

# TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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## ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 93 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.

February 27: Turkish authorities have [arrested](#) former teacher Güler Çetinkaya due to her alleged use of the ByLock mobile messaging app despite a landmark European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) ruling delivered last year.

February 27: Human Rights Association (IHD) Prison Commission member Mehmet Acettin, Socialist Assemblies Federation (SMF) Term Spokesperson Barış Kayaoğlu and SMF member Metin Keleş, Partizan magazine reader İbrahim Hakkı Eren, ESP members Ali Haydar Keleş, Ali Karaçay, Mesut Çeki, Hüseyin Gültepe, Uğur Ok, Hacer Elçin, SKM MYK member Ezgi Gürbüz and Selda Aydoğdu were [detained](#) in house raids in Istanbul.

## 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

February 28: 12 people were [detained](#) in police intervention against the press declaration of Socialist Women Assemblies (SKM) in front of Süreyya Opera House in Kadıköy district of Istanbul.

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

February 27: Turkish police on Tuesday morning [detained](#) three journalists, Arif Aslan, Oktay Candemir and Lokman Gezgin, in the eastern province of Van following raids on their houses.

February 27: Public broadcaster Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT) stopped airing a speech by Turkey's main opposition leader Özgür Özel on Tuesday after Özel [attempted](#) to criticize the station due to its failure to give coverage to opposition politicians.

February 28: A journalist, Diren Keser, in southern Turkey was [sent](#) to prison on Tuesday evening after police raided his house when the top appeals court upheld a prison sentence handed down to him in 2017.

February 28: Turkey's Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), which monitors broadcasts on national television and radio stations, also [intends](#) to scrutinize broadcasts on YouTube and other social media sites.

February 29: At least 3 news articles, YouTube videos of parliamentary debates and social media posts of AKP Istanbul MPs Ravza Kavakçı Kan and Fatma Betül Sayan Kaya, as well as AKP Istanbul Women's Branch Chair Rabia İlhan Kalender, about the large scholarships they received from Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (İBB) subsidiaries KİPTAŞ and İSBAK during the AKP period, were [blocked](#) from access by the Istanbul Anatolian 9th Criminal

Judgeship of Peace on the grounds of violation of personal rights.

## HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

February 28: An opposition MP, Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu, and a leading human rights advocate in Turkey has [won](#) his legal battle to obtain a 2016 classified memo in which a district governor instructed local authorities to bar victims of post-coup purges from entering all publicly owned buildings.

## JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

**February 29:** Washington-based advocacy organization Freedom House has in its latest report [referred](#) to the elections in Turkey last May as “unfair” and said they were held amid suppression of the political opposition and restrictions on freedom of speech.

## KURDISH MINORITY

February 27: Police [forced](#) their way into the İstanbul home of Çiçek Otlı, a deputy from the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) in an early morning raid.

February 27: An appeals court in Turkey has [ruled](#) to remove from her job Mühdan Sağlam, an academic who was recently reinstated after initially being fired for signing a joint petition about the Kurdish issue.

## REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

February 29: Turkey [bears](#) responsibility for human rights abuses and violations of land and property rights in swaths of northern Syria it controls alongside its proxies.

## TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

February 28: 12 prisoners (Zerrin Yılmaz, Muhabbet Kurt, Mukaddes Kubilay, Zeynep Han Bingöl, Rozerin Kurt, Selver Yıldırım, Esra Sayektaş, Pınar Tikit, Alev Yarar, Zelal Bilgin, Ayla Akat Ata, and Salver İspir) in Ankara Sincan Women's Prison were [denied](#) their right to health

February 29: 4 prisoners in Denizli T Type Prison were [transferred](#) to Samsun S Type High Security Prison under coercion on February 22, 2024. It is learned that 4

prisoners were subjected to verbal and physical violence and their hands, feet and eyes were bound.

March 1: Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) Party Assembly member Sıtkı Güngör was [detained](#) in a house raid in İstanbul. He was subjected to reverse handcuffing and physical violence of the police officers during detention and transfer to hospital and got injured due to this.

## WOMEN'S RIGHTS

February 28: Seven women were [killed](#) by their partners or ex-partners across Turkey on Tuesday.