

Living in an armed conflict zone and Resilience across the system

BUKET KARA

PHD CANDIDATE IN PSYCHOLOGY, KOC UNIVERSITY, TURKEY

VISITING RESEARCHER AT THE CENTRE OF RESILIENCE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE, UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON, UK

22 MAY 2019 – RESILIENCE FORUM



Outline

- ▶ Overview of Turkey and Kurds living in Turkey
- ▶ Brief history of the Turkish-Kurdish conflict
- ▶ Battles in 2015-2016
- ▶ Experiences at the individual level: Children and Families
- ▶ Experiences at wider: Education and Academia
- ▶ Resilience

Turkey...



- ▶ Located in the middle of Europe, Asia and Middle East
- ▶ Upper-middle-income
 - ▶ Child poverty! - 36% *
 - ▶ In EU: 1%-32%, average = 10%
- ▶ 81 million population**
- ▶ 70-75% Turkish
 - ▶ 19% Kurdish
 - ▶ 7-12% other minorities



- ▶ Kurds: Transnational ethnic community
- ▶ Semi-feudal structure; patriarchal
- ▶ Mainly lives in the East of Turkey

- ▶ Structural and cultural violence
- ▶ Systematic socioeconomic underdevelopment
- ▶ Lowest urbanization rate, welfare status and life chances
- ▶ Child poverty: 49% - 55%
- ▶ Intergenerational transmission of poverty

Ethnic conflict

Brief History of the Turkish-Kurdish Conflict

1923 - Republic

- Founded on the remnants of multi-ethnic, -religious, and -lingual Ottoman Empire.
- Policies to construct a national (i.e., Turkish) state with a national (i.e. Turkish) identity.
- Assimilation.

1920 to 1940 - Riots

- Several riots against the assimilation policies of secular Turkish state.
- More religious-based and tribal characteristics.
- Each quelled by slaughter of thousands.
- Systematic oppression of Kurds.

1978 - PKK

- Foundation of the Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK - Kurdish Workers Party).
- Ethno-nationalistic perspective.
- Demanding greater political and cultural rights and authority in the East of Turkey.

1980 - Military Coup

- Following the raging political violence between left- and right-wing groups.
- 500k were tortured and arrested, hundreds died in prison, 50 were executed.
- New Constitution: Militarily disciplined Turkish society. Complete denial and ban of ethnic minorities.

1984 to 2000 - Conflict

- PKK announced a Kurdish uprising.
- 36k death – 6k civilians, 8k from Turkish Army, and 22k from PKK. 7k cases of unidentified murders and disappearances.
- Destroyed villages and forced displacement of 1 million.
- 1999 - PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan was arrested. PKK declared a unilateral ceasefire.

Brief History of the Turkish-Kurdish Conflict

Early 2000's

- Negotiations with the European Union.
- Some reforms to protect the rights of ethnic minorities.
- Pro-Kurdish political parties were banned.

2004 to 2015

- Periods of combats and ceasefires.
- Secret negotiations..
- In March 2013, Ocalan announced a ceasefire with peace talks.
- The ceasefire ended.

July 2015 and onwards

- Emergency state and open-ended and day-long curfews in 11 cities affecting 1.81 million residents.
- Extensive damage to property including housing, business, and public buildings because of heavy weaponry use (e.g., air-dropped bombs).
- Casualties:
 - 397 civilians (at least 79 children)
 - 223 unknown youth (rebels or civilians?)
 - 1,423 rebels and 851 state forces
- In July 2016, coup attempt. Emergency state in whole country.

