

Kurdish Monitoring

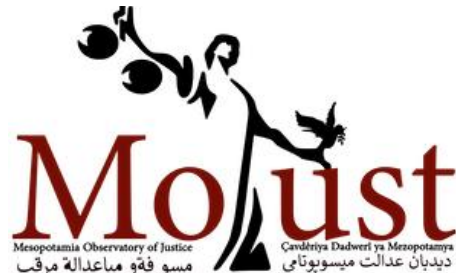
Kurdish Language Rights Monitoring and Reporting Platform

Report on Systematic Violations Against Kurdish Language and Culture in Turkey

2024

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KURDISH MONITORING



About Kurdish Monitoring

Kurdish Monitoring is an independent initiative established to document and monitor systematic violations against Kurdish language and culture in Turkey and to release these violations to the public through regular reports. Based on the principle that linguistic pluralism is a fundamental human right, the platform aims to make visible the obstacles to the use of Kurdish in the public sphere and to conduct data-based advocacy against these violations.

Functioning and Objectives of the Platform

1. Data Collection

Violation records will be kept through open sources (official documents, court decisions, local and national media news).

Field data will be compiled in cooperation with non-governmental organisations (NGOs), lawyers and victims.

2. Reporting

Regular Reports: Comprehensive analyses will be published quarterly, semi-annually and annually.

Information Notes: In cases of urgent violations or important developments, rapid assessment texts will be prepared.

3. Advocacy

The reports will be submitted to national and international human rights organisations.

Awareness campaigns will be conducted among local governments, political parties, and the media.

Target Audience and Collaborations

Civil Society: Human rights organisations, language activists, academics.

Media: Local and national media, independent journalists.

International Organisations: UN Special Rapporteurs, The Council of Europe.

Public Opinion: Kurdish community and all language rights defenders in Turkey, legislative organ.

Final Goal

Kurdish Monitoring advocates for the constitutional assurance of the Kurdish language in Turkey, its use in the public sphere freely and the protection of Kurdish cultural heritage. With the belief that linguistic diversity is the foundation stone of democracy, it carries out a data-based struggle for a future where violations of Kurdish language rights end.

Current Situation of Kurdish Language Rights in Turkey

In Turkey, Kurdish language faces legal and de-facto obstacles.

Right to Education: The right to education in the mother tongue is not recognised in Turkey and is limited to elective courses and the opening of private educational institutions.

Kurdish language teacher appointments remain merely symbolic.

Culture and Arts: Theatre plays, concerts and literary works face arbitrary bans; actors/actresses, singers and writers are targeted.

Media and Communication: Newspapers, magazines, and social media accounts that publish in Kurdish are subjected to censorship and face access bans.

Public Sphere: Kurdish signs or warnings belonging to municipalities are removed, playing Kurdish music and dancing the Halay (Kurdish dance) at weddings is considered a "crime." MPs' speeches in Kurdish in the Parliament are interrupted, and their speeches are recorded as "unknown language" in the parliamentary minutes. Kurdish is prevented in areas like healthcare, the workplace, and other public spaces.

Prisons: Prisoners are prevented from communicating in Kurdish and their letters and books in Kurdish are confiscated. Prisoners who insist on speaking and writing in Kurdish are faced pressure from prison administrations, punished (such as through visitation bans, communication bans, etc.), and their sentences are extended.

These practices contradict international conventions to which Turkey is a party, such as the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Article 27) and the European Convention on Human Rights (Article 10).

An Analysis of the Human Rights Violations Faced by the Kurdish Language and Culture in Turkey in 2024

