

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



Issue 158 | June 26-July 2, 2023

ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

June 26: Council of Europe (CoE) released its [Annual Penal Statistics on Prison Populations](#), which found that as of January 2022 one third of prisoners in Europe were incarcerated in Turkey.

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

June 26: A Muğla court [sentenced](#) two activists to six months, 20 days in prison on charges related to their attendance in an environmental protest against the construction of a coal mine.

June 27: Rights groups [announced](#) that five foreign nationals who were among more than 100 people detained at a Pride march in İstanbul are facing deportation.

July 1: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a demonstration about those who disappeared in police custody in the 1990s, detaining 22 people.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

June 26: The police in İstanbul [detained](#) journalist Merdan Yanardağ due to his televised remarks criticizing the “isolation” imposed on the outlawed Kurdistan Workers’ Party’s (PKK) jailed leader Abdullah Öcalan. Charged with

disseminating terrorist propaganda, Yanardağ was arrested by a court the next day.

June 27: The police in Şanlıurfa [detained](#) local journalist Mehmet Yetim for sharing a video of an elderly man sexually harassing a two-year-old girl. Yetim was released the same day.

June 27: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to 93 news articles reporting that US and Swedish prosecutors were investigating corruption allegations implicating Bilal Erdoğan, the son of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

June 30: The police in İzmir [detained](#) 14 people on charges of spreading terrorist propaganda on social media. The detainees were released the next day.

July 2: Courts reportedly [blocked](#) access to 396 pieces of online content about a pro-government journalist’s marriage between April 15 and June 15.

July 2: The prosecutors reportedly [launched](#) investigations into social media messages posted by politicians, journalists and commentators discussing the possibility of a refugee riot in Turkey similar to recent protests taking place in France.

PRISON CONDITIONS

June 26: Reports [revealed](#) that Aytekin Bulut, a sick inmate incarcerated in Tekirdağ, has been denied necessary medication for a month.

July 1: A Kırşehir prison [denied](#) medical treatment to sick inmate Süleyman Ayaz.

July 1: A prison administration in Diyarbakır did not [respond](#) to a request for a kidney transplant for sick

inmate Firat Nebioğlu, despite the availability of an organ donor.

July 1: An Ankara prison [stopped](#) providing sick inmate Nuriye Adet with necessary diet meal prescribed by the doctor on the grounds that she can procure it at the prison cafeteria.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

June 27: Rights groups [announced](#) that five foreign nationals who were among more than 100 people detained at a Pride march in İstanbul are facing deportation.

July 29: Reports [indicated](#) that 12 Afghan nationals who were held in a migrant repatriation center in Kütahya were hospitalized due to suspicions of poisoning.

July 1: The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) [reported](#) that Turkish authorities deported 390 Syrian refugees to Turkish-controlled areas in Syria within one week.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

July 2: The police in İstanbul [strip-searched](#) and mistreated one person who was detained during a demonstration.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

June 27: The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) [said](#) in a ruling that Turkey's legal precondition for divorced women to wait 300 days before remarrying amounted to discrimination and a violation of women's rights to privacy and marriage.