

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 131 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.

October 3: The Forensic Medicine Institution [rejected](#) a referral about the release of Ali Osman Köse, a prisoner suffering from cancer, stating that he could receive treatment behind bars.

ARBITRARY DEPRIVATION OF LIFE

September 29: The police in Batman [shot](#) Suat Şahin, a 21-year-old man, for allegedly resisting an ID check, leaving him in a critical condition.

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.

September 27: Emrah Topaloğlu, a member of a leftist political party in İstanbul, [announced](#) that on September 24 he was forced into a civilian vehicle by people who introduced themselves as police officers. Topaloğlu said that during his brief and unofficial detention, the

abductors threatened him and tried to coerce him into becoming an informant for the authorities.

September 29: Ezgi Orak, a member of the HDP, was [forced](#) into a civilian vehicle in Ankara by people who introduced themselves as police officers. A complaint filed with the police revealed that the license plate of the vehicle was not in the official inventory. Orak turned up in official police custody several hours later. She was released on October 3.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION

September 27: The police [detained](#) 28 people in İstanbul and 41 others in İzmir for protesting the lack of affordable housing for university students. The detainees were released the next day.

September 28: Media reports [said](#) that at least 80 people were in police custody for protesting the unaffordable housing problem for university students.

September 28: The authorities [seized](#) the bank account of Nazan Bozkurt, a former public servant summarily fired from her job by an executive decree in 2017, after an administrative fine of TL 281,000 (€27,000) was imposed on her for participating in a protest.

September 29: Reports revealed that several university students were [removed](#) from public dormitories and deprived of their scholarships for attending an LGBT parade.

September 29: The Hakkari Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

September 29: The Tunceli Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

October 1: The police in İstanbul briefly [detained](#) two people holding a demonstration in front of the Forensic Medicine Institution to demand the release of a sick prisoner.

October 2: The Muş Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

September 27: A Diyarbakır court [sentenced](#) writer Nurcan Kaya to one year, three months in prison on charges of spreading terrorist propaganda, over a tweet she posted in 2014 about resistance in the Syrian town of Kobani against the occupation of the Islamic State.

September 27: A court [sentenced](#) Mehmet Şah Tekiner to one year, three months in prison on charges of insulting the president, over a Facebook post in which he shared a news story by a German daily.

September 27: The police in Denizli [detained](#) Tugay Odabaşoğlu, the provincial chair of the main opposition party, for allegedly calling the president a murderer during a speech at a local party meeting on September 18. Odabaşoğlu was arrested a day after his detention.

September 27: The police in Rize [detained](#) Gökmen Turna, a local executive for the Labor Party (EMEP), for allegedly spreading terrorist propaganda and insulting the president on social media. Turna was released under judicial control and a travel ban the next day.

September 28: The police in Zonguldak [detained](#) Çiğdem Günay, the provincial chair of the Workers' Party of Turkey (TİP), on account of her social media messages.

September 28: Ankara prosecutors [indicted](#) the head of the Ankara Bar Association and 10 members of the association's executive board, seeking up to two years in prison due to a press statement in which they criticized Ali Erbaş, the head of the Diyanet, the country's top religious authority.

September 28: Security forces in the border province of Edirne briefly [detained](#) two journalists from the Netherlands, who were at the border area to report on migrant mobility, for entering a military forbidden zone.

September 28: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to news reports about a ruling party member who was

allegedly awarded several public tenders by district municipalities held by the ruling party.

September 28: The Press Advertising Agency (BİK), the state body responsible for regulating publicly funded advertisements in the media, [imposed](#) a four-day advertising ban on the government-critical Sözcü newspaper over a column about two ruling party figures.

September 28: An İzmir court [acquitted](#) Beyza Buldağ, who was standing trial over her social media comments against a university rector appointed by the president.

September 30: İstanbul prosecutors [indicted](#) Gülsüm and Sami Elvan, the parents of Berkin Elvan, a teen who was struck in the head with a tear gas canister fired by a police officer during the anti-government Gezi Park protests in İstanbul in 2013. The parents are charged with insulting the president.

September 30: Diyarbakır prosecutors [demanded](#) a prison sentence of up to 22.5 years for Kurdish journalist Nurcan Yalçın, who is standing trial on terrorism-related charges.

September 30: The Constitutional Court [ruled](#) that a two-year prison sentence handed down to a bus driver in Diyarbakır for playing Kurdish-language music did not violate his freedom of expression.

September 30: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to news reports about a right-wing union leader who threatened main opposition politician Canan Kaftancıoğlu.

September 30: Diyarbakır courts [ruled](#) to block access to nine web addresses used by the pro-Kurdish Jinnews, Kızıl Bayrak, Umut Gazetesi, Etkin and Mezopotamya news websites, citing national security reasons.

October 1: An Ankara court [convicted](#) actress Ezgi Mola on insult charges after she protested in a tweet in August 2020 the release of a former soldier accused of raping an 18-year-old Kurdish woman. The court ordered Mola to pay a fine of TL 5,200 (€500).

October 1: The Turkish Journalists' Association (TGC) [reported](#) that in September, six journalists received prison sentences of 27 years and three months.

October 1: İstanbul prosecutors [indicted](#) social media user Gökhan Akkaya on charges of insulting a presidential aide.