The General Distribution of Violations

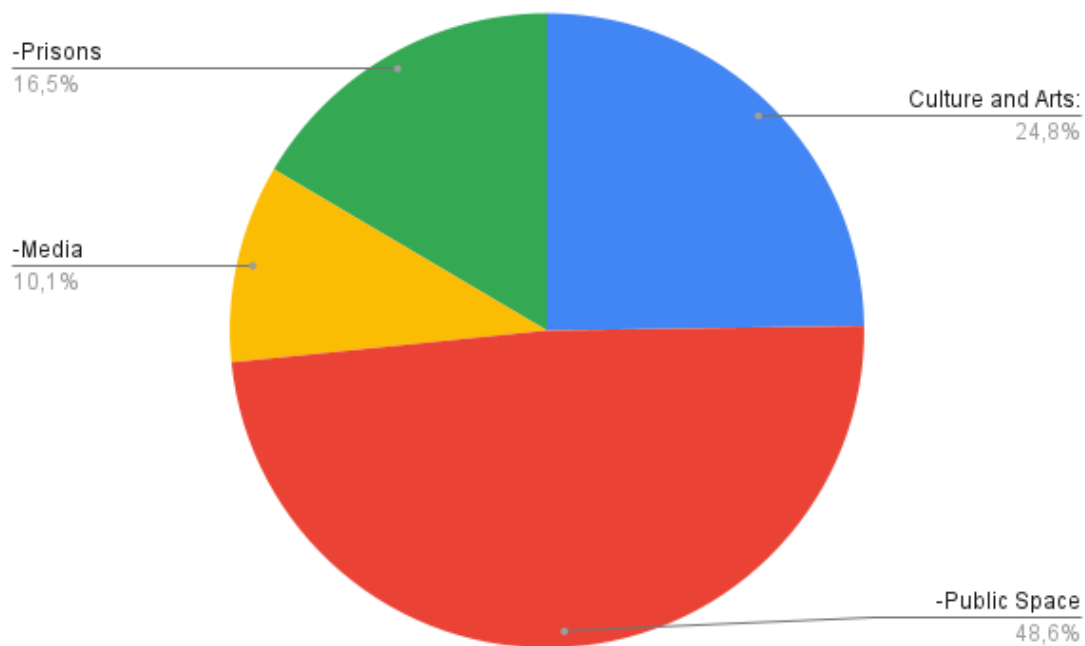
A total of **109 violations** were detected. Distribution according to categories:

-**Culture and Arts:** 27 violations

-**Public Space:** 53 violations

-**Media:** 11 violations

-**Prisons:** 18 violations



(Graphic 1)

Detailed Analysis by Categories

1. Violations in the Field of Culture and Arts (27)

Event Cancellations/Bans:

-The unjustified cancellation of theatre plays, concerts and cultural events in Kurdish by governorships or municipalities (e.g. banning of the theatre play “Qral û Travîs” in 4 different cities, cancellation of 4 concerts of Sasa Serap).

-The closure of social media accounts of actors, singers and writers (e.g. singer Rotinda).

Detentions/Arrests:

-The detention of members of the music group Koma Hevra, musicians Helim Arslan and Azad Bedran.

Investigations and Legal Pressures:

-The investigations against singer Kasım Taşdoğan and director Kazım Öz.

2. Violations in Public Sphere (53)

Parliament and Legal Restrictions:

-The prevention of speaking in Kurdish in the Turkish Grand National Assembly, the refusal of interpreter requests, the rejection of mother tongue education proposals.

-The removal of Kurdish signs and writing “Turkey is Turkish”.

Detentions/Arrests:

-The detention of 375 people and the arrest of 47 due to Kurdish songs/dancing Halay at weddings.

-The dismissal of workers for speaking Kurdish (Bodrum and Istanbul Airport).

Discrimination in Education and Health:

-The reduction of Kurdish language teacher positions to 10.

-The refusal of medical tests for patients who do not speak Turkish (Siirt).

-The continuous pressure on institutions providing Kurdish education, arrest or resignation of teachers.

Hate Crimes:

-The banning of the slogan “Jin, Jiyan, Azadi (Women, Life, Freedom)”, the removal of Kurdish writings.

-The killing of Hakim Lokman from the Kurdistan Region of Iraq for speaking Kurdish.

3. Violations in the Media (11)

Internet and Broadcast Censorship:

- The access restrictions to the Kurdish accounts of Xwebûn Newspaper, Mezopotamya Agency, and Jinnews.

-The closure of social media accounts.

Book and Press Bans:

-The banning of 120 Kurdish books, magazines, and newspapers.

-The banning of writer Rênas Jiyan's Kurdish novel.

4. Violations in Prisons (18):

Communication Restrictions:

-The prohibition of prisoners speaking Kurdish with their families and the confiscation of their letters.

-The interruption of phone calls (for a disabled prisoner in Kayseri).

Penalties and Disciplinary Practices:

-The solitary confinement for prisoners singing in Kurdish (Şakran and Batman Prisons).

-The disciplinary investigation for poems written in Kurdish.

Book/Material Blockages:

-Kurdish books being given in exchange for translation fees, and the confiscation of the Kurdish translations of author Yaşar Kemal's books.

