

# TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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## ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 172 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 14:** An inmate named Abdülrezzak Şuyur [lost](#) his life in an İzmir prison three months after he was diagnosed with lung cancer. Reports indicated that the prison administration had not offered Şuyur medical treatment.

**December 14:** The European Court of Human Rights [ruled](#) that the pre-trial detention of journalist Nazlı Ilıcak violated her right to liberty and security.

**December 14:** The Human Rights Association (İHD) [reported](#) that at least 59 sick prisoners, seven of whom shortly after the deferment of the execution of their sentences, have lost their lives in Turkey since early 2020.

**December 15:** Halil Güneş, an inmate suffering from cancer, was [found dead](#) in a Diyarbakır prison. The authorities had denied release to Güneş, despite a medical board report.

**December 16:** Esra Çiçeklidağ, a former judge and the mother of a 6-month-old baby, was [arrested](#) and sent to a Kocaeli prison in violation of a law that requires the postponement of the execution of sentences for women who have given birth within the last year and a half.

## 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

**December 13:** A Diyarbakır court [sentenced](#) Yüksel Almas, co-chair of an association established for solidarity with relatives of those who lost their lives in the armed conflict in the Kurdish-majority southeast, to 10 years in prison on terrorism-related charges.

**December 13:** The police in Konya [detained](#) a man named Hayrettin Bulan for staging a protest in front of the local governor's office.

**December 13:** The Hakkari Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

**December 14:** The police in Ankara [intervened](#) in a demonstration staged by university students to protest the government's economic policies, briefly detaining 13 people.

**December 14:** A Diyarbakır court [sentenced](#) former NGO executive Yılmaz Kan to six years, three months in prison on terrorism charges, as part of an investigation into the Kurdish political movement.

**December 14:** The Kahramanmaraş Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 14 days.

**December 15:** The authorities [imposed](#) a TL 80,000 (€ 4,500) in administrative fine and confiscated a house belonging to Acun Karadağ, a former public servant summarily fired from her job by an executive decree after a 2016 coup attempt, for participating in a protest.

**December 16:** The police in Diyarbakır [detained](#) Emine Kaya, the co-chair of a pro-Kurdish association for solidarity with relatives of prisoners.

**December 16:** An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to acquit 13 activists who stood trial for protesting a pro-government construction company for building a stone quarry in an environmentally significant area.

**December 17:** The Tunceli Governor's Office [banned](#) a planned labor rally, citing the Covid-19 pandemic.

**December 18:** The İstanbul Governor's Office [banned](#) an event planned by an opposition party.

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

**December 13:** A Diyarbakır prosecutor [requested](#) up to five years in prison for journalist Durken Süren who is standing trial on terrorism-related charges over her social media messages as well as her work for the pro-Kurdish Azadiya Welat and Özgür Gündem newspapers.

**December 13:** The Coalition for Women in Journalism (CFWIJ) [reported](#) that rights violations faced by women journalists in Turkey increased by 244.11 percent in 2021 compared to last year.

**December 13:** A court [sentenced](#) to house arrest three YouTube journalists known for their political street interviews who were detained on December 12.

**December 14:** The European Court of Human Rights [ruled](#) that the pre-trial detention of journalist Nazlı Ilıcak violated her rights to liberty and security as well as freedom of expression.

**December 14:** A Konya court [sentenced](#) a man to 14 months in prison on charges of insulting the president, for sharing two cartoons about him on social media.

**December 14:** A Diyarbakır prosecutor [demanded](#) life in prison for journalist Rojhat Doğru, a former reporter for

Gale Kurdistan TV who is on trial for allegedly threatening the integrity of the state and having terrorist affiliation.

**December 14:** An İzmir court [sentenced](#) a man named Ahmet Saymadi to one year, two months, 17 days in prison on charges of insulting the president on social media.

**December 14:** A new report [found](#) that investigations have been launched into 211,523 people in Turkey on various accusations over their exercise of free speech during the first six years of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's presidency.

**December 15:** The Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), Turkey's broadcasting watchdog, [imposed](#) fines on streaming platforms Netflix and Exxen due to their "immoral" content, ordering them to remove a movie and a talk show. RTÜK also fined pro-opposition Halk TV, Fox TV and TELE 1 broadcasters over their anti-government broadcasting.

**December 16:** An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to acquit journalist Mehmet Aslan of terrorism charges. Aslan stood trial over his work for the pro-Kurdish Mezopotamya news agency.

**December 17:** The police [detained](#) 12 people, including HDP executives, as part of an investigation into alleged terrorist propaganda at a party meeting in İstanbul on December 12.

**December 17:** A Kayseri court [ruled](#) to block access to three news articles on corruption and nepotism allegations targeting a local district governor.

