

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 14 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.

August 9: Reports [revealed](#) that the authorities were keeping behind bars Şivakar Ataş, a 27-year-old prisoner suffering from severe heart disease and blood pressure along with a herniated disc. Ataş also reportedly needs surgery due to cysts detected in her uterus.

August 10: [Mustafa Said Türk](#), an 86-year-old disabled man who was jailed on conviction of links to the Gülen movement, was sent back to prison after being briefly hospitalized. Although Türk's lawyer had requested a stay of execution of the sentence, citing old age and severe illness, it was denied by Manisa courts.

August 13: Pro-Kurdish media [reported](#) that an Ankara prison has not released 14 female inmates who are eligible for parole, citing as grounds their alleged lack of remorse.

ARBITRARY DEPRIVATION OF LIFE

August 8: Two inmates in an Elazığ prison [stabbed](#) eight political prisoners arrested or convicted on charges of affiliation with the Gülen movement or the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The assailants reportedly identified themselves as "men of the deep state." One of the victims was severely injured as a result of the assault. The incident drew widespread public outcry as it took place in

a high-security prison and was perceived as possibly deliberate negligence threatening the safety of political prisoners.

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

August 8: The Tunceli Governor's Office [banned](#) a concert that was planned to be held in the province.

August 11: The Adana Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a day.

August 11: The Van Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for two days.

August 12: The police in İstanbul and Adana [intervened](#) in demonstrations about those who disappeared in custody in the 1990s, detaining a total of 70 activists.

August 12: The police in Gaziantep briefly [detained](#) labor union leader Mehmet Türkmen Şireci over a protest march against low wages.

August 12: The police in Muş briefly [detained](#) 20 people who joined a campaign event organized by the HDP.

August 13: Gendarmes in Muğla [intervened](#) in a demonstration against the construction of a coal mine in a forested area, detaining two activists.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

August 8: The Constitutional Court [ruled](#) that a fine imposed on journalist Bülent Keneş over an article he wrote in 2015 about the then-prime minister was in violation of freedom of expression.

August 9: The Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK) [imposed](#) monetary fines and temporary broadcast bans on anti-government TV stations KRT TV and TELE1 over the content of their programs.

August 10: The police [detained](#) 13 OnlyFans content creators after they were seen in a viral video tossing dollar bills around a central square in İstanbul. The detainees are facing charges of fomenting enmity and hatred among the public.

August 10: Bitlis prosecutors [indicted](#) jailed Kurdish journalist Mehmet Şah Oruç on terrorism-related charges.

August 10: Reports revealed that the gendarmes in Muğla [detained](#) American journalist Daniel McArdle who was in the province to report on environmental protests against the construction of a coal mine in a forested area. Detained on August 6, McArdle was kept in custody for three days without being allowed to meet his lawyers and was ultimately deported.

August 11: The family members of Kurdish journalist Ruken Tuncel [suffered](#) racist assault and harassment near their home in İstanbul.

August 11: The Mersin police [detained](#) 11 people for spreading terrorist propaganda during Newroz celebrations.

August 11: Journalist Seyhan Avşar [announced](#) that she was being investigated for reporting on the alleged sexual abuse of a 6-year-old girl in a hospital owned by the health minister.

August 11: The European Fact-Checking Standards Network (EFCSN) and the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) released a joint [report](#) which found that Google's search algorithms and knowledge panels in

Turkey display a discernible bias, favoring pro-government media over independent sources.

August 11: The Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK) [sanctioned](#) the Power Türk station for airing the music video of a singer.

August 13: Reports revealed that Turkey's authorities briefly [detained](#) German MP Gökay Akbulut on August 3 due to her social media posts. Akbulut was reportedly released following the diplomatic intervention of the German government.

KURDISH MINORITY

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OTHER MINORITIES

August 8: The Freedom of Belief Initiative (İÖG) released a [report](#), which documented a total of 36 belief or non-belief-based hate crimes that were committed in 2022 in Turkey. Most of these incidents targeted Alevis and Christians, according to the report.

PRISON CONDITIONS

August 8: Reports [documented](#) overcrowding and denial of medical care to sick inmates in an Edirne prison.

August 12: An Erzurum prison [denied](#) treatment to sick inmate Önder Poyraz.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

August 8: Statistics released by Germany's Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) [showed](#) that Turkish nationals filed a total of 23,486 asylum applications in the first seven months of 2023. The number represented a 203 percent increase compared to the same period last year.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

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August 10: A prison administration in Mersin [confiscated](#) letters written by inmates to inform journalists and NGOs about the rights violations they suffered, citing security reasons.

August 12: Soldiers in Bitlis [tortured](#) a villager named Kerem Arvas who was detained during a military operation.