Information Note

The data obtained from open sources reflect only a part of the pressure on the Kurdish language. While a violation against an individual in a prison has been recorded as a single data, this situation applies to everyone in the same prison. It should also be noted that people practice self-censorship by not speaking Kurdish to avoid certain sanctions. Moreover, as seen in the case of 120 books being confiscated within a month, bans and restrictions affect not only publishers and authors but also readers. Banned theatre plays and concerts prevent thousands of people from engaging with Kurdish. The pressures in daily life that do not make it to the media go far beyond the available data. Violations encountered in everyday life —including restrictions on using Kurdish on social media and other platforms, as well as discriminatory and racist expressions against the language— indicate that the actual number of violations is far higher than what is reported in this document.

Systematic Violations Against Kurdish Language and Culture in Turkey in 2024

From Culture to Politics, Prison to Media: An Analysis of a Year

1. Restrictions in the Field of Culture and Arts

January

- The Kurdish theatre play "*Qral û Travîs*" performed by Şano Ar Theatre, founded in Batman, was banned in Ağrı without any justification while its tour was ongoing.

February

- The Kurdish theatre play "*Qral û Travîs*", which was banned in Ağrı in January, was also banned in several other cities in February. The play was banned in Antep on February 10, in Istanbul on February 16, and in Adana on February 18. In Istanbul, the Şişli District Governorate banned the play without providing any justification. The actors were removed from the stage, and the audience was prevented from entering the hall. The actors were forcibly removed from the venue. In front of the Şişli Cemil Candaş Cultural Center, actors and actor Bahoz Özsunar's brother protesting the ban were detained.
- The Bingöl Governorate cancelled the Metin and Kemal Kahraman concert, which was organised by the Bingöl branch of the Education and Science Workers' Union (Eğitim-Sen) for International Mother Language Day on February 21, just two hours before the event, without providing any justification.
- An investigation has been launched against Kurdish singer Kasım Taşdoğan for singing the song "*Serhildan Jiyan e*" at the 2023 Newroz festival in Kars.

March

- The Adana Governorate banned four members of the music group Kolektîfa Rîtmên Azad from performing at the March 8 rally organized by the Adana Women's Platform.

May

- Kurdish singer Sasa Serap's concerts scheduled for May 7 in Kayseri, May 20 in Malatya, May 22 in Mardin, and May 25 in Van were cancelled. The Malatya concert was cancelled with an official letter sent by the governorship to the organisation company. The concerts in Kayseri and Van were cancelled through the verbal notification of the officials calling from the governorship. The Mardin concert, which was planned to be held in the conference hall of a hotel, was cancelled due to "technical failures".
- Singer Kasım Taşdoğan's concert in Dersim was cancelled by the governorate.

September

- Zeynep Doğan, Gencay Morkoç and Yusuf Keleş, members of Kurdish music group Koma Hevra, were detained outside the Mezopotamia Language and Culture Research Association (MED-DER) after making a solidarity visit. It was learned that they were taken to the Provincial Police Department and detained due to the Kurdish songs they sang at a concert in Şêx Sêîd Square (Dağkapı Square) in Diyarbakır.
- Kazım Öz, the director of the films Bahoz and Zer, was summoned to testify due to an investigation launched against him over the release of Zer on YouTube.
- Kurdish singer Rotinda's social media accounts were closed.

October

- Kurdish singers Helim Arslan (Omerî) and Azad Bedran Kızılkar were detained in Diyarbakır. Arslan was detained at his home, while Kızılkar was detained at the airport.
- Although the venue for Kurdish music singer Seyidxan Sevinç's concert in Siirt had been approved following discussions with the Provincial Directorate of National Education, the concert was cancelled by the Governorate just two days before the event. The concert then was moved to the Siirt Bar Association Hall. The artist stated that the organizing company's application for a Turkish-language concert, however, was approved.
- Gencay Morkoç, a member of the Kurdish music group Koma Hevra, was detained and then arrested.
- The Ministry of Culture and Tourism has decided that the film "*Rojbash*", produced by Özkan Küçük and telling the story of a group of Kurdish theatre actors reuniting after 25 years, is "not suitable for commercial circulation".

November

- Rojda Şenses' concert, scheduled for November 17 in Küçükçekmece, Istanbul, was cancelled by the CHP-affiliated Küçükçekmece Municipality on November 8 without any explanation.
- Azad Bedran's concert, scheduled for November 15 at the Muratpaşa Municipality Cultural Center in Antalya at 20.00, was also cancelled on the grounds of "there is another meeting".

- The concerts of Xecê, who sings in Kurdish, in Erzurum on November 16, in Ağrı on November 20, and in Muş on November 21 were cancelled by the venue owners.

December

- The concert of Diljen Roni, who sings in Kurdish, at the Şişli Cemil Candaş City Cultural Center was cancelled by the CHP-affiliated Şişli Municipality on the grounds of "renovation."