Impact of the Turkish-Kurdish Conflict

► Individual Level

► Children and Families

► Wider Level: Education and Academia

- Teachers: Ayşe Çelik
- Local group: Colorful Hopes
- Academics for Peace



Impact at the individual level: Children and Families

Southeastern Project

- ▶ Between June and October 2016
 - ▶ Three cities affected from the conflict: Diyarbakir, Hakkari, Van
 - ▶ Face-to-face interviews during house visits
 - ▶ 495 caregivers (mainly mothers) for their 653 children aged from 1.5 to 18
-
- ▶ Demographic and socioeconomic variables
 - ▶ Children's armed conflict experiences

Impact at the individual level: Children and Families

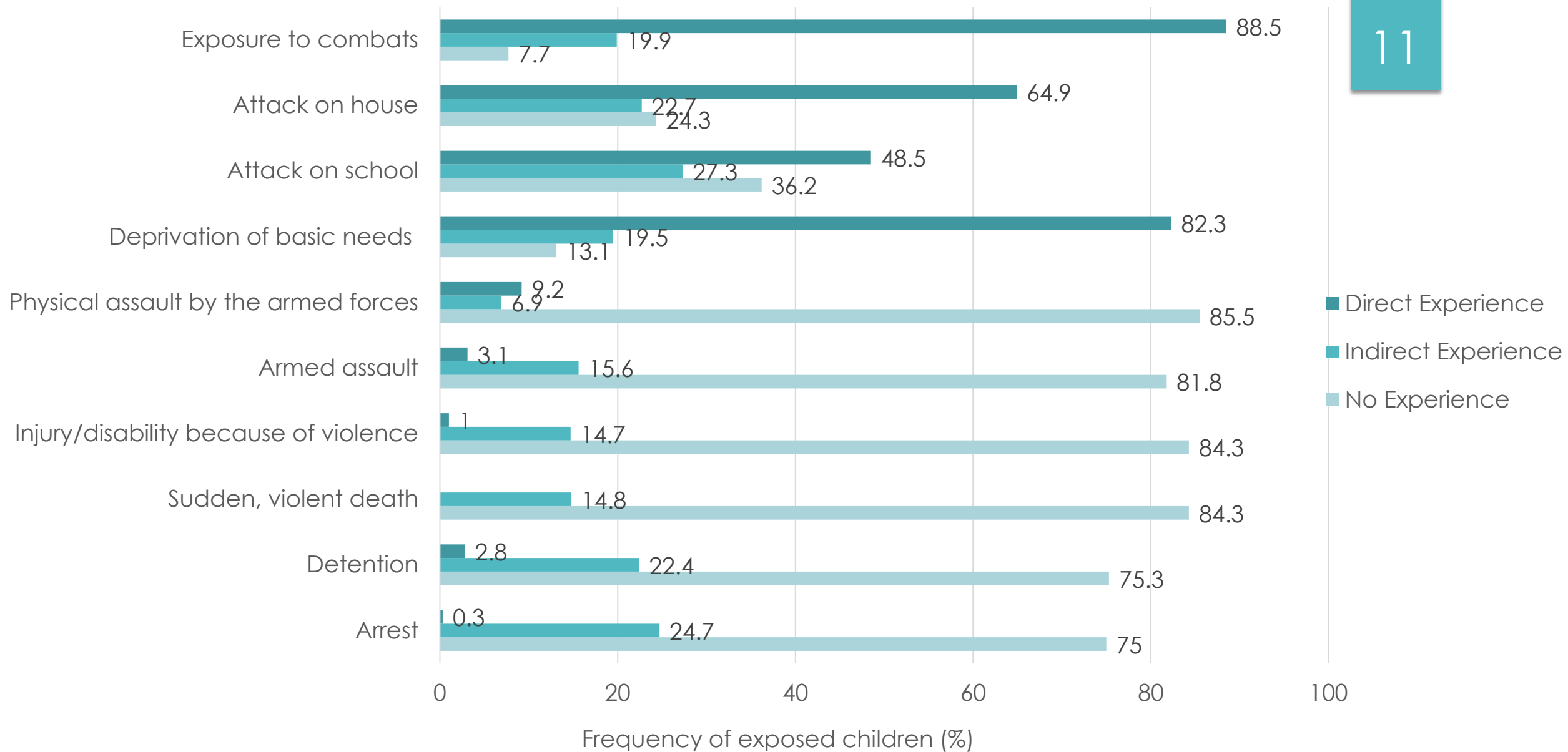
Socioeconomic adversity

- ▶ %48 of the caregivers were illiterate, only 0.8% had university education
- ▶ 95% were unemployed
- ▶ Almost all families were in the extreme poverty
- ▶ Crowded households (average = 7, range = 2-17)
- ▶ High fertility rate (average = 5, range = 1 to 15)

