

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 22 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 27: [Leyla Kurt](#), a woman whose husband was imprisoned on conviction of alleged links to the Gülen movement succumbed to cancer. Kurt died without being able to see her husband who was not released in time despite being eligible for parole.

December 29: The authorities [detained](#) and arrested Refik Yeşil, a 68-year-old man suffering from late stage cancer, over alleged links to the Gülen movement.

December 27: Human rights groups [reported](#) that sick prisoner Yusuf Akbaba, who has diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease, is under a vital risk, calling for his release.

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.

December 30: The Human Rights Association (İHD) released a [report](#) which found that between January 2021 and November 2021, 13 people were abducted and released without any formal procedure.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION

December 27: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a workers' protest, briefly detaining nine people.

December 27: The police in Ankara [intervened](#) in a workers' protest, briefly detaining four people.

December 28: The Hakkari Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of one day.

December 30: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a demonstration about rights violations in prisons, detaining 11 people.

December 31: A judge at an İstanbul court [criticized](#) women who demonstrate against femicide during a hearing in the trial of 35 women standing trial due to a women's rights demonstration they staged in March 2020.

January 2: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a demonstration organized by the HDP, detaining at least 10 people.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

December 27: The Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency (BDDK) [filed](#) criminal complaints against five prominent economists, including a former central bank governor, due to their comments about the depreciation of the Turkish lira.

December 28: The police in Antalya [detained](#) 12 people as part of an investigation into alleged terrorist propaganda at a HDP rally on October 24. The detainees were released the next day.

December 28: The police in İzmir briefly [detained](#) UK-based Alevi NGO leader İbrahim Erbil over a speech he made at a commemoration event.

December 28: Facebook [banned](#) the page of the Mezopotamya news agency.

December 29: Can Candan, a former faculty member at Boğaziçi University and a documentary filmmaker, [announced](#) that his dismissal from the university in July was due to an administrative investigation into one of his tweets.

December 30: İzmir prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into HDP co-chair Pervin Buldan. The Kurdish politician is accused of insulting the panel of judges during a hearing in the trial of an alleged murderer who carried out a deadly armed attack at the HDP's İzmir office in June.

December 30: The Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), Turkey's broadcasting watchdog, [imposed](#) monetary fines on Halk TV, FOX TV and TELE1 channels due to on-air comments critical of the government.

December 30: İstanbul prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into opposition politician Canan Kaftancıoğlu over a flyer printed by her party about a pro-government businessman at the center of money laundering allegations.

December 30: Prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into journalist Sevilay Yılman on charges of insulting the interior minister in two newspaper columns.

December 31: An İstanbul court [sentenced](#) journalists Mahir Kanaat, Ömer Çelik, Tunca Öğreten, Eray Sargın and Metin Yoksu to one year, eight months in prison on terrorism charges due to their publication of news stories about the leaked emails of a former finance minister.

December 31: The Constitutional Court [found](#) no rights violations in the case of journalist Cemal Azmi Kalyoncu who was imprisoned for almost four years on terrorism-related charges.

December 31: The Eskişehir Governor's Office [ordered](#) the removal of a banner that was placed by the opposition party CHP on the party's provincial headquarters. The banner contained criticism of the government's monetary policy.

January 2: İstanbul prosecutors [indicted](#) actor İlyas Salman on charges of denigrating the state due to a video that he had posted on social media.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

December 27: An administrative court in Ankara [revoked](#) the attorney's licenses of two lawyers based on a complaint filed by the Justice Ministry.

December 31: The Constitutional Court [found](#) no rights violations in the case of journalist Cemal Azmi Kalyoncu who was imprisoned for almost four years on terrorism-related charges.

KURDISH MINORITY

December 28: An assailant carrying a gun and a knife [attacked](#) a HDP building in İstanbul, injuring a party employee.

December 28: The police in Antalya [detained](#) 12 people as part of an investigation into alleged terrorist propaganda at a HDP rally on October 24.

December 28: The police in Edirne [detained](#) HDP executive Zeynep Karaman as part of an investigation into widespread protests in Kurdish-majority provinces in 2014. Karaman was later arrested by a court.

December 28: Facebook [banned](#) the page of the Mezopotamya news agency.

December 30: İzmir prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into HDP co-chair Pervin Buldan. The Kurdish politician is accused of insulting the panel of judges during a hearing in the trial of an alleged murderer who carried out a deadly armed attack at the HDP's İzmir office in June.

December 2: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a demonstration organized by the HDP, detaining at least 10 people.

OTHER MINORITIES

December 28: The police in İzmir briefly [detained](#) UK-based Alevi NGO leader İsrail Erbil over a speech he made at a commemoration event.

December 31: Vandals [spray painted](#) racial slurs on the front gate of a protestant church in İstanbul. One suspect was briefly detained in connection with the incident.

PRISON CONDITIONS

December 28: Opposition MP Gülize Biçer Karaca [reported](#) that a total of 645 inmates in Turkish prisons died by suicide in the last 25 years.

December 30: An Adana prison [blocked](#) the hospitalization of inmates who refused to undergo mouth searches.

December 31: The Constitutional Court [ordered](#) the state to pay compensation to a prisoner after he was barred for 15 months from calling his wife who was jailed in another prison.

January 1: A report released by the Diyarbakır Bar Association [noted](#) a significant increase in rights violations as well as a worsening of conditions in prisons in 2021.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

December 28: Far-right MP Ümit Özdağ [released](#) a video of him visiting a Syrian jeweler, asking to see his identification documents.

December 28: Two migrants [died](#) after their boat capsized off the coast of İzmir.

December 29: A Turkish neo-Nazi group [released](#) a video showing one of its members beating an Afghan migrant in İstanbul.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

December 29: İbrahim Temel, an inmate held in an Elazığ prison [told](#) his family that the guards have been torturing him and threatening to kill him.

December 30: The Human Rights Association (İHD) released a [report](#) which found that between January 2021 and November 2021, at least 66 people were

coerced into becoming “informants” for the authorities, often while they were in detention centers or prisons.

December 30: Two men were [beaten](#) by narcotics police in Mersin who allegedly raided their house by mistake.

December 30: The guards in an Afyon prison [mistreated](#) an inmate named Cumali Yıldırım who resisted a strip-search.

December 30: The guards in an Iğdır prison physically [assaulted](#) inmate Hogir Batu for refusing to undergo a strip-search.

January 1: The guards in a Gümüşhane prison [mistreated](#) inmate Reşit İlhan.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

December 31: A judge at an İstanbul court [criticized](#) women who demonstrate against femicide during a hearing in the trial of 35 women standing trial due to a women's rights demonstration they staged in March 2020.