- Metin-Kemal Kahraman's concert to be held at the same venue was also cancelled for the same reason.

- Murad Demir's concert on the same date was also cancelled.

2. Restrictions in Public Sphere

January

- On January 3, in Aliağa district of Izmir, a citizen named Ferhat Çelik was subjected to violence by watchmen for listening to Kurdish music. Çelik filed a criminal complaint with the Izmir Chief Public Prosecutor's Office against the watchmen's violence.
- An 80-year-old individual, S.Ç., who came from Van to Istanbul, stated that she was kept waiting for hours at Istanbul Airport because she did not speak Turkish.

February

- During a speech in Kurdish given by DEM Party MP Beritan Güneş Altın on February 21, Mother Language Day, in the General Assembly of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (TBMM), her microphone was turned off. TBMM Deputy Speaker Celal Adan stated that, according to the Constitution, the speech had to be made in Turkish. MP Beritan Güneş Altın, declaring that her right to speak was violated, reacted by saying, "We will never stop speaking Kurdish, defending Kurdish, or defending other languages." At the end of her speech, while using Kurdish expressions again, her microphone was turned off once more.
- The Kurdish posters prepared by DEM Party and DBP for 21 February World Mother Language Day and the local elections were prevented from being hung on billboards by the Van Metropolitan Municipality, which is under trustee administration.

March

- Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu appeared on the "*Yeni Bir Sabah*" program hosted by İsmail Küçükkaya on Halk TV on March 5, 2024. During the broadcast, İmamoğlu said that he was deeply moved by a Kurdish lament he listened from singer Rojda. However, in social media posts and news websites, it was claimed that the lament that had affected İmamoğlu was "a song promoting hostility toward Turks." In reality, the lament sang by Rojda was a famous lament by Dengbêj Şakiro, and the claims were unfounded.
- In the sermon (khutbah) system introduced by the Presidency of Religious Affairs, eight languages are included: Turkish, English, Arabic, German, Italian, French, Russian, and Spanish. However, Kurdish is not included.

April

- DEM Party MP Gülcan Kaçmaz's microphone was muted while she was trying to celebrate the Yazidis' "Çarşema Sor" holiday in Kurdish in the Parliament.

May

- Pîne Cafe, located in the Art Street of Diyarbakır's Yenişehir district, was raided by the police for providing services in Kurdish. The cafe owner, Ramazan Şimşek, who had publicly announced that he would offer services in Kurdish to prevent the language from disappearing, was taken into custody. Şimşek was sentenced to ne exeat and house arrest on the grounds that he had committed the crime of "making propaganda for an illegal organisation" through Kurdish song posts on the cafe's Instagram account.

- The Ministry of National Education allocated only 10 positions for Kurdish language teachers among the 20,000 teachers to be appointed. The Ministry announced that while last year it had appointed 50 Kurdish teachers for the "Living Languages and Dialects" course, this year the number is 10. It was also announced that six of the appointed teachers will be for the "Kurmanci" dialect of Kurdish, while four will be for the "Zazaki" dialect.

- The Presidency of the Parliament did not process a bill demanding constitutional guarantees for education in mother tongue and Kurdish as the language of education on the grounds that it was "contrary to the Constitution".

- During the Mardin Metropolitan Municipality Council meeting, Co-Chair Devrim Demir, who spoke in Kurdish on the occasion of May 15 Kurdish Language Day, was prevented by AKP members of the Assembly.

July

- In Mersin, a group of young people was targeted after sharing a video on their social media accounts showing them performing the halay dance and chanting slogans to the accompaniment of Kurdish songs. Upon the targeting, the Mersin Chief Public Prosecutor's Office launched an investigation into 11 young people seen dancing in the video and issued detention warrants. Following the decision, 9 young people were detained in house raids, while 2 young people could not be found at their residences. Those detained were made to listen to the song "Ölürüm Türkiyem (I would die for you my Turkey)" in the police vehicle. The 9 young people were later arrested and put into prison.

- In Istanbul, 18 people were detained for performing the halay dance to Kurdish songs at weddings held at different times in Bağcılar, Esenyurt, Sultangazi, and Gaziosmanpaşa. After their statements at the prosecutor's office, 11 people were arrested and sent to prison on charges of "making propaganda for an illegal organisation" while seven were released under judicial control.

