

# TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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## ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least seven 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

**April 17:** The police in Ankara [intervened](#) in an election campaign booth set up by a leftist party, briefly detaining three party members.

**April 20:** The governorates of İstanbul and Ankara [banned](#) Armenian Genocide remembrance events.

**April 22:** The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a demonstration held to raise awareness about enforced disappearance cases of 1980s and 90s, briefly detaining 17 activists.

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

**April 17:** The Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK) [imposed](#) a monetary fine and a temporary broadcast ban on the Show TV channel on the grounds that a series had content that “encouraged” violence against women.

**April 18:** A Diyarbakır court [sentenced](#) Kurdish journalist İsmail Çoban to one year, six months in prison on charges of disseminating terrorist propaganda.

**April 18:** An Elazığ court [sentenced](#) journalist Mehmet Güleş to one year, nine months, 25 days in prison on charges of disseminating terrorist propaganda on social media.

**April 18:** An Ankara court [overturned](#) a fine imposed on a social media user on charges of insulting a political party leader.

**April 19:** Ankara prosecutors [demanded](#) up to two years, four months in prison for actress Hazal Kaya on charges of insulting a former soldier convicted of raping an 18-year-old who later died by suicide.

**April 19:** An Ankara court [ordered](#) opposition leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu to pay non-pecuniary damages to President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan for raising allegations that Erdoğan and his close associates were planning to flee the country.

**April 20:** The police in Çanakkale [detained](#) journalist Serdar Akinan on charges of disseminating misleading information for raising allegations about the failed coup attempt of July 2016. Akinan was released under judicial probation the next day.

**April 20:** An Ankara court [ruled](#) to block access to five news reports and a tweet covering child abuse allegations implicating a deputy minister.

**April 20:** The authorities [blocked](#) access to the YouTube account of a Kurdish businessman who has recently been making allegations about the ruling party.

**April 22:** The police in Van briefly [detained](#) Kurdish journalist Gülşen Konuk over news reports and social media posts.

## JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

**April 17:** The main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) [filed](#) a criminal complaint against the administration of the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT), Turkey's public broadcaster, for failing to air its campaign video for the upcoming elections.

**April 18:** Mardin prosecutors [dismissed](#) a complaint against police officers who physically assaulted a person during Newroz celebrations on the grounds that the officers involved in the incident were not identified.

## KURDISH MINORITY

**April 18:** A Diyarbakır court [sentenced](#) Kurdish journalist İsmail Çoban to one year, six months in prison on charges of disseminating terrorist propaganda.

**April 18:** The police in Şırnak [detained](#) former district co-mayor Berivan Kutlu. Kutlu was released the next day.

**April 19:** A court [sentenced](#) Kurdish politician Ayşe Gökkan to three years, nine months in prison on terrorism-related charges.

**April 22:** The police in Van briefly [detained](#) Kurdish journalist Gülşen Konuk over news reports and social media posts.

**April 23:** A racist mob in Antalya [attacked](#) a passenger bus to a predominantly Kurdish province, injuring three people.

## PRISON CONDITIONS

**April 19:** An Antalya prison [denied](#) medical care to inmates who refused to receive treatment in handcuffs.

**April 20:** A prison administration in Edirne did not [allow](#) inmates to write a joint letter to inmates incarcerated in another prison. The administration also restricted inmates' social rights.

**April 20:** Rights groups [reported](#) overcrowding and malnutrition in a Giresun prison. Reports also said items sold at the prison cafeteria were overpriced.

**April 20:** An Edirne prison [denied](#) medical care to inmates who refused to receive treatment in handcuffs.

**April 20:** Prison administrations in Rize and Bayburt [restricted](#) inmates' social and sportive activities and confiscated their letters.

**April 22:** [Abdulvahap Kavak](#), an inmate with chronic diseases incarcerated in a Bolu prison, was reportedly deprived of needed medical care.

## REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

**April 19:** The Council of Forensic Medicine (ATK) [revealed](#) that the cause of death of Barış Büyüksu, a 30-year-old Turkish asylum seeker who crossed the Aegean Sea and was later found unconscious in a boat that was pushed back from Greece to the Turkish coast in October, was the torture he was subjected to prior to pushback.

## TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

**April 18:** More than 60 women who are incarcerated in an Ankara prison [sent](#) a joint letter to the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT), demanding immediate action on suspicious deaths in Turkey's prisons.

**April 18:** Mardin prosecutors [dismissed](#) a complaint against police officers who physically assaulted a person during Newroz celebrations on the grounds that the officers involved in the incident were not identified.

## TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

**April 20:** [Mehmet Cintosun](#), a Turkish businessman who went missing in Iraq in January, turned up in police custody in Turkey. Cintosun was reportedly abducted by Turkish intelligence due to his links to the Gülen movement.