefly detaining five people.

July 5: The police in İstanbul [detained](#) activist Nursel Tanrıverdi while protesting her summary removal from her public sector job in the aftermath of the 2016 coup.

July 6: An [opinion](#) published by the Venice Commission underlined that Turkey's new terrorism financing law goes beyond the stated intention and negatively affects civil society by further tightening the government's control over its activities.

July 8: The Aydın Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of five days. The ban came amid public protests against the construction of a feldspar mine in the province.

July 9: The police in Adıyaman [detained](#) nearly 50 people for attending protests against a regulation on tobacco trading.

July 9: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a demonstration to commemorate the victims of a 2015 bomb attack, briefly detaining five people.

July 10: The police in Ankara [blocked](#) a demonstration to commemorate the victims of a 2015 bomb attack, briefly detaining 13 people.

July 10: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a demonstration to commemorate the victims of a 2015 bomb attack, briefly detaining six people.

July 11: Reports revealed that İzmir prosecutors [indicted](#) three people on the charge of insulting the president during Boğaziçi University protests in February.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

July 5: An Ankara court [ruled](#) to block access to a total of 55 news reports about a public tender launched by the Health Ministry.

July 5: An Antalya court [ruled](#) to block access to news reports about the Governor of Uşak who was seen yelling at citizens on the street while supervising the implementation of Covid-19 measures.

July 5: Reporters Without Borders (RSF) released a [gallery](#) of “press freedom predators,” a list of 37 heads of state or government who crack down on press freedom, including President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

July 6: A court [ruled](#) to block access to a news report on a company owned by the family of the interior minister.

July 6: The Constitutional Court [ruled](#) that the interim closure of Özgür Gündem, a now-defunct newspaper that had focused on Kurdish issues, violated the constitutional rights of freedom of expression and freedom of the press.

July 6: A monthly [report](#) found that a total of 87 journalists stood trial over their publications in June.

July 7: Prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into the BirGün newspaper on allegations of insulting the president and his far-right election ally in a report on the government’s relationship with the mafia.

July 7: An İstanbul court [sentenced](#) journalist Cem Şimşek to 11 months, 22 days in prison on charges of insulting the president, for reporting on cartoons published in German media.

July 7: An Ankara court [ruled](#) to block access to news reports and tweets about the interior minister’s alleged ties to business.

July 7: Media regulator RTÜK [imposed](#) a broadcast ban and a monetary fine on Halk TV for allegedly spreading terrorist propaganda over a song that was sung on the air by an opposition lawmaker.

July 7: An Ankara court [ruled](#) to block access to a column published by journalist Mine Kırıkkanat.

July 8: The police in İstanbul [blocked](#) an open air Kurdish-language music event and confiscated the musicians’ instruments.

July 8: An İstanbul court overseeing the case of Murat Şahin, a man who in 2016 attacked journalist Can Dündar with a firearm, [handed down](#) a prison sentence of three years. The court ruled to suspend the sentence due to the defendant’s “good behavior,” meaning that he will not be spending any time in prison unless he commits another crime in five years.

July 9: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to arrest a person over his social media posts about the revelations of a mobster concerning the relations between the state and the mafia.

July 9: The police in Giresun briefly [detained](#) a minor over social media posts about the revelations of a mobster concerning the relations between the state and the mafia.

July 9: Ankara prosecutors [indicted](#) folk singer Onur Kocamaz on the charge of provoking hatred and enmity among public, over a social media post.

July 9: A monthly [report](#) found that, among the 77 cases of violations against women journalists observed in June, 36 were recorded in Turkey.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

July 6: Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu, a leading rights advocate and former lawmaker who has been held behind bars since April 2, was [released](#) from prison following a decision by the Constitutional Court.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

July 9: Turkey ranked 107th out of 128 countries in the World Justice Project’s [Rule of Law Index 2020](#).

KURDISH MINORITY

July 5: The police in Bursa [detained](#) local HDP executive Köksal Söylemez.

July 6: The Constitutional Court [ruled](#) that the interim closure of Özgür Gündem, a now-defunct newspaper that had focused on Kurdish issues, violated the constitutional rights of freedom of expression and freedom of the press.

July 7: The European Parliament in a [resolution](#) condemned the Turkish government for its repressive

policies targeting opposition parties, particularly the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP).

July 8: The police in İstanbul [blocked](#) an open air Kurdish-language music event and confiscated the musicians' instruments.

July 10: Reports [revealed](#) that a Kurdish family living in Konya was assaulted by a far-right mob in what appears to be a racist hate crime. The incident left six members of the family seriously injured.

July 10: The police [detained](#) nine imams for preaching sermons in Kurdish.

July 10: The police in Batman briefly [detained](#) local HDP member Gülistan Yılmaz Diyar.

MISTREATMENT OF CITIZENS ABROAD

July 5: President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan [acknowledged](#) that Turkish-Kyrgyz educator Orhan İnandı, who went missing in Bishkek on the night of May 31, was actually abducted by Turkey's National Intelligence Organization (MİT) and was brought to Turkey.

July 7: Erk Acarer, a government-critical journalist who lives in exile in Germany, [announced](#) that he was attacked "with knives and fists" in the courtyard of his apartment building in Berlin.

OTHER MINORITIES

July 5: The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) [pointed out](#) that discrimination against the Alevi community in Turkey is rampant and pervasive and that the situation is getting worse.

PRISON CONDITIONS

July 5: A [survey](#) conducted by the Media and Law Studies Association (MLSA) on the detention conditions of political prisoners found that prisoners lacked cleaning and hygiene supplies as well as restrictions on visiting rights.

July 7: A prison administration in İzmir [imposed](#) a three-month restriction on the visitation rights of three inmates for chanting political slogans.

July 7: Reports revealed that a Düzce prison has been [denying](#) hospital appointments to 13 inmates for two years.

July 9: A parliamentary report on prison conditions [noted](#) that inmates are denied basic necessities and are subjected to strip-searches.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

July 7: Save the Children, a London-based aid organization, [reported](#) that refugee girls in Turkey face higher risks of forced underage marriages.

July 8: Kurdish writer [Meral Şimşek](#), who is facing terrorism-related charges in Turkey, was detained, tortured and pushed back by the Greek police after crossing the border on June 29.

July 11: A bus carrying undocumented migrants [crashed](#) in Van, killing at least 12 people.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

July 5: Photos of Orhan İnandı, a Turkish-Kyrgyz educator who turned up in the custody of Turkish authorities after going missing in Bishkek on May 31, showed possible marks of torture on his hand. Leading forensic expert Şebnem Korur Fincancı [said](#) that İnandı might have been subjected to strappado, while İnandı's wife, Reyhan İnandı, [noted](#) that her husband had lost significant weight.

July 6: The guards in an Ağrı prison physically [assaulted](#) inmate Mizgin Kayıtbey. The victim was injured and taken to a hospital.

July 9: The guards in an Antalya prison physically [assaulted](#) inmates for resisting a strip-search during a prison transfer.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

July 6: A monthly gender-based violence [report](#) compiled by Bianet said that men killed 24 women and inflicted violence on at least 94 others in June.