

27  
Mar 2020

▲ Lvl. 1

No state  
reply yet

Turkey

n° 35/2020

Alert created on: 27 Mar 2020

## Turkish Government to Exclude Imprisoned Journalists from Plans to Release Prisoners amid COVID-19 Pandemic

SOURCE OF THREAT ▶ State

CATEGORY  ▶ Detention and imprisonment of journalists


### NO STATE REPLY YET

**PARTNER:** IPI, Article 19, AEJ, EFJ/IFJ

On 24 March 2020, the ruling coalition AKP and MHP submitted a draft law on criminal enforcement regulation for parliamentary discussion. The new law proposes the release of around one-third of Turkey's 300.000 prison inmates, by accelerating early release on probation in order to ease capacity in the overcrowded prisons. According to local rights groups, Turkey's prisons are 121 percent over capacity posing a serious threat to prisoners' health. The proposed law, however, excludes those convicted of terrorism-related offenses. Yet of the 92 journalists in jail over 50 percent of them are there on terrorism charges, the results of politicised targeting of journalists for their critical reporting. Dozens of journalists have been jailed for "terrorist propaganda" or "membership of a terrorist organisation" by a subservient judiciary, as part of the government backlash against political opposition in the wake of the 2016 failed coup.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

 PACE rapporteur calls on Spain and Turkey to include politicians in early prison releases prompted by Coronavirus

 IPI statement: "IPI calls for journalists release from Turkey's prisons amid COVID-19 threat"