- In the Doğubayazıt district of Ağrı, police raided a wedding held in a wedding hall. During the raid, the wedding hall owner Ali Boran, musician Şenol Aktar, his brother Onur Aktar, and cameraman Abdullah Kebude were detained. After giving their statements at the Counterterrorism Department (TEM), they were released.
- A total of 6 people including Gökhan Rızaoğlu, Seyyit İbrahim Yardımcı, Okan Sekirden, 2 unidentified people from Doğubayazıt and Mutlucan Sekirden from Istanbul were detained. The detainees were charged with “making propaganda for an illegal organisation” on the grounds that they wore Kurdish national clothes and danced halay to the Kurdish songs at a wedding they had attended about two weeks ago.
- A video of women performing the halay dance at a wedding in the Kurtalan district of Siirt was shared on social media and later targeted by some users. Six women were detained in house raids in Batman and Siirt. 3 sisters were arrested, their mother was sentenced to house arrest. Siirt Governorate made a written statement and said, “On 25.07.2024, it was detected that a video recorded at a wedding hall in Kurtalan district was shared on X social media platform and it was found that it contained propaganda of PKK/KCK Terrorist Organisation.”
- A person named B.S., who was doing his military service in Aydın, was detained at the military recruitment office. B.S. was arrested by the court on the allegation of “making propaganda for an illegal organisation” and sent to prison. It was learned that B.S. was arrested on the grounds of singing Kurdish songs and dancing the halay at his military service celebration before enlisting in the army in Arnavutköy district. It was also reported that another person who participated in the halay dance is being sought by authorities.
- In Hakkari, police detained five people on the grounds of “making terrorist propaganda” through songs and slogans at a wedding. Four of the suspects were taken to the courthouse after interrogation procedures and four of them were arrested by the court, while one suspect was released.

According to a statement by the Human Rights Association (İHD), in the first ten months of 2024, a total of 375 people were detained in Batman, İzmir, Urfa, Mardin, Diyarbakır, Şırnak, Antalya, Mersin, Ağrı, Siirt, Istanbul, Hakkari, Osmaniye, and Balıkesir for performing the halay dance to Kurdish songs and 47 of them were arrested.

- The Kurdish warning signs “Pêşî Peya / Pedestrians First” written by Van Metropolitan Municipality on streets with high pedestrian traffic were removed. In their place, the phrase “Turkey is Turkish, and it will remain Turkish” was written. Subsequently, in cities such as Mardin, Batman,

Diyarbakır, Şırnak and Karakoçan district of Elâzığ, Kurdish warning signs written by municipalities on pedestrian crossings were erased for the same reasons.

- The Diyarbakır Bar Association filed a criminal complaint regarding the removal of Kurdish traffic signs. In a written statement made by the Bar Association, it was stated: "Our Bar Association has filed a criminal complaint against those concerned pursuant to articles 216 and 152/1-a of the Turkish Penal Code due to the insulting and hateful act against the Kurdish language in relation to the defacing of the Kurdish 'Hêdî (Slow)' and 'Pêşî Peya (Pedestrians First)' warning signs written on pedestrian crossings in Diyarbakır". In response to a parliamentary question about the removal of the "Pêşî Peya" warning signs, the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure argued that the Kurdish language does not "comply with the standards".

- DEM Party-affiliated municipal council members' proposal to hang signs in Turkish, Kurdish and Arabic in Karaköprü Municipality "to preserve languages alive" was rejected by AKP and YRP.

- Four members of the music group Koma Özgün, who sang Kurdish songs at a wedding in Hakkari, were arrested on charges of "making illegal organisation propaganda" through the songs "Keça Kurdan" and "Şervano." One member of the group was released under judicial control.

- Kurdish musician Bengîn was sentenced to prison for singing Kurdish songs at the Newroz celebrations held in the Diyadin district of Ağrı on March 25. In the first hearing of the trial, she was sentenced to 1 year in prison on the grounds of "making illegal organisation propaganda" through the songs "Rojbaş", "Milîtano" and "Serhildan Jiyane".

- A Kurdish song was shared on Trabzonspor's official TikTok account. Enis Destan included the Kurdish song in his post. Kurdish rapper Serhado's song Zimane Kurdi (Kurdish language) was used in the post. The post was later removed.

- In the minutes of the Human Rights Commission of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, when Minister of Interior Ali Yerlikaya was discussing the song "Ölürüm Türkiyem (I would die for you my Turkey)", he said, "I am not saddened by the fact that those who constantly say 'Biji Portugal' do not like this song (Biji means 'long live' in Kurdish. He does not want to say Kurdistan and say Portugal instead sarcastically)." The word "Biji" was censored in the minutes.

