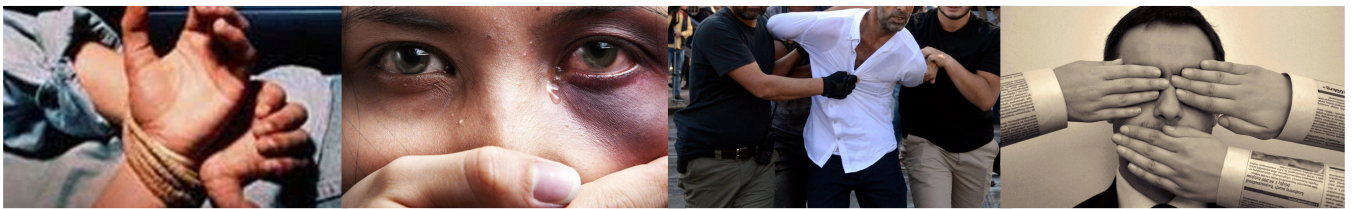


TURKEY'S ABYSMAL HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD

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APRIL 2018

**THIS PAMPHLET INCLUDES A SUMMARY OF THE U.S. STATE
DEPARTMENT'S REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN TURKEY IN
2017**



Turkey experienced significant political challenges during 2017. The continuing state of emergency--imposed following the July 2016 coup attempt, renewed once in 2016 and an additional six times during the year--had far-reaching effects on the country's society and institutions, restricting the exercise of many fundamental freedoms.



The most significant human rights issues included alleged torture of detainees in official custody; allegations of forced disappearance; arbitrary arrest and detention under the state of emergency of tens of thousands, including members of parliament and two Turkish-national employees of the U.S. Mission to Turkey, for alleged ties to terrorist groups or peaceful legitimate speech.

THE 18-MONTH LONG STATE OF EMERGENCY

Turkey's state of emergency has
been extended 6 times since its
imposition on 21 July 2016



BUREAU OF DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND LABOR:

The weakening of safeguards against abuse in detention under the state of emergency was accompanied by increased reports of torture and mistreatment in police detention, such as beating and stripping detainees, use of prolonged stress positions, and threats of rape as well as threats to lawyers and interference with medical examinations. While many allegations arose in relation to members of the military and police detained in connection with the coup attempt, they were not the only groups who reported mistreatment after the coup attempt, and Kurdish detainees in the southeast had reported similar abuses during the prior year.

PRISON AND DETENTION CENTER CONDITIONS



TURKEY'S PRISONS ARE EXCEPTIONALLY OVERCROWDED

As of June 15, the Ministry of Justice indicated a total prison inmate population of 224,878 in government-operated detention facilities with a capacity of 202,676 inmates. At least 22,000 arrestees or convicts were in prisons and had to sleep on the floor or in rotation

THOUSANDS OF REGISTERED STUDENTS ARE BEHIND BARS

In September the Ministry of Justice, responding to an inquiry by Gamze Akkus Ilgezdi, a CHP Istanbul lawmaker and parliamentary Human Rights Commission member, announced that 69,301 formally registered students were imprisoned as of the end of 2016, the highest number of jailed students in the country's history.



CHILDREN UNDER 18 CHARGED WITH TERRORISM

As of August 1, the General Directorate of Prisons and Detention Houses stated that of the 2,767 children between the ages of 12 and 18 in prison, 197 were in prison on terror-related charges

A report by the HRFT profiled the suspicious death of Hamza Kacmaz, a prisoner in Antalya who allegedly committed suicide on August 19 by hanging himself in his prison cell. The autopsy report showed no signs of strangulation and noted signs of handcuffing. Other inmates testified that Kacmaz sustained beatings and torture prior to his death.

www.silencedturkey.org

ANTI-TERRORISM LAWS AND POLITICAL PRISONERS

MORE THAN 50 THOUSAND POLITICAL PRISONERS CHARGED FALSELY

In November media reported that, according to the Ministry of Justice, 62,669 prison inmates were charged with terrorism-related crimes. An exact breakdown of numbers of alleged members of the PKK, ISIS, and the Gulen movement was not available at year's end. In July the Ministry of Justice reported the arrest of 50,510 individuals in connection with the July 2016 attempted coup. Some observers considered many of these individuals political prisoners, a charge sharply disputed by the government.

Authorities used counterterrorism laws broadly against many human rights activists, media outlets, suspected sympathizers and alleged members of the Gulen movement. Prosecutors cited alleged threats to national security, and in some cases used what appeared to be questionable evidence to file criminal charges against a broad range of individuals, including journalists, opposition politicians, activists, and others critical of the government. Human rights groups alleged that many detainees had no substantial link to terrorism and were detained to silence critical voices or weaken political opposition to the ruling AKP.



BYLOCK USERS JAILED FOR USING MOBILE APP

The government alleged that individuals who used the messaging application ByLock were members of the Fethullah Terror Organization (FETO), a term the government applied to the Gulen movement, which it holds responsible for the 2016 coup attempt. On September 26, the Supreme Court of Appeals ruled that use of ByLock constituted prima facie evidence of membership in FETO. Based on an examination of the history of the ByLock application, including its alleged modification by alleged Gulen-linked staff working in an intelligence department of the National Police, the Appellate Court found that evidence of the use of ByLock was sufficient to sustain the convictions of two former judges who had filed appeals. In 102,000 instances, use of the smartphone application ByLock was cited as evidence of alleged support for or membership in a terrorist organization.