Impact at the individual level: Children and Families

Due to battles and curfews:

- ▶ 78% of children changed their residence at least once (average = 2, range = 0-8)
- ▶ 41% of school age children changed their school at least once (average = 1, range = 0-3)
- ▶ 16% of them could not attend school for a period ranging between 1 and 12 months (average = 8)
- ▶ 21% of children were separated from at least one of their parents
- ▶ 35% of children were separated from close associates (e.g. siblings, friends)



Impact at the individual level

Children and families experience

- ▶ Sharp socioeconomic hardship
- ▶ Exposure to armed conflict experiences
- ▶ Poverty and political violence increase violence in families
- ▶ All linked to psychological problems in children and adolescents

Impact at the wider level: Education

Fall 2015

- ▶ Due to curfews, education was disrupted *
 - ▶ 17 districts of 7 cities
 - ▶ 1,556 schools
 - ▶ 360k students and 17k teachers
- ▶ Teachers in two districts were instructed to leave the region
 - ▶ an SMS from the Ministry of Education
 - ▶ to receive a “training” in the middle of the semester

* Because of the curfews, 2016

Impact at the wider level: The case of Ayşe Teacher

The case of Ayşe Çelik:

A teacher calling in a talk show as an audience from Diyarbakir on January 2016



Her statement:

“What is happening here is misrepresented on television. I cannot really say more, please don't stay silent. Please show more sensitivity as human beings. Don't let people die. Don't let children die. Don't let mothers cry”.

Responses at the wider level: The Case of Ayşe Teacher



- ▶ Ayşe Teacher was charged with terrorist propaganda and sentenced to 15 months in prison.
- ▶ She entered in prison with her 6-month-old baby.
- ▶ After the campaigns and her lawyers' applications, her sentencing was deferred.
- ▶ She was released upon the Constitutional Court's verdict that her freedom of expression was violated.

Impact at the wider level: A community group

- ▶ Colorful Hopes Association
- ▶ A local organization in Sur district of Diyarbakir



Responses at the wider level: A community group

- ▶ Leisure and sport activities
- ▶ Workshops on social equality, peace, ecosystem and environmental issues
- ▶ Talks with “celebrities”
- ▶ Campaigns:
 - ▶ Toy library
 - ▶ Book library
 - ▶ Bikes
- ▶ Mobilizing and training local people and volunteers
- ▶ Research on child labor: Children- not seasonal, all the time!



Impact at the wider level: Academics for Peace



- ▶ January 11, 2016
- ▶ 1,128 pro-peace academic
- ▶ Public petition:
«We will not be a party to this crime!»
- ▶ Calling the government to «prepare the conditions for negotiations and create a road map that would lead to a lasting peace»

Impact at the wider level: Academics for Peace

- ▶ Furious reactions from the government
- ▶ Disciplinary action by university administrations upon the call from the Council of Higher Education
- ▶ Many academics were dismissed or forced to resignation
- ▶ Criminal investigation
- ▶ Jail
- ▶ Public lynch, hate speech, harassment



Impact at the wider level: Academics for Peace

- ▶ Coup attempt in July 2016
- ▶ Emergency state during the following two years
- ▶ «Executive Orders» - not just Gülenist movement
- ▶ 126k exiled from public service and positions
 - ▶ Academics for Peace
 - ▶ Left-wing, union members and representatives
 - ▶ Kurdish groups, teachers, dozens of elected mayors
- ▶ Arrest of co-chairs of pro-Kurdish People's Democratic Party
 - ▶ Journalists, lawyers, Medical Chamber members

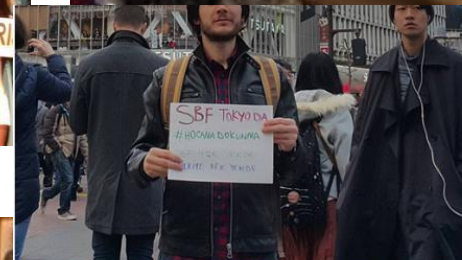


Purge statistics: <https://turkeypurge.com/>

Reality check: *The numbers behind the crackdown, 2018*

Responses at the wider level: Academics for Peace

1,128
to
2,212



POSTS

LIKES

ARCHIVE

afsnet.org

Solidarity - AFS Protests Reprisals Against Turkish Academics for Peace - American Folklore Society >

Resources for folklorists

1 note

...

