

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 5 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.

5 January: Büşra Tuna Çankaya, a religious studies teacher sentenced to 6 years and 10 months in prison by the Antalya 2nd High Criminal Court for allegedly staying in a girls' dormitory linked to Gülen Movement and using ByLock, was [arrested](#) in Edirne along with her 9-month-old son Bera and her husband, Yasin Çankaya, a former police officer dismissed by state of emergency decree.

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

3 January: Turkish police [detained](#) three protesters at a rally in Istanbul for displaying banners condemning trade with Israel, accusing them of incitement, as tensions over the Gaza conflict continue to escalate.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

31 December: Turkish prosecutors have [issued](#) a detention warrant for journalist and author Ahmet Nesin, who has been living in exile since 2016, on accusations of insulting President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in a recent YouTube program.

2 January: Turkish journalist Elif Bayburt [faces](#) trial for allegedly insulting the state during an interview about human rights activist Ayşenur Ezgi Eygi's death in the West Bank, where her guest accused Turkey and the US of complicity in alleged Israeli genocide against Palestinians.

2 January: Turkish authorities [sentenced](#) 58 journalists to a total of 135 years in prison, detained 112, and arrested 26 in 2024, with a report by opposition lawmaker Zeynep Oduncu Kutevi accusing the government of stifling independent journalism and suppressing dissent.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

31 December: A total of 26 summary proceedings seeking the lifting of parliamentary immunity were [submitted](#) to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (TBMM), all targeting opposition members and none from the ruling AKP.

KURDISH MINORITY

31 December: In Turkey's Kocaeli province, 10 people, including the Gebze District Co-Chairs of the People's Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party), Melike Aydın and Ömer Yıldız, were [detained](#) during house raids for their social media posts about journalists Nazım Daştan and Cihan Bilgin, who lost their lives in Northern and Eastern Syria.

5 January: Pro-Kurdish news and media accounts blocked in Turkey under the pretext of protecting national security and public order, and made inaccessible by X, include:

- Mezopotamya Agency's account (@MAturkce) with 264,000 followers,
- JINNEWS Agency's account (@jinnewsturkce) with 168,000 followers,
- Yeni Yaşam Newspaper's account (@yeniyasamgazete) with 125,000 followers,
- Siyasi Haber's account (@SiyasiHaberOrg) with 44,000 followers.

OTHER MINORITIES

2 January: A gunman [fired](#) multiple shots at the Kurtuluş Churches Association in Istanbul's Çekmeköy district on New Year's Eve, shouting anti-Christian remarks; no injuries were reported.

PRISON CONDITIONS

3 January: In Ankara's Sincan Women's Prison, prisoners' social and cultural rights have been [restricted](#) under the pretext of austerity measures.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

31 December: It has been reported that three female prisoners held in Ağrı Patnos Prison were [subjected](#) to torture and ill-treatment by prison guards, and that evidence of the abuse was not documented in the prison infirmary where they were taken.

TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

31 December: Kyrgyzstan has [transferred](#) the management of Gülen-linked Sapat schools to Turkey's Maarif Foundation, following Ankara's longstanding pressure to close or take control of institutions associated with the Gülen movement.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

3 January: In 2024, at least 394 women were [killed](#) by men in Turkey, and 259 women were found dead under suspicious circumstances, according to a report by the "We Will Stop Femicide Platform."