On June 6, police detained Taner Kilic, the founder and chair of Amnesty International Turkey, in Izmir along with 22 others for alleged Gulen ties and in part for allegedly using the ByLock mobile application, a claim rejected by Amnesty International (see section 5). Critics alleged Kilic's detention stemmed from government displeasure with Amnesty reporting critical of the government. In October a court released the "Buyukada 10" pending the outcome of their trial, which continued at year's end. Kilic and Kavala remained in pretrial detention, with judicial proceedings against them continuing at year's end

ARBITRARY DEPRIVATION OF LIFE



66 DEATHS UNDER GOVERNMENT SUPERVISION

There were credible allegations that the government contributed to civilian deaths in 2017. Human rights groups documented several suspicious deaths of detainees in official custody, although overall numbers varied. The Human Rights Foundation of Turkey (HRFT) reported at least 10 deaths in prison, including those of three children. The Human Rights Association (HRA) reported 17 deaths in prison. The Ministry of Justice, responding to questions from CHP member of parliament Baris Yardakas, reported that 66 prisoners committed suicide in 2016, 40 of them after the July 2016 attempted coup. Human rights groups stated the government took insufficient measures to protect civilian lives.

AT LEAST 570 COMPLAINTS AND 328 ALLEGATIONS OF TORTURE

The constitution and law prohibit torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment, but there were reports that some government forces employed these tactics. Human rights groups alleged that torture and mistreatment in police custody increased, despite the presence of closed-circuit cameras installed by the government in 2012, and that police abused detainees outside police station premises. The HRA reported that during the first 11 months of the year, it received 423 complaints related to abuse while in custody. It also reported intimidation and shaming of detainees by police were common and that victims hesitated to report abuse due to fear of reprisal. Separately, the HRFT reported that in the first 11 months of the year, it received 570 complaints, including 328 allegations of torture and inhuman treatment by government authorities. The government declined to provide information on whether it undertook investigations into allegations of mistreatment in prison or detention centers during the year.



On August 3, Davut Turkel, a 59-year-old laborer and member of the AKCA-DER labor union, died in police custody. On July 13, police raided his home and detained him along with 90 others, reportedly as part of a Gulen-related investigation into the 2016 attempted coup. Following 12 days in detention, he was injured prior to appearing before a judge, transferred to a hospital, and died nine days later after falling into a coma. Police claimed he fell down on the courthouse steps and injured his head. A hospital autopsy confirmed the cause of death was a brain hemorrhage. Critics asserted the death was suspicious, in view of the fact that Turkel was at the courthouse with a two-person police escort when he sustained his injuries

VIOLATION OF CIVIL RIGHTS

Unlawful Wiretapping

Human rights groups noted that wiretapping without a court order by the National Security Agency circumvented judicial control and potentially limited citizens' right to privacy. Many citizens asserted that authorities tapped their telephones and accessed their email or social media accounts, perpetuating widespread self-censorship under the continuing state of emergency. Human rights groups asserted that self-censorship due to fear of official reprisal accounted in part for the relatively low number of complaints they received regarding allegations of torture or mistreatment.

Punishment of Families

Under the state of emergency, the government targeted family members to exert pressure on some wanted suspects. Government measures included cancelling the passports of family members of civil servants suspended or dismissed from state institutions, as well as of those who had fled authorities. In some cases the government cancelled or refused to issue passports for the minor children of individuals outside the country who were wanted for or accused of ties to Gulen.



Crackdown on Free Speech

Multiple articles in the penal code directly restrict press freedom and free speech, for example, through provisions that prohibit praising a crime or criminals or inciting the population to enmity, hatred, or denigration, as well as provisions that protect public order and criminalize insult. Many in media reported the government's prosecution of journalists representing major independent newspapers and its jailing of scores of journalists during the preceding year hindered freedom of speech and that self-censorship was widespread amid fear that criticizing the government could prompt reprisals.

Ban on Freedom of Movement

The constitution provides for freedom of internal movement, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation, but the government limited these rights. The government restricted foreign travel for tens of thousands of citizens accused of links to the Gulen movement or the failed 2016 coup attempt. Freedom of movement was also restricted in the southeast as a result of counter-PKK operations and, in certain cases, curfews imposed by local authorities. The government also limited freedom of movement for the 3.3 million persons from Syria as well as for the approximately 300,000 persons from Iraq, Afghanistan, and other countries who were present in the country.

On March 22, Ali Gul, an Istanbul law school student, was arrested and charged with insulting the president after he prepared a short video on social media regarding why Turks should vote "no" in the April constitutional referendum. He remained in jail for two months.

TURKEY 26 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2017 United States Department of State • Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SERVICE UNDER ATTACK

4,087
ORGANIZATIONS
PERMANENTLY CLOSED

187
MEDIA
OUTLETS

2,300
EDUCATIONAL
INSTITUTIONS

1,600
NGOs

Since the 2016 coup attempt the government has seized approximately 1,000 businesses worth an estimated **46 billion lira (\$12 billion)**, according to government officials. The HRA reported that, in the first 11 months of the year, the government seized the assets of more than 180 shuttered media companies. In September the government's Saving Deposit Insurance Fund announced it would sell the assets of 21 media companies.

121,870
INDIVIDUALS DISMISSED OR
DETAINED

116K
CIVIL
SERVANTS

5,717
ACADEMICS

153
JOURNOS

CLICK BELOW TO ACCESS THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT'S REPORT
ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN TURKEY IN 2017