August

- A private company in Bodrum banned its employees from speaking Kurdish among themselves. Despite this, the young workers insisted on speaking Kurdish with each other. When one of the managers of the company raised the issue again in the Whatsapp group, 12 young workers voluntarily quit their jobs and returned to their hometowns. Due to their resignation, the young people were underpaid. The young workers announced that they would file a complaint against the company.

- Mehmet Kalkan and Fatih Aydın, who were employees at the company HD İskender at Istanbul Airport, were subjected to mobbing for speaking Kurdish. Later, the workers were dismissed on the grounds of a fire in the fryer.
- Hivda Kahraman, one of the 5 people detained in Osmaniye for dancing the halay to Kurdish music at a wedding, was arrested.
- Lawyer Bermal Yildeniz, who completed his internship at Diyarbakır Bar Association and took his oath in Kurdish as well as Turkish, was targeted. Yildeniz shared a video of him taking the oath in Kurdish with the note “Pêşiyê Zimanê Kurdî (Kurdish First)”. Yildeniz was subjected to attacks on social media after the post.
- The Ministry of Defence responded to a parliamentary question on whether services are provided in Kurdish by stating that “The state of Turkey is indivisible with its country and nation. Its language is Turkish”.
- Cemal Güzel, one of the 3 construction workers detained while listening to Kurdish music in a park in Altıeylül district of Balıkesir, was arrested on charges of “making propaganda of an illegal organisation” and “resisting the police”.

September

- The police raided the Mesopotamia Language and Culture Research Association (MED-DER) and the bookshop Payîz Pirtûk. After searching for 3 hours, the police confiscated Kurdish language education books, magazines and hard discs.
- The Anka Language and Art Education Cooperative, which organises multilingual education workshops in Diyarbakır, was also raided. Rıfat Roni, former co-chair of MED-DER, was arrested.
- Hakim Lokman, a citizen of Kurdistan Region of Iraq, was stabbed in the heart in Istanbul, allegedly for speaking Kurdish. The incident occurred in Aksaray. 45-year-old Lokman's cousin Ramazan Muhammed said that “they did not know the exact cause of the fight, but Lokman was attacked by 12 people”.
- Fatma Sümeli, who went to the hospital in Siirt due to hearing problems, was denied examination on the grounds that her "SRT values could not be measured because she did not know Turkish." At the Siirt Training and Research Hospital's Ear, Nose, and Throat Clinic, the "Speech Reception Threshold (SRT)" test could not be conducted due to her inability to speak Turkish. The doctor conducting the examination noted on the test document, "The patient's SRT values could not be measured because she does not know Turkish". The doctor recommended that Sümeli be taken to a different hospital.
- KAMİAD Deputy President Nedim Şimşek spoke in Kurdish to the Rudaw television channel about the issues faced by Kurdish contractors. Following this,

he was referred to the disciplinary committee and suspended from his position until the process was concluded. KAMİAD President Ali Adıgüzel referred to Rudaw as a "so-called broadcasting organisation".

- The trial of 15 people who were charged for dancing halay to Kurdish songs during the DEM Party Dêrsim Provincial Organisation's primary elections for co-mayor candidates continued.

October

- The slogan "Jin, Jiyan, Azadi (Women, Life, Freedom)" was banned in Diyarbakır.
- The DEM Party's demand for Kurdish interpreter staff in the Parliament was rejected with the votes of the AKP and MHP.
- In the case filed against members of Religious Scholars Assistance and Solidarity Association (DİAYDER) for delivering sermons in Kurdish, 12 people were sentenced to 6 years and 3 months in prison, while 4 others received 7 years and 6 months imprisonment. Six people were acquitted in the trial.
- During the press declaration organised by women's NGOs in Sivas to protest recent femicides, a Kurdish banner reading "Jin, Jiyan, Azadî (Women, Life, Freedom)" was also displayed. People around reacted to the Kurdish banner.