↻

♥

www7.nationalacademies.org

Solidarity - 28 Nobel Prize Laureates endorse the statement from Executive Committee of the International Human Rights Network of Academies and Scholarly Societies >

...

↻

♥

eua.be

Solidarity - European University Association >

...

↻

♥

ecpr.eu

Solidarity - European Consortium for Political Research >

...

↻

♥

isanet.org

ISA Public Statement Regarding the Persecution of Academics in Turkey > International Studies Association >

...

↻

♥

salsa4.salsalabs.com

Solidarity - Scholars at Risk Network >

...

↻

♥

freedomofexpressiontr.wordpress.com

Solidarity - Letter in support of academics for peace in Turkey (USA) >

...

↻

♥

ancmsp.com

Solidarity - AECSP, AFS, AFSP, ANCMSP et ASES - ANCMSP (France) >

L'ANCMSP renseigne les candidats aux métiers de la science politique sur l'actualité de la discipline, sur les recrutements et sur l'enseignement et la recherche en sciences humaines et sociales.

Association Nationale des Candidats aux Métiers de la Science Politique (ANCMSP)

...

↻

♥

scholarsatrisk.nyu.edu

Solidarity - Coalition of 20 higher education networks and associations >

DÉCLARATION DE SOUTIEN AUX UNIVERSITAIRES SIGNATAIRES DE LA PÉTITION POUR LA PAIX EN TURQUIE

docs.google.com

Open Letter of Support

International solidarity

POSTS

LIKES

ARCHIVE

afsnet.org

Solidarity - AFS Protests Reprisals Against Turkish Academics for Peace - American Folklore Society >

Resources for folklorists

1 note

...

↻

♥

www7.nationalacademies.org

Solidarity - 28 Nobel Prize Laureates endorse the statement from Executive Committee of the International Human Rights Network of Academies and Scholarly Societies >

...

↻

♥

eua.be

Solidarity - European University Association >

ecpr.eu

Solidarity - European Consortium for Political Research >

↻

♥

International solidarity

isanet.org

ISA Public Statement Regarding the Persecution of Academics in Turkey > International Studies Association >

...

↻

♥

salsa4.salsalabs.com

Solidarity - Scholars at Risk Network >

...

↻

♥

Institution and group endorsements

In addition to more than 1,800 academics, including Noam Chomsky, Şeyla Benhabib, Steven Pinker, Judith Butler and Bruce Alberts, the following institutions and groups also support the petition:

Research Institute on Turkey, **Academic Solidarity Network**, Forum Transregionale Studien, **Article 19**, Global Freedom of Expression, **Columbia University**, Academics for Peace – North America, **Academics for Peace – United Kingdom**, California Scholars for Academic Freedom, **PEN International**, National Writers Union - UAW Local 1981/AFL-CIO, **English PEN**, **PEN America** and **Dansk PEN**.

DÉCLARATION DE SOUTIEN AUX UNIVERSITAIRES SIGNATAIRES DE LA PÉTITION POUR LA PAIX EN TURQUIE

docs.google.com

Open Letter of Support

Responses at the wider level: Academics for Peace

Alternative
Schools



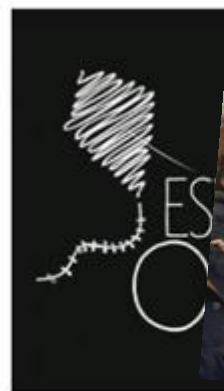
Kocaeli Dayanışma Akademisi (KODA)