**December 17:** The Council of State, Turkey's highest administrative court, [ruled](#) for a stay of execution on a regulation that made it easier for the authorities to cancel press cards of journalists.

## KURDISH MINORITY

**December 13:** A Diyarbakır court [sentenced](#) Yüksel Almas, co-chair of an association established for solidarity with relatives of those who lost their lives in the armed conflict in the Kurdish-majority southeast, to 10 years in prison on terrorism-related charges.

**December 13:** A Diyarbakır court [sentenced](#) former district municipal council member Panayır Çelik to six years, three months on terrorism-related charges.

**December 13:** A Diyarbakır prosecutor [requested](#) up to five years in prison for journalist Durken Süren who is standing trial on terrorism-related charges over her social media messages as well as her work for the pro-Kurdish Azadiya Welat and Özgür Gündem newspapers.

**December 13:** İstanbul prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into the HDP due to alleged dissemination of terrorist propaganda at a party congress.

**December 14:** A Diyarbakır prosecutor [demanded](#) life in prison for journalist Rojhat Doğru, a former reporter for Gale Kurdistan TV who is on trial for allegedly threatening the integrity of the state and having terrorist affiliation.

**December 14:** A Diyarbakır court [sentenced](#) former NGO executive Yılmaz Kan to six years, three months in prison on terrorism charges, as part of an investigation into the Kurdish political movement.

**December 15:** A Diyarbakır court [sentenced](#) local Kurdish politician Celal Yoldaş to 10 years, six months in prison on terrorism-related charges.

**December 16:** The police in Diyarbakır [detained](#) Emine Kaya, the co-chair of a pro-Kurdish association for solidarity with relatives of prisoners. Kaya was arrested by a court on December 19.

**December 16:** An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to acquit journalist Mehmet Aslan of terrorism charges. Aslan stood trial over his work for the pro-Kurdish Mezopotamya news agency.

**December 17:** The police [detained](#) 12 people, including HDP executives, as part of an investigation into alleged terrorist propaganda at a party meeting in İstanbul on December 12.

**December 17:** Reports revealed that the Şırnak police physically and verbally [mistreated](#) HDP members Botan Em and Rıdvan Türel who were detained on December 11.

**December 17:** Sümeyye Gök, a HDP member who was detained on December 8, was reportedly [subjected](#) to a strip-search and coerced into becoming an informant for the state while in custody.

**December 18:** The police in Mardin [detained](#) local Kurdish politician Celal Ata.

**December 19:** A 17-year-old Kurdish minor was physically [assaulted](#) by a group in Ankara in what appears to be a racist attack.

## OTHER MINORITIES

**December 14:** İstanbul prosecutors [indicted](#) four trans women over their “indecent behavior.”

## PRISON CONDITIONS

**December 14:** An inmate named Abdülrezzak Şuyur [lost](#) his life in an İzmir prison three months after he was diagnosed with lung cancer. Reports indicated that the prison administration had not offered Şuyur medical treatment.

**December 14:** An Elazığ prison [denied](#) permission to Haşim Gezer to attend the funeral of his sister Garibe Gezer who was found dead in her cell in a Kocaeli prison after reports that she was heavily tortured. The prison administration in Kocaeli where Gezer lost her life launched disciplinary investigation into some inmates for staging a protest by clapping hands.

**December 15:** Reports indicated that a Samsun prison has been [denying](#) treatment to sick inmate Bilal Akbaş for seven months for refusing to undergo mouth searches.

**December 16:** Media reports [indicated](#) an increase in the number of complaints from prisoners about lack of heating and adequate nutrition.

**December 17:** An inmate named İlyas Demir [lost](#) his life in a one-person prison cell in Bolu. His sister announced to the press that Demir had been suffering from psychological problems since 2013 and that prison authorities had not offered him treatment.

**December 19:** An inmate named Vedat Erkmen [lost](#) his life in a Tekirdağ prison in what authorities classified as a suicide. Media reports indicated that prior to his death Erkmen had been placed in a one-person cell out of concerns for his “safety.” Family members alleged that Erkmen was unlikely to commit suicide and that he might have been killed.

## TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

**December 13:** The guards in a Çorum prison physically [assaulted](#) five inmates who tried to resist a strip-search during a prison transfer.

**December 15:** Eight inmates in a Konya prison were [taken](#) to a room under the guise of meeting with their lawyers, and then interrogated by police and gendarmerie intelligence officers.

**December 17:** Reports revealed that the Şırnak police physically and verbally [mistreated](#) HDP members Botan Em and Rıdvan Türel who were detained on December 11.

**December 17:** Sümeyye Gök, a HDP member who was detained on December 8, was reportedly [subjected](#) to a strip-search and coerced into becoming an informant for the state while in custody.

**December 19:** The police in Karabük physically [assaulted](#) a 11-year-old minor suspected of stealing a bike.