

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 57 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.

24 December: Turkish police [detained](#) 32 individuals in their homes over alleged links to the Gülen movement in a series of coordinated operations conducted in four provinces.

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

No news has emerged of [Yusuf Bilge Tunc](#), 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

23 December: The Şanlıurfa Governor's Office [announced](#) a five-day ban on all outdoor events, including press statements, gatherings, marches, hunger strikes, sit-ins, vigils, rallies, and leaflet distribution, as well as the entry of individuals deemed likely to participate in such activities, effective from December 23 to 27, 2024.

24 December: The final hearing in the case seeking the closure of the Migration Monitoring Association (GÖÇİZDER) was held at the Istanbul Bakırköy 15th Civil Court of First Instance, where the court [ruled](#) for the dissolution of the association following the defense statements.

25 December: Eighteen people were [detained](#) during a street protest in Istanbul against the newly announced minimum wage.

27 December: The Ankara Criminal Court of First Instance [sentenced](#) a protestor to 6 months and 7 days in prison for "obstructing a public official through force or threat" during a protest held on February 2, 2021, in Ankara against the appointment of a rector to Boğaziçi University by President Erdoğan, as part of a trial involving 21 individuals.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

26 December: A 16-year-old girl in Istanbul was [sentenced](#) to a suspended 10-month prison term for allegedly insulting President Erdoğan, following his lawyer's direct intervention and despite the absence of surveillance footage.

24 December: A criminal investigation has been [launched](#) by the Diyarbakır Chief Public Prosecutor's Office against journalist Medine Mamedoğlu on charges of "inciting the public to disobey the law" after she shared footage on social media showing police detaining a child with alleged torture and other ill-treatment.

26 December: Turkish journalist Nevşin Mengü [faces](#) up to seven and a half years in prison after publishing an interview with Salih Müslim, one of the leaders of a Syrian Kurdish group that Turkey has designated as a terrorist organization.

26 December: The Istanbul 14th High Criminal Court [sentenced](#) Hüseyin Aykol and Reyhan Çapan to 4 years and 4 months, and Ayşe Batumlu Kaya to 2 years and 9 months for “spreading terrorist propaganda” and “inciting crimes” over articles in the closed *Özgür Gündem*, while issuing no ruling for Eren Keskin due to a prior conviction.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

26 December: Turkish prosecutors [dropped](#) a torture case against police officers accused of abusing detainees following the 2016 coup attempt, citing the passage of seven years, despite the fact that Turkish law imposes no time limit for prosecuting torture incidents.

KURDISH MINORITY

26 December: Pro-Kurdish Yeni Yaşam newspaper employee Veysi Akören was detained at Batman airport on charges of “spreading terrorist propaganda.”

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

24 December: Members of the Eğitim-Sen union, detained in 2023 for participating in protests against the appointment of rectors to universities by President Erdoğan, [reported](#) during a recent hearing in December 2024 that they were subjected to degrading strip-searches in prison, including being forced to squat and cough while guards mocked them.

24 December: Turkish philanthropist Melek İpek, arbitrarily imprisoned since November 2024 on charges linked to the Gülen movement, [described](#) her detention as a “great injustice” during a recent visit, citing her deteriorating health.

24 December: It has been reported that detained journalists Gülistan Dursun, Pınar Gayıp, and Serpil Ünal were [subjected](#) to strip searches during their admission process at Istanbul Bakırköy Women’s Prison.

TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

27 December: More than 600 human rights violations, including abductions, killings, and property seizures, were [documented](#) in 2024 in Syria’s Afrin district, which is under Turkish control.

WOMEN’S RIGHTS

26 December: A report by the Social Democracy Foundation (SODEV) [reveals](#) that the withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention has led to an increase in violence against women in Turkey, highlighting rising femicides and domestic abuse incidents since the convention’s removal.