October 1: Hatay prosecutors [indicted](#) local HDP executive Abdurrahim Şahin, seeking his imprisonment on terrorism-related charges, on account of a speech he gave seven years ago.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

September 27: The Council of Judges and Prosecutors (HSK) [promoted](#) judge Akın Gürlek who previously presided over an İstanbul court that refused to implement a Constitutional Court ruling on imprisoned opposition lawmaker Enis Berberoğlu.

September 30: Turkey [ranked](#) 12th out of 193 countries in terms of criminality score in the Global Organized Crime Index 2021, which said that Turkey has become a mafia state.

KURDISH MINORITY

September 28: HDP MP Gülistan Kılıç-Koçyiğit reported that a prison administration in Kırıkkale [launched](#) a disciplinary investigation into an inmate for using the Kurdish word for “comrades” in a phone call.

September 30: An Ankara court [acquitted](#) Adnan Selçuk Mızraklı, the former mayor of Diyarbakır, of charges of disseminating terrorist propaganda. Mızraklı was removed from office by the Interior Ministry in August 2019.

September 30: Diyarbakır prosecutors [demanded](#) a prison sentence of up to 22.5 years for Kurdish journalist Nurcan Yalçın, who is standing trial on terrorism-related charges.

September 30: The Constitutional Court [ruled](#) that a two-year prison sentence handed down to a bus driver in Diyarbakır for playing Kurdish-language music did not violate his freedom of expression.

September 30: Diyarbakır courts [ruled](#) to block access to nine web addresses used by the pro-Kurdish Jinnews, Kızıl Bayrak, Umut Gazetesi, Etkin and Mezopotamya news websites, citing national security reasons.

October 1: A Hakkari court [sentenced](#) former district mayor Remziye Yaşar to 17 years in prison on terrorism-related charges. The court also sentenced 27 others, including pro-Kurdish party executives, to eight years, nine months in prison.

October 1: Hatay prosecutors [indicted](#) local HDP executive Abdurrahim Şahin, seeking his imprisonment on terrorism-related charges, on account of a speech he gave seven years ago.

OTHER MINORITIES

September 29: Reports revealed that several university students were [removed](#) from public dormitories and deprived of their scholarships for attending an LGBT parade.

October 1: A report published by the Freedom of Belief Initiative found that Alevis were [targeted](#) in more than half of the hate crimes recorded in Turkey in 2020.

PRISON CONDITIONS

September 28: HDP MP Gülistan Kılıç-Koçyiğit reported that a prison administration in Kırıkkale [launched](#) a disciplinary investigation into an inmate for using the Kurdish word for “comrades” in a phone call.

September 29: A prison administration in Kayseri reportedly [placed](#) an inmate who tested positive for Covid-19 in the same room with a 60-year-old inmate.

September 29: Reports said that a Kırıkkale prison was [denying](#) treatment to inmate Hamdullah Zengin, who was found injured and who still has two bullets lodged in his arm.

October 3: Abbas Özdemir, a prisoner held in an İzmir prison who recently underwent an eye surgery, [suffered](#) an severe infection due to unhygienic prison conditions.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

September 27: The Palestinian Foreign Ministry [announced](#) that six Palestinians went missing in Turkey over the past month.

September 29: Turkey [suspended](#) the issuance of the temporary protection ID card for Syrian refugees and replaced it with a medical tourism document valid for a month that does not cover all expenses, causing war-stricken Syrians to face expensive bills.

September 30: The European Council [approved](#) €149.6 million in additional funding from the EU budget to support Syrian refugees in Turkey.

September 30: The Diyarbakır Bar Association [called on](#) Turkish authorities to halt the expulsion of 39 Afghan asylum seekers who were detained on September 19.

September 30: A district mayor in İstanbul [announced](#) that his municipality has banned the renting of houses by foreign nationals in order to ensure the departure of refugees from the district.

October 1: A group of locals in İzmir [attacked](#) the houses, workplaces and cars of Syrian refugees. The incident took place following reports that a 17-year-old Turk was killed in a fight.

October 2: Erkan Akıllı, a teacher who was convicted on terrorism charges due to his links to the Gülen movement, [died](#) a few hours after crossing into Greece via the Evros River. The cause of death was not announced.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

September 26: The police in Diyarbakır physically [assaulted](#) a group of people during an ID check.

September 29: İsmail Bayram, a former inmate who was held in the Kayseri Bünyan prison [told](#) the media that he witnessed torture and mistreatment, which have become commonplace in the facility.

September 29: The guards in an İzmir prison physically [assaulted](#) inmates İbrahim Tikan and Fırat Yağmehan for objecting to the installation of surveillance cameras in their ward.

October 1: The police in Diyarbakır [mistreated](#) a man named Ali Osman Nadiroğlu during a house raid to detain him.

TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION AND VIOLATIONS

October 1: A Belgian court [started](#) the trial of the members of an alleged Turkish hit team who were claimed to be preparing for attacks on Kurdish leaders Remzi Kartal and Zübeyir Aydar.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

October 1: The Constitutional Court [issued](#) a landmark decision in the case of government officials accused of

negligence in the murder of academic Serpil Erfindık, who was killed by her husband in 2013, ruling to relaunch the investigation into them.

October 1: An Ankara court [convicted](#) actress Ezgi Mola on insult charges after she protested in a tweet in August 2020 the release of a former soldier accused of raping an 18-year-old Kurdish woman. The court ordered Mola to pay a fine of TL 5,200 (€500).

October 1: The Interior Minister [announced](#) that more than 148,000 women used a mobile application of the ministry to report male violence to the police since its introduction in March 2018.