



This project is co-financed by the European Union.

Report on Improving, Empowering, and Accessing Justice for Children's Rights



acar

Accountability for Children
Advocacy for Rights
Çocuklar İçin Hesap Verebilirlik
Haklar İçin Savunuculuk

unicef 
for every child

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ABBREVIATIONS

CAT	UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
COE	Council of Europe
CPT	Convention for the Prevention of Torture
CRC	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
EU	European Union
HRC	Human Rights Committee
ICCPR	UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
LPPD	Law on the Protection of Personal Data of Türkiye
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

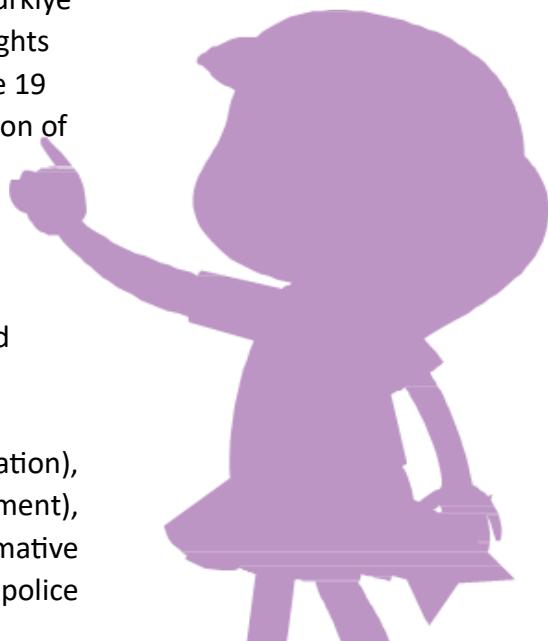
1. INTRODUCTION

The Baran Tursun Foundation is an institution dedicated to monitoring, reporting, and advocacy in the field of human rights violations, particularly those stemming from law enforcement practices. The Foundation identifies ill-treatment, violence, and violations of the right to life against children and adolescents, whether in their daily lives or in contexts where they are deprived of liberty, as a fundamental human rights concern and conducts systematic monitoring activities in this area. Its work prioritises safeguarding the well-being of children, ensuring their access to justice, and strengthening accountability mechanisms.

This study, prepared within the framework of the ACAR Project, which is implemented by UNICEF and co-funded by the EU, aims to enhance knowledge and build monitoring capacity regarding the protection of children's and adolescents' fundamental rights, including the right to life, access to justice, and protection from ill-treatment. For this purpose, standardized data were collected, evidence-based analyses were conducted, and findings were reported in line with international child protection standards.

The findings generated through the monitoring activities have been analysed in the light of the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) to which Türkiye is a State Party, as well as other international human rights norms. In particular, Article 6 on the right to life, Article 19 on protection from violence, Article 37 on the protection of children deprived of liberty, together with General Comment No. 10 on children's rights in juvenile justice and the Committee's Concluding Observations on Türkiye, have served as the principal points of reference in aligning the identified rights and violations with international standards. In addition, the Punishment (CAT), particularly Article 2 (obligation to prevent), Article 12 (prompt and impartial investigation), and Article 16 (prohibition of other forms of ill-treatment), were taken into account as complementary normative grounds in evaluating violations concerning children in police custody and within the criminal justice system.

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provisions of the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Moreover, the International UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), in particular Articles 6 and 7, the UN Convention against Torture (CAT), the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), in particular Articles 2, 3, 6 and 13, the Council of Europe (CoE) Convention for the Prevention of Torture (CPT), and the CoE Guidelines on Child Friendly Justice of 2010 set out the international obligations to which Türkiye is bound.

At the national level, the Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye provides the binding framework. Article 17 safeguards the right to life and the protection of physical and moral integrity. Article 41 places the obligation on the State to take the necessary measures for the protection of children. Article 90, paragraph 5 establishes the precedence of international treaties concerning fundamental rights and freedoms in cases of conflict with national legislation.

This legal and normative framework has guided the assessment of the findings obtained under the ACAR Project, Civil Society Cooperation Programme, against both national and international standards and has formed the basis for the policy recommendations and proposals set out in this report. The project has contributed to making existing violations visible and has also provided a concrete reference point for strengthening child protection, reinforcing law enforcement accountability, and ensuring access to justice in line with Türkiye's international obligations.

