

# TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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## ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 27 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.

## ARBITRARY DEPRIVATION OF LIFE

29 October: Former police officer Oğuz Doğan, dismissed from his public duty over alleged links to the Gülen movement, has [died](#) by suicide, highlighting the ongoing struggle of former public servants in Turkey, who face employment bans, travel restrictions, and social security notes that deter private sector hiring.

## 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

30 October: Police [intervened](#) during a press statement in front of Istanbul's Çağlayan Courthouse, where a call was

made for the closure of type Y and S prisons, resulting in the detention of four individuals.

31 October: The Şanlıurfa Governor's Office [announced](#) a two-day ban, effective from October 31, 2024, on all outdoor activities across the province, including gatherings, marches, press statements, hunger strikes, sit-ins, rallies, setting up stands or tents, distributing leaflets/brochures, and hanging posters/banners, as well as restricting entry to the province for individuals intending to participate in such activities.

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

1 November: A 73-year-old woman was [convicted](#) and fined for allegedly insulting former AKP lawmaker Ravza Kavakçı Kan in a Facebook comment related to plagiarism allegations concerning Kan's doctoral thesis.

2 November: Human Rights Watch [condemned](#) proposed amendments to Turkey's anti-espionage law, warning that vague definitions could criminalize the work of journalists, human rights defenders, and civil society members.

3 November: In Istanbul, HalkTV editor Dinçer Gökçe, Gazete Pencere editor Nilay Can, and lawyer İrem Çiçek were [detained](#) by Bakırköy Chief Public Prosecutor's Office on charges of "insulting a public official," "slander," "insulting judicial authorities," and "spreading misleading information" after reporting and sharing claims that the prosecutor handling the "newborn gang" case had been dismissed.

## JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

30 October: Ahmet Özer, the mayor of İstanbul's Esenyurt district from Turkey's main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP), was [detained](#) at his home in an early

morning raid on suspicion of membership in the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

31 October: ECHR judgments [remain](#) unimplemented in Turkey, particularly the Yalçinkaya judgment, which could impact over 100,000 individuals tried unfairly, as highlighted in the European Commission's 2024 report on Turkey's deteriorating democratic standards and rule of law.

1 November: Ahmet Özer, the opposition mayor of Esenyurt, Istanbul, was [replaced](#) by Istanbul Deputy Governor Can Aksoy after Özer's detention on terrorism-related charges, marking the second such trustee appointment since the March 31 local elections.

## **KURDISH MINORITY**

30 October: In Istanbul, 20 people, including Esenyurt's CHP-elected Mayor Ahmet Özer and Koma Hevra vocalist Zeynep Doğan, were [detained](#) in house raids on charges of "membership in a terrorist organization."

1 November: Azime Bozkurt, a distributor for Yeni Yaşam—a pro-Kurdish newspaper known for its detailed reporting on the consequences of the Turkish government's actions in Kurdish regions—was [detained](#) in Tunceli on charges of "making propaganda for an organization."

1 November: Ali Çeven was [detained](#) due to his statements on the Kurdish issue made during a street interview, during which he reportedly suffered physical violence from the police, resulting in injuries.

## **TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT**

31 October: Since 2021, Turkey's Ministry of Justice has [denied](#) parole to over 8,521 inmates, with critics alleging that political prisoners are disproportionately affected by these decisions.