November

- In the justification of the sentence given to Eyyüp Subaşı, former co-chair of the Kurdish Research Association, for "membership in an illegal organisation", telephone conversations with those who want to learn Kurdish were considered a crime.
- The DEM Party's proposal for providing Kurdish services on airplanes and free internet access to homes was rejected with the votes of the AKP and MHP.
- The trustee appointed to Batman Municipality removed the sign reading "Komplexa werzîşê ya jinê (Women's Sports Complex)" in Kurdish, which had been placed during the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) period in 2015.
- DEM Party's MP Burcugül Çubuk's microphone was switched off at the parliamentary podium when she wanted to play a Kurdish song performed by Devrim Demir, Co-Mayor of Mardin Metropolitan Municipality, who was replaced by a trustee.
- A trustee has been appointed to the Bahçeşaray Municipality, which was under DEM Party administration. The trustee removed the Kurdish signs and banners that had been put up by the DEM Party-led municipality

- During the discussions of the 2025 Central Government Budget Law Proposal at the Parliamentary Plan and Budget Commission, DEM Party made a motion to allow citizens to receive health services in Kurdish, but the motion was rejected.
- Teachers of the “Beybûn Multilingual Nursery” opened by Batman Municipality on 15 October decided not to work with the trustee after the appointment of a trustee to the municipality. Families also did not send their children to the nursery after the trustee decision.
- A lawyer registered to Istanbul Bar Association filed a complaint to the Bar Association administration for messages written in Kurdish in the WhatsApp group of the Philosophy and Sociology of Law Commission, a sub-commission of the Bar Association. The lawyer announced the matter on his social media account.

December

- In the Çan district of Çanakkale, Kurdish songs were played at the wedding of a family from Ağrı. A racist group intervened the wedding, cut off the electricity, and beat a young man.
- Celal Adan, Deputy Speaker of the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), who chaired the General Assembly of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey during the budget negotiations, allowed DEM Party Şırnak MP Ayşegül Doğan to greet in Kurdish. However, Kurdish expressions were not recorded in the minutes. As in previous practices, a note was made at the end of the minutes regarding the Kurdish parts of the speech: “In this part, non-Turkish words were expressed by the speaker”.
- During DEM Party MP Zeynep Oduncu's speech in Kurdish in the General Assembly of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, her microphone was switched off. Oduncu first said the words “No to war, peace now” in English. When she said the same phrase in Kurdish, her microphone was switched off by Bekir Bozdağ, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament.
- At Harran University, a student who played the guitar and sang Kurdish songs at the Göl Café run by the rectorate was prevented by the university administration. When the student started to play the guitar and sing in Kurdish, the security guards instructed the café management to turn on loud Turkish music. The student reacted against the prevention of singing in Kurdish, however, he was threatened by the security guards. Students who asked about the reason for the Kurdish ban were told, “When Kurdish songs are sung, fights break out”.

3. Restrictions on the Media

January

- Erzurum 2nd Criminal Judicature of Peace imposed an access ban on the website of the Kurdish-language newspaper Xwebûn.

February

- Kurdish “@JinnewsKurmanci” account of JINNEWS was blocked.

March

- Erzurum 1st Criminal Judicature of Peace censored Mezopotamya Agency's website “mezopotamyaajansi35.com” on 12 March, World Day Against Cyber-Censorship.

July

- Jinnews' Kurdish account on the X platform was blocked. The agency's previous accounts @JinNewsKurdi, @JinnewsKurdi, @JinnewsKurmanci and @KurdiJinnews had been blocked before. With this closure, the Kurdish accounts of the agency were blocked for the 5th time.
- Mezopotamya Agency's (MA) domain name “mezopotamyaajansi.net” was blocked by the Gümüşhane Criminal Judicature of Peace.

August

- Mezopotamya Agency's (MA) domain name “mezopotamyaajansi38.com” was blocked by Eskişehir Criminal Judicature of Peace.

September

- The website of the Kurdish weekly newspaper Xwebûn was blocked. According to the decision on the website of the Information and Communication Technologies Authority (BİK), the website “www.xwebun.org” was banned from access by the Adana 5th Criminal Judicature of Peace.

December

- In December, 120 books, magazines and newspapers in Kurdish or related to Kurds were banned in Turkey. Most of the banned newspapers, books and magazines were published by Kurdish publishing houses.

- At the 8th Diyarbakır Book Fair, two Turkish books were banned, as well as a Kurdish book titled "Dildarê Serkeftinê" written by Mahmut Aba and published by Aram Publishing.
- Diyarbakır 4th Criminal Court of Peace banned Kurdish writer and poet Rênas Jiyan's Kurdish novel "Kavirên Anarchist".
- Mezopotamya Agency's (MA) domain name "mezopotamyaajansi40.com" was banned from access with the decision of Bitlis Criminal Judicature of Peace dated 27 December 2024 and numbered 2024/2618 on the grounds of "protection of national security and public order". *NuJINHA's accounts on X platform were banned from access by Kocaeli 1st Criminal Judicature of Peace.

4. Restrictions in Prisons

January

- The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) invited the Turkish Government to submit its defence in the case of Aziz Yalçın v. Turkey concerning the ban on a prisoner speaking Kurdish with his family.