2. BACKGROUND

There are several factors that place children and adolescents at risk of human rights violations in their encounters with law enforcement officials. First, the legal and institutional framework for protecting the rights of children and adolescents remains insufficient in both legislation and practice. Gaps in the identification and punishment of perpetrators, limitations in impartiality and effectiveness of investigations and prosecutions, and weaknesses in administrative oversight constitute the main problem areas. These concerns were also highlighted in the 2023 Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, which urged Türkiye to strengthen the child justice system, ensure that deprivation of liberty is used only as a measure of last resort, and to investigate allegations of ill-treatment by law enforcement officials in an independent manner (CRC/C/TUR/CO/4-5).

The Law on Internal Security No. 6638, enacted in 2015, has significantly expanded the powers of law enforcement in the use of force. Abstract concepts contained in the law, such as "foreseeability," "reasonable suspicion," and "discretion," are open to varying interpretations by individual law enforcement officers in practice. This has blurred the boundaries of permissible use of force and, in some cases, led to practices incompatible with international human rights standards. Field observations and monitoring activities have documented that, as a direct consequence of this lack of clarity, the right to life of individuals, including women and children, has been violated. These findings demonstrate the urgent need to strengthen accountability mechanisms and establish clear, reviewable safeguards for the use of force by law enforcement officials, grounded in the principles of proportionality and necessity.

A further consequence of the failure to apply the principles of proportionality and necessity in line with international human rights standards has been the exposure of children who pose no threat or engage in no act of violence to disproportionate interventions by law enforcement in their daily lives. Incidents of ill-treatment and violence have been reported in the streets, in parks, on the way to school, and even in homes, including against children in their mothers' arms. In some cases, these incidents have resulted in violations of the right to life. The concluding observations of the UN Human Rights Committee in 2024, in particular with regard to the protection of the right to life under Article 6 and the prohibition of torture and ill-treatment under Article 7, expressed concern over the proportional use of force by law enforcement officials and the lack of accountability (CCPR/C/TUR/CO/2).

It is observed that families seeking justice often face additional or counter lawsuits, further hindering their access to effective remedies. It has also been noted that rights violations vary geographically at the national level, with a concentration of cases in certain regions. The 2024 Concluding Observations of the UN Committee against Torture similarly drew attention to the absence of effective, prompt, independent, and impartial investigations into allegations of torture and ill-treatment and noted that the perception of impunity has become entrenched at the societal level (CAT/C/TUR/CO/5).



International and national observations indicate that structural problems persist, including the disproportionate use of force by law enforcement personnel, the failure to collect evidence independently, and the limited availability of reliable reporting and application mechanisms.

In its 2024 Concluding Observations, the Committee against Torture stressed that allegations of ill-treatment are not investigated effectively, promptly, independently, or impartially. It underscored the absence of independent mechanisms to investigate allegations against law enforcement officials, the persistence of an environment of impunity, and the tendency for allegations of excessive use of force and ill-treatment to result in minor criminal sanctions.

In conclusion, when assessed against Türkiye's obligations under the international treaties to which it is a party, as well as the provisions of its Constitution, the findings indicate that strengthening protective mechanisms for children, ensuring accountability of law enforcement officials, and safeguarding the right of children to access justice are urgent requirements.

3. PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Purpose

The Project aims to contribute to the prevention of violence, discrimination, and breaches of the right to life faced by vulnerable children and adolescents, both in the community and in the context of deprivation of liberty. Particular attention is given to the situations involving disproportionate use of force by law enforcement officials. The Project further seeks to strengthen the development, implementation, and protection of children's rights practices in line with international standards.

3.2 Target Group

The primary target group of this study is children and adolescents who come into contact with law enforcement and are at risk of violence, discrimination, both in the community and in the context of deprivation of liberty, where disproportionate use of force by law enforcement may occur. The indirect target group comprises institutions, professionals, and stakeholders whose engagement can support the protection, well-being, and participation of children and adolescents.

3.3 Method

The study was designed and conducted in accordance with international norms and standards for child protection and human rights. Data collection involved a combination of face-to-face and online interviews with children and adolescents, conducted in accordance with the ethical approval process and safeguarding principles. The methodology included compiling background information, generating evidence, analyzing findings, and presenting results through measurement, classification, visualization, and reporting. Focus group discussions, with the active participation of children, were also employed as a core tool to ensure child perspectives were reflected in the study.

3.4 Monitoring Tools and Participation

One of the central components of the Project was to ensure the meaningful participation of children and adolescents in monitoring, data collection, database development, and reporting. Through their engagement, the project aimed to support children's self-confidence, strengthen their understanding of protection and participation rights, raise awareness of risks such as violence and discrimination, and enhance their capacity to advocate for their own rights.

3.5 Thematic Scope

The study focused on key themes relating to children's rights, including violence, discrimination, right to life, barriers to accessing justice, and gender-based inequalities. Within this framework, monitoring activities examined cases in which children and adolescents were exposed to rights violations arising from law enforcement interventions, both in community settings and in the context of deprivation of liberty. The data collected through short-term monitoring activities were compiled, analyzed, and presented using visual and statistical tools in line with international reporting standards.

3.6 Geographic Scope

The monitoring activities were conducted across the entire territory of Türkiye. While cases were recorded nationwide, findings indicated that violations of the right to life were particularly concentrated in the Eastern Anatolia and Southeastern Anatolia regions. Within these areas, a higher number of cases were documented in provinces such as Diyarbakır, Şırnak, and Van. The findings reveal that children and adolescents living in these regions are at higher risk of being exposed to rights violations in the context of law enforcement interventions.

3.7 Chronological Scope

The monitoring encompasses cases from 2007 to 2024. Trends over time were analyzed, with particular attention to fluctuations in the number of reported cases. These trends were considered in relation to Türkiye's broader sociological and political context in order to understand potential contributing factors. Data collected through the monitoring activities indicated that the highest concentration of cases was recorded in 2015, particularly in Diyarbakır and surrounding provinces.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 General Approach

The study employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. A comprehensive literature review was conducted, including an assessment of relevant published reports. Primary data were collected through surveys and focus group discussions with children aged 15-19. The focus group discussions were designed for 8-10 children, while survey interviews engaged 15-20 children. In total, focus group discussions were conducted with 20 children, and survey interviews with 30-40 children in İzmir and Diyarbakır.

In order to enhance the participation of children, outreach was conducted through CSOs, Bar Associations, and relevant institutions to encourage engagement and facilitate children's safe involvement in the activities.

4.2 Ethical Considerations

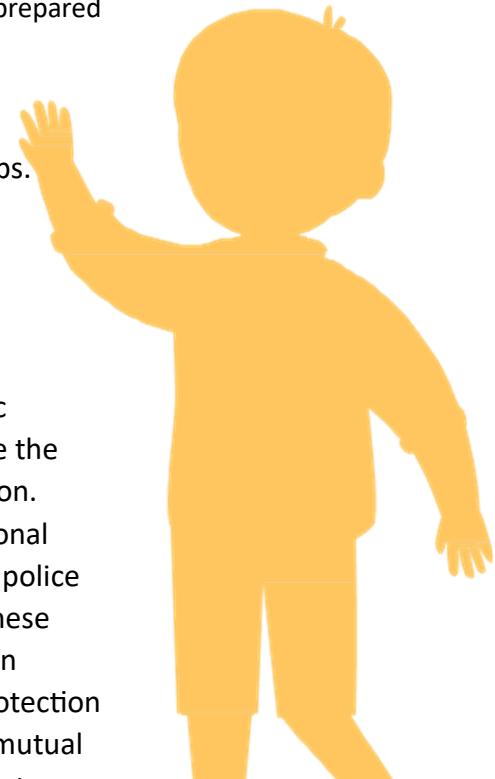
All project activities were implemented in accordance with the Baran Tursun Foundation's child protection policy and international child rights standards. Staff members who directly engage with children participated in preparatory meetings with experienced NGOs in the field of children's rights, enabling them to draw upon existing knowledge and best practices. No personal data was requested from participants during project activities, except for the signatures provided on the information and consent form prepared by the Baran Tursun Foundation in compliance with the Law on the Protection of Personal Data (KVKK).

In accordance with the best interests of the children, parental consent was obtained for all children participating in the workshops.

4.3 Risk Factors

Engagement in child rights monitoring and advocacy, especially in relation to fundamental human rights, carries inherent risks. Institutions and individuals documenting violations involving public officials may encounter obstacles in the field, which can complicate the process of gathering evidence and producing reliable documentation. Given the sensitivity of the issues addressed at both local and national levels, the project team held face-to-face meetings with provincial police departments and other relevant government authorities. During these meetings, the overall objectives of the Project and the Baran Tursun Foundation's commitment to advancing social benefit and child protection were explained. The purpose of these engagements was to foster mutual understanding, mitigate potential risks during fieldwork, and promote constructive dialogue with key stakeholders.

Institutions and individuals documenting violations involving public officials may encounter obstacles in the field, which can complicate the process of gathering evidence and producing reliable documentation.



5. FACTS & SURVEYS ANALYSIS & MEASUREMENTS

5.1 Ethical Approval

Ethical approval for conducting face-to-face studies with children and adolescents was obtained through the scientific research of Prof. Dr. İbrahim Aziz Yağan, Faculty of Education at Dicle University, Ziya Gökalp. The approval was granted by the Ethics Committee for Social and Human Sciences of Dicle University, as documented in its decision dated 12 February 2025 (Report No: E-12679147-663.05-870739).

5.2 Surveys

The survey component of the study was designed to generate preliminary evidence on children's and adolescents' experiences with law enforcement interventions, their perceptions of violence and ill-treatment, and their level of awareness regarding access to justice and legal aid mechanisms.

The Baran Tursun Foundation places particular attention on the disproportionate use of force by law enforcement, violations of the right to life, and access to justice. In this context, workshops were organized drawing on existing data, and surveys were conducted with children and adolescents to gather insights.

The survey does represent the entire country, but was conducted in two provinces, İzmir and Diyarbakır, to provide a preliminary understanding of the topic. In İzmir, surveys were administered to 20 children and adolescents during a workshop held on 9 March 2025, and in Diyarbakır to 21 children and adolescents during the workshop held on 22 March 2025

The question relating to violence and maltreatment was developed based on children's own definitions of psychological and physical violence.

These included experiences such as slapping, pushing, baton strikes, insults, swearing, intimidation, threats, unnecessary body searches,

90% of the children reported an increased awareness of legal aid mechanisms.



prolonged waiting times, and other forms of harsh interventions. Following the surveys, lawyers from bar associations conducted awareness-raising activities on children's rights and the availability of legal aid. As a result, 90% of the children reported an increased awareness of legal aid mechanisms. This survey strengthened children's understanding of the rights violations, their perceptions of maltreatment, their knowledge of access to justice, and their awareness of available legal remedies.

The survey also explored which institutions children, or their families, would approach in cases of violence. The most frequently mentioned institutions were police stations, prosecutors' offices, bar associations, and district governors' offices, where complaints could be filed.

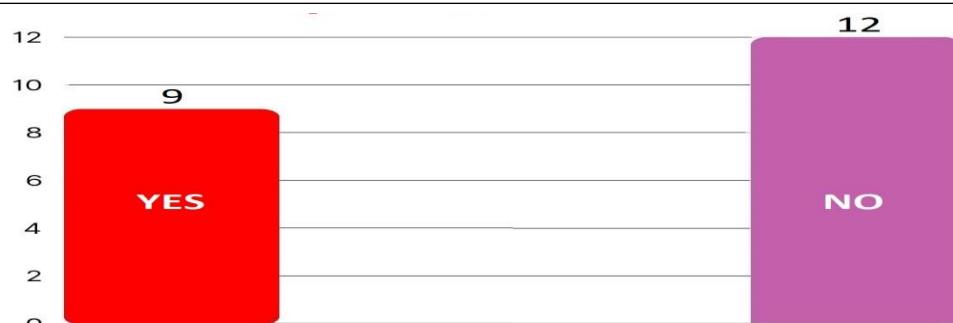
5.3 Data Analysis



MALTREATMENT DISTRIBUTION BY PROVINCE

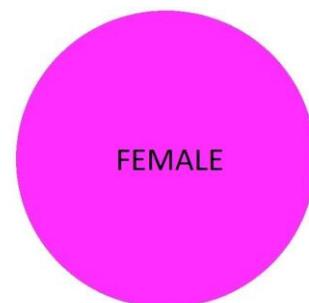
The survey involved 21 children and adolescents from Diyarbakır and 20 from İzmir. The findings indicated that reported cases of exposure to law enforcement abuse were more frequently observed among participants in Diyarbakır. The geographic, cultural, and political context of the region appears to influence the prevalence of such incidents. These observations highlight the need for further, in-depth research to better understand the underlying factors and to inform appropriate policy responses.

5.4 Diyarbakır Province Findings & Measurements



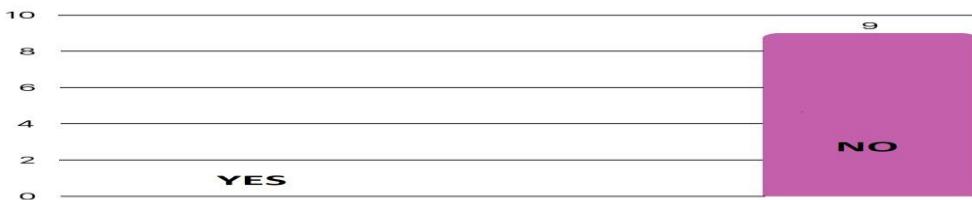
BEING MIS TREATED BY LAW ENFORCEMENT

It was observed that 9 of the 21 children and adolescents who participated in the Diyarbakır workshop reported experiencing ill-treatment in the context of law enforcement interventions. .



MIS TREATMENT DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO GENDER