KAMPÜSSÜZLER
Kampüssüzler



Ankara Dayanışma Akademisi



Eskişehir Okulu



Response Academi



ABOUT US

NEWS

COURSES

CONFERENCES

PUBLICATIONS

PROJECTS

25

Alternative
Schools



Kocaeli Dayanışma



DR. ALI RIZA GÜNGEN AT KASSEL UNIVERSITY



DR. YÜKSEL TAŞKIN AT LMU MUNICH



DR. ULAŞ BAYRAKTAR AND DR. MEHMET
PENBECIOĞLU AT TU BERLIN

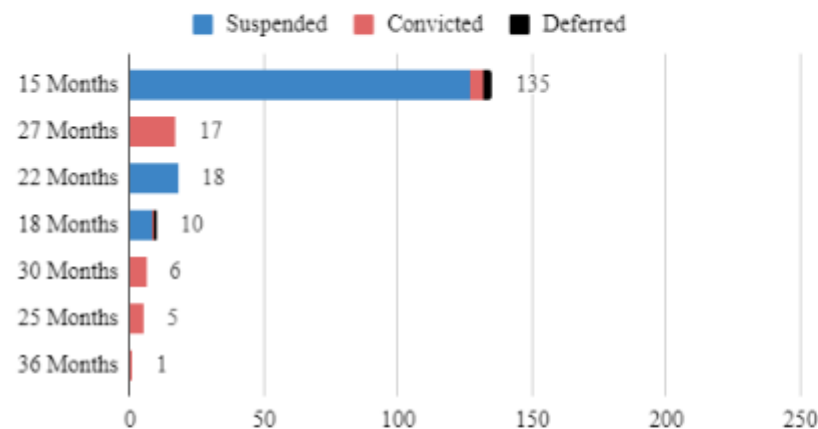


DR. BEDİZ YILMAZ UND DR. CEM ÖZATALAY FOR THE
NEW UNIVERSITY IN EXILE CONSORTIUM

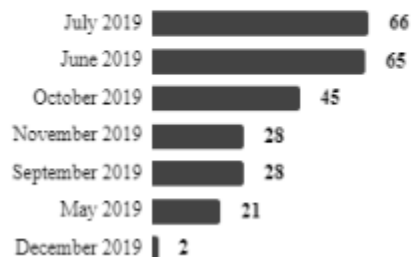


Ankara Dayanışma

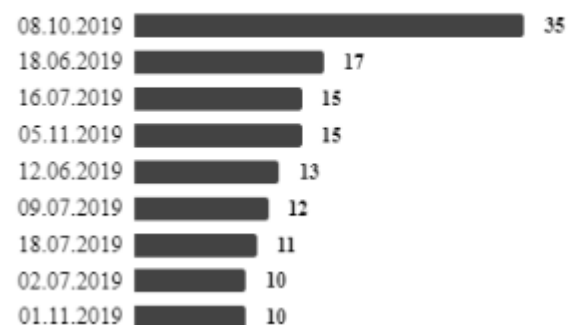
Distribution of Sentences



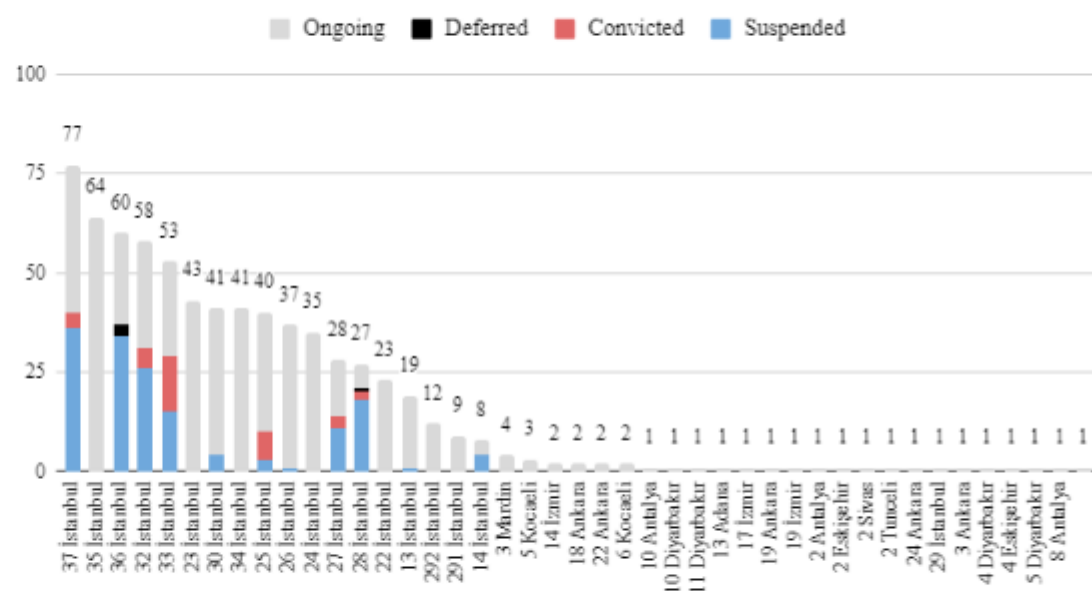
Upcoming Hearings per Month



Busiest Hearing Days



Courts and Cases

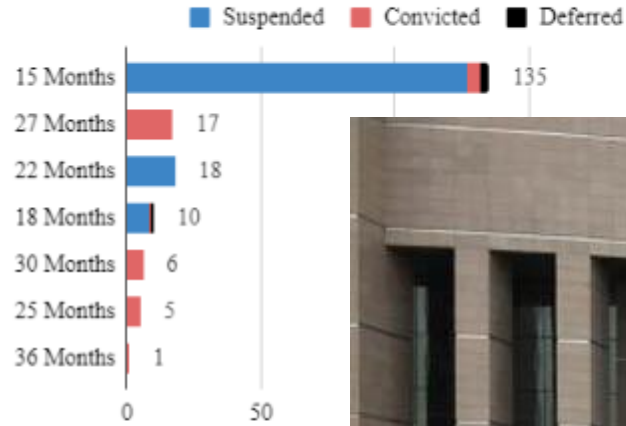


Number of Courts	43	Rejection of Venue	#	Court	Cases Merged