March

- Prisoners in Afyon T Type Prison announced that the prison administration intervened in those who listen to music in Kurdish. In their statement, the prisoners said, "They intervened in our radios by saying, 'You are listening to Kurdish songs, do not switch on Kurdish songs'. We complained about this situation. This is an attack on our language. They tell us 'Do not listen to Kurdish songs and Kurdish news'. The Kurdish letters we send and receive are confiscated. Again, they claim 'there is no interpreter, that's why we don't give them to you' as a justification."

- F. Y., M. R. A., F. A., M. M. S. and M.A., who applied to İHD by letter from Tekirdağ F Type Prison No 2, stated that there is a book restriction, that they are prevented from getting books especially in Kurdish, that they are asked to pay for an translator to translate the books, and that they are not given letters and writings written in Kurdish.

May

- A. İkbâl, who met with a lawyer in Kırşehir High Security Closed Prison, stated that no one from his family lived in Turkey, that he had no contact with anyone, that he could not hear anyone's voice even on the phone, and that he was insulted by the officials because he spoke Kurdish.

- In the same prison, H. A stated that he was asked to pay for translation of his Kurdish books.

July

- O.Ç. from Edirne L Type Prison made an application to Human Rights Association (İHD) and stated that they used to play Turkish-Kurdish games in the ward, but disciplinary proceedings were initiated against them because of the Kurdish expressions they wrote on a piece of paper while playing games.

- Families were forced to "speak in Turkish" during open visits in Erzincan L Type Closed Prison. The family of Nihat İşnâz, who was arrested after being detained in Van in 2015, was forced to "speak in Turkish" during an open visit. According to the father Muzaffer İşnâz, when they were speaking Kurdish in the visitation hall, the guards warned them to "speak in Turkish". İşnâz responded by saying that he

did not speak Turkish. Then a quarrel broke out between the prisoner Nihat İřnaz and the guard. It is learnt that Nihat İřnaz was given a one-month visit ban because of this argument.

August

- řırnak Bar Association Human Rights Commission member lawyer Fadıl Tay, who met with prisoners in řırnak T Type Closed Prison, stated that prisoners were banned from speaking Kurdish with their families during phone calls after the change of the prison director. Tay said: The prisoners stated that the prison director told them “You will not speak Kurdish with your families during phone calls”.
- A Kurdish book draft written by musician Erkan Benli, who is a prisoner in Giresun Espiye L Type Closed Prison, and Yařar Kemal's books translated into Kurdish were seized.
- Medine Kaymaz's telephone conversation with her convicted son Bayram Kaymaz in Tekirdağ F Type Closed Prison was cut off because she spoke Kurdish.
- In řakran Women's Closed Prison, 31 prisoners were sentenced to a one-month communication and visit ban for singing and chanting slogans in Kurdish.
- In Bafra T Type Prison, prisoners Enes İlgen and Serdar Bařaran were sentenced to 11 days in solitary confinement for Kurdish poems and songs in their notebooks.

September

- 15 prisoners in Batman T Type Prison were sentenced to solitary confinement for 15 days on the grounds that they sang Kurdish songs.
- “Many Turkish and Kurdish books, etc. sent to us from outside are either confiscated without a court order or not given to us for months under the name of ‘control’,” said E. O., who reached İHD by letter from Tekirdağ F Type Prison No 1.

November

- In Kayseri Prison, the phone call of 90% disabled prisoner řaban Kaygusuz, who was placed in a solitary cell one week ago, was cut off on the grounds that he was speaking in Kurdish.

December

- Detainees and convicts in Adana Suluca High Security Closed Prison stated that they were subjected to oral searches, social activities were prevented, and they were not allowed to chat in Kurdish.

- In Kırşehir Prison, a petition was required to speak any language other than Turkish.
- In the violation report of the Association of Lawyers for Freedom for 2024, it was stated that many applications were made to them from many prisons throughout the year regarding the Kurdish language barrier. According to the report, Kurdish prisoners stated that they were not given Kurdish books, that they were asked to pay for an translator for Kurdish books, that the book limitation was set as 7 books in general and they had the right to change books every 2 months, that they were prevented from sending letters in Kurdish, that letters and writings written in Kurdish were not sent on the grounds that there was no translator in the letter reading commission and in the prison, that harassment and insults increased when they played the saz (a musical instrument) and sang Kurdish songs.

***Sources:** *The data in this report is based on open data sources, media and monthly and annual reports of non-governmental organisations.*