

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

September 11: More than 50 lawyers were [detained](#) upon warrants issued by Ankara prosecutors who in a written [statement](#) accused them of following up on the cases of defendants affiliated to the Gülen movement and “trying to manipulate the trials under the guise of the practice of law.”

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

September 7: Activists Cemal Yıldırım, Muhammet Semih Karaoğlu and Resul Kalyoncu were [detained](#) by the police while trying to hold a press statement in protest of the large-scale purge of public sector workers in the aftermath of a coup attempt in July 2016.

September 7: Aygül Doku and Bedriye Doku were briefly [detained](#) after attempting a sit-in in the Tunceli province to protest the failure of authorities to locate their family member Gülistan Doku, who has been missing since January 5, 2020. The detainees were released the same day after their questioning.

September 10: Gendarmerie forces violently [dispersed](#) a protest in Mardin’s Artuklu district against a local electricity distribution company, detaining nearly 20 people.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

September 7: Journalist Oktay Candemir was briefly [detained](#) in the province of Van over his comments critical of a TV series airing on state-run TRT channel.

September 7: A person in Muğla was briefly [detained](#) for allegedly insulting President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan

on social media. The man was subsequently released pending trial and with a ban on leaving the country.

September 7: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to news stories about the seizure of a non-seizable loan received by the opposition-held İstanbul municipality.

September 7: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to a news story by the leftist BirGün newspaper about a municipal tender being granted to a pro-government businessperson in the Bahçelievler district.

September 8: A prosecutor [demanded](#) prison sentences ranging from eight to 19 years for journalists Barış Terkoğlu, Aydın Keser, Ferhat Çelik, Eren Ekinci, Erk Acarer, Hülya Kılınç, Barış Pehlivan and Murat Ağirel, who are standing trial on charges of disclosing classified information over their reports on a Turkish intelligence officer killed in Libya. Pehlivan, Kılınç and Ağirel were [released](#) after their hearing on September 9, which ended with Ağirel being sentenced to 4 years, 8 months; Pehlivan and Kılınç to 3 years, 9 months in prison. Journalist Terkoğlu was verbally targeted by interior minister Süleyman Soylu.

September 8: Reporter Serdal Işık was briefly [detained](#) over his social media posts. Işık was released after his questioning.

September 8: İstanbul prosecutors [indicted](#) musician Ferhat Tunç over the artwork of one of his albums, which features three leftist activists from the 1970s.

September 8: Journalist Özgür Boğatekin was [summoned](#) by a prosecutor to give a statement about a Facebook post where he criticized a racist [attack](#) against Kurdish seasonal workers in Sakarya.

September 9: Media watchdog RTÜK [announced](#) that it started an investigation into Haber Global TV

broadcaster over a guest's remarks about the country's religious high schools (imam hatip).

September 10: A court [ordered](#) imprisoned journalist Müyesser Yıldız to pay TL 20,000 (€ 2,250) in damages for allegedly insulting Defense Minister Hulusi Akar in her reporting on the July 2016 coup attempt. Yıldız is currently in prison on charges of espionage.

September 10: Reporters Murat Başal and Emrah Kızıl were [subjected](#) to a knife attack by a group of people while following up on local news in Diyarbakır. The suspects involved in the attack were later released, which drew criticism from journalists' associations.

September 10: Hasan Basri Aydın, a 90-year-old retired teacher, was briefly [arrested](#) in İstanbul for allegedly insulting former minister Cemil Çiçek.

September 13: Justice ministry data [indicated](#) that 12,298 people stood trial in 2019 for allegedly insulting the president and 3,831 of the defendants were handed down sentences.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE

September 9: French newspaper Le Monde published an [article](#) severely criticizing Robert Spano, the head of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) over his visit to Turkey last week, where he only met with government and ruling party officials, excluding opposition circles, minorities and human rights defenders. Leading human rights defender Şebnem Korur Fincancı said in a [podcast interview](#) that Spano should resign for his one-sided visit to Turkey, which she said resembled a "pro-government puppet show."

KURDISH MINORITY

September 10: A court in the Van province [sentenced](#) former HDP provincial co-chair Yadişen Karabulak to 7 years, 6 months in prison on terrorism-related charges.

September 11: A court [sentenced](#) pro-Kurdish HDP MP Remziye Tosun to 10 years in prison for alleged "membership in a terrorist organization."

MISTREATMENT OF CITIZENS ABROAD

September 8: The General Prosecutor of Moldova [announced](#) that the country's former intelligence chief Vasile Botnari received a suspended sentence for the

forcible rendition to Turkey of a group of Turkish teachers. Botnari was also ordered to pay €125,000 in fines, the amount that Moldova lost in the case of five of the teachers whose lawyers sued the country before the [European Court of Human Rights](#) (ECtHR).

PRISON CONDITIONS

September 9: Rights groups [alleged](#) that a prisoner in Gümüşhane named Mustafa Kabakçioğlu was put in a prison cell after he showed symptoms of Covid-19 and that he was found dead in the cell the next day.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

September 7: Turkish authorities [arrested](#) Maryam Shariatmadari, an Iranian anti-hijab activist, to be deported to Iran, where she could face execution. Shariatmadari was released the next day, but her future and status in the country remain unclear.

September 9: A 13-year-old Afghan migrant child [was](#) found dead in an irrigation pool in Ankara where he was working as a shepherd.

September 11: Ümit Şakır, a Turkish asylum seeker was [reported](#) missing since September 3. Şakır was reportedly left stranded in the Evros river by the Greek border guards.

September 11: A Turkish asylum seeker fleeing the Turkish government [spoke](#) to a news website, alleging that he and a group of other migrants were subjected to torture at the hands of the Greek security forces in Neo Cheimonio after their arrival in Greece, before being pushed back to Turkey across the Evros river.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

September 11: A monthly rights [report](#) released by opposition MP and human rights defender Sezgin Tanrıkulu said that at least 143 people, including five children, were subjected to torture in August 2020.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

September 10: The Constitutional Court [ruled](#) that a woman's rights were violated when she was prevented by a lower court from having an abortion after being sexually abused in childhood years.