Signatories on Trial	709	25 İstanbul	23	23 İstanbul	15
First Signatories	682	23 İstanbul	22	24 İstanbul	13
Second Signatories	27	30 İstanbul	19	291 İstanbul	8
Statements Taken	369	37 İstanbul	15	33 İstanbul	27
(Prosecutor's) dictum	254	26 İstanbul	14	35 İstanbul	33

Academics for Peace - Hearing Statistics as of 21.05.2019

27

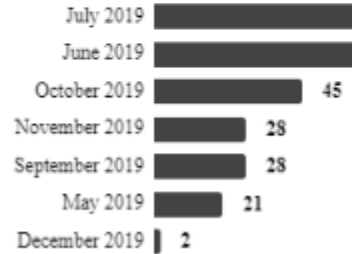
Distribution of Sentences



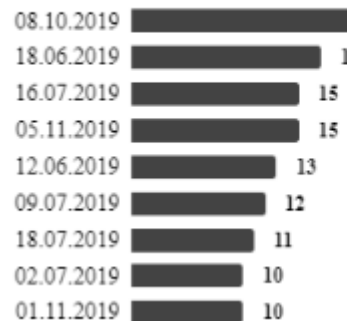
Courts and Cases



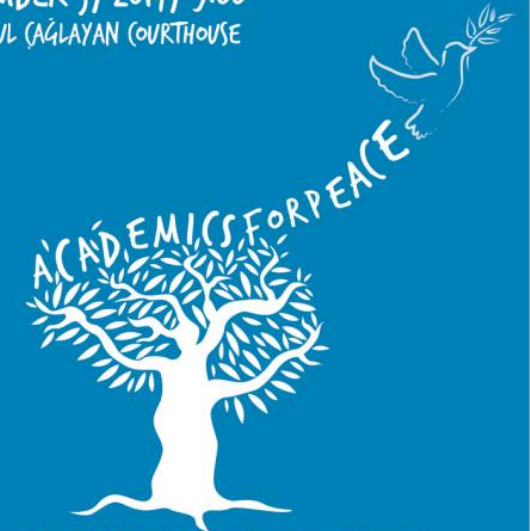
Upcoming Hearings per Month



Busiest Hearing Days



CALL FOR SOLIDARITY
FOR ACADEMICS FOR PEACE #TURKEY
DECEMBER 5, 2017, 9:00
ISTANBUL CAĞLAYAN COURTHOUSE



#HANDSOFFMYCOLLEAGUES
#ACADEMICS4PEACE

@barisakademik
www.barisicinakademisyenler.net

Excerpts from the Hearings...

The Statement of an academic from Marmara University /January 04, 2018

"I'm neither a hero nor an enemy, I'm just a human being with a conscience.

The Statement of an academic from Galatasaray University /December 22, 2017

"The civilian casualties of the conflict period had lead me to deep worries. Even

The Statement of an academic from Marmara University /December 21, 2017

"If the same text would appear in front of me, I wouldn't hesitate to undersign it

The Statement of an academic from Istanbul University /December 7, 2017

"I have spent 16 full years in academia, and I have always wanted to remain in it. My only ideal is to lead a scientist's life and serve the society.

I have undersigned the declaration dated January 11, 2016 solely for this reason. I was watching the events that have occurred in early 2016 with sorrow. I was aware of the applications made to ECHR by the lawyers. I have deeply felt the agony of the wounded people waiting for ambulance, the dead bodies being kept in refrigerators. In the end, I thought it (the declaration) would contribute to the struggle for peace."

Overall

- ▶ Impact at multiple levels of the society
- ▶ Evaluation of the situation from the lens of Resilience

Resilience - definitions...

- ▶ “*Dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity.*” (Luthar et al., 2000)
- ▶ “The ability to withstand and rebound from disruptive life challenges, strengthened and more resourceful.” (Walsh, 1996)
- ▶ “Good outcomes in spite of serious threats to adaptation or development.” (Masten, 2001)
- ▶ “Overcoming adversity, whilst also potentially subtly changing, or even dramatically transforming, (aspects of) that adversity.” (Hart et al., 2016)
 - or, beating the odds and changing the odds

Resilience through...

- ▶ consciousness-raising by working with individuals or groups in relation to the various inequalities they might face.
- ▶ emancipatory learning, adult education and legal rights education.
- ▶ mobilizing communities, neighborhood organization and community development.
- ▶ advocacy work, civic activism or advocating for others can inspire transformation.
- ▶ negotiating, developing and using persuasion skills.
- ▶ lobbying, campaigning and understanding the stages of policy and law-making and, thus, where to focus your effort.
- ▶ co-production, distributing leadership, participatory action research.

RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK

Basics

-  Good Housing
-  Money to live
-  Being safe
-  Transport and getting to places
-  Healthy diet
-  Exercise and fresh air
-  Enough sleep
-  Play and hobbies
-  Not being judged

Belonging

-  Find somewhere you feel like you belong
-  Find your place in the world
-  Spend time with good people and in good places
-  Keep relationships going
-  More healthy relationships the better
-  Take what you can from relationships where there is some hope
-  Get together with people you can rely on
-  Responsibilities & obligations. For example: looking after your brother/sister or going to school
-  Focus on good times and places
-  Understand what has happened in your life
-  Predict a good experience of someone or something new
-  Make friends and mix with other people

Learning

-  Make school or college work as well as possible
-  Engage mentors
-  Plan out your future
-  Organise yourself
-  Highlight achievements
-  Develop life skills

Coping

-  Understand right from wrong
-  Be brave
-  Solving problems
-  Focus on the good things in life. Put on your Positivity Glasses!
-  Find time for your interests
-  Calming down and making yourself feel better
-  Remember tomorrow is another day
-  Lean on others when necessary
-  LOL Have a laugh

Core self

-  Instil a sense of hope
-  Understand other people's feelings
-  Know and understand yourself
-  Take responsibility for yourself
-  Find time for your talents
-  There is existing help and solutions for problems, use them

Noble truths



Accepting



Conserving



Commitment



Enlisting

Blackpool Council

being being
resilience research and practice

NATIONAL
LOTTERY FUNDS

Practice

In the context of Turkish-Kurdish Conflict...

Can you identify the Resilient moves?

How can we use Resilience Framework to build resilience?

- ▶ Individual Level
 - ▶ Children and Families
- ▶ Community Level
 - ▶ Local group: Colorful Hopes
- ▶ Wider System
 - ▶ Academics for Peace

References

34

- ▶ Başer, Z., & Çelik, A. B. (2014). Imagining peace in a conflict environment: Kurdish youths' framing of the Kurdish issue in Turkey. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 48(3), 265-285.
- ▶ *Because of the curfews, 362 thousand students were devoid of education* (2015, December 27), T24. Retrieved from <http://t24.com.tr/haber/sokaga-cikma-yasaklari-sebebiyle-362-milyon-ogrenci-egitimden-mahrum-kaldi,321983>
- ▶ Çayır, K. (2013). Discrimination in the context of intergroup relations. In K. Çayır & M. Ayan Ceyhan (Eds.), *Discrimination: Multi-Dimensional Approaches* (2nd Ed.) (pp. 5-15). Istanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları.
- ▶ Gürsel, S., Uysal, G., & Kökkızıl, S. (2016, 21 April). *Research Brief 16/193: One third of children live in severe material deprivation*. Retrieved from: <https://betam.bahcesehir.edu.tr/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/ResearchBrief193.pdf>
- ▶ Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies (2005). *Research on migration and displaced population in Turkey*. Ankara: İsmat Matbaacılık Yayıncılık.
- ▶ Hart, A., Gagnon, E., Eryigit-Madzwamuse, S., Cameron, J., Aranda, K., Rathbone, A., & Heaver, B. (2016). Uniting resilience research and practice with an inequalities approach. *Sage Open*, 6(4), 1-13.
- ▶ Human Rights Foundation of Turkey (2016, August 21). *Curfews between August 16, 2015-August 16, 2016 and civilians who lost their lives*. Retrieved from <http://en.tihv.org.tr/curfews-between-august-16-2015-august-16-2016-and-civilians-who-lost-their-lives>
- ▶ Human Rights Inquiry Committee of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (2013, February 13). Inquisition report for the violations of right to live due to terrorist incidences and violence. Retrieved from <https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/komisyon/insanhaklari/belge/TER%C3%96R%20VE%20C5%9E%C4%B0DDET%20OLAYLARI%20KAPSAMINDA%20YA%C5%9EAM%20HAKKI%20C4%B0HLALLER%C4%B0N%C4%B0%20C4%B0NCELEME%20RAPORU.pdf>
- ▶ İçduygu, A., Romano, D., & Sirkeci, İ. (1999). The ethnic question in an environment of insecurity: The Kurds in Turkey. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 22(6), 991-1010.
- ▶ International Crisis Group (2018). *Turkey's PKK conflict: A visual Explainer*. Retrieved from: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/content/turkeys-pkk-conflict-visual-explainer#pre2015>
- ▶ Kirişçi, K., & Winrow, G. M. (1997). *The Kurdish question and Turkey: An example of a trans-state ethnic conflict*. London: Frank Cass.
- ▶ Luthar, S. S., Cicchetti, D., & Becker, B. (2000). The construct of resilience: A critical evaluation and guidelines for future work. *Child Development*, 71(3), 543-562.
- ▶ Masten, A. S. (2001). Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development. *American Psychologist*, 56(3), 227-238.
- ▶ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2017, February). *Report on the human rights situation in South-East Turkey July 2015 to December 2016*. Retrieved from http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/TR/OHCHR_South-East_TurkeyReport_10March2017.pdf
- ▶ *Reality check: The numbers behind the crackdown in Turkey* (2018, June 18), BBC. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-44519112>
- ▶ Sirkeci, İ. (2000). Exploring the Kurdish population in the Turkish context. *Genus*, 56(1/2), 149-175.
- ▶ *Teacher Ayşe Çelik released from prison upon Constitutional Court verdict of 'right violation'* (2019, May 10), Bianet. Retrieved from: <https://bianet.org/english/print/208365-teacher-ayse-celik-released-from-prison-upon-constitutional-court-verdict-of-right-violation>
- ▶ *Turkey country profile* (2018, July 10), BBC. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-17988453>
- ▶ Walsh, F. (1996). The concept of family resilience: Crisis and challenge. *Family Process*, 35(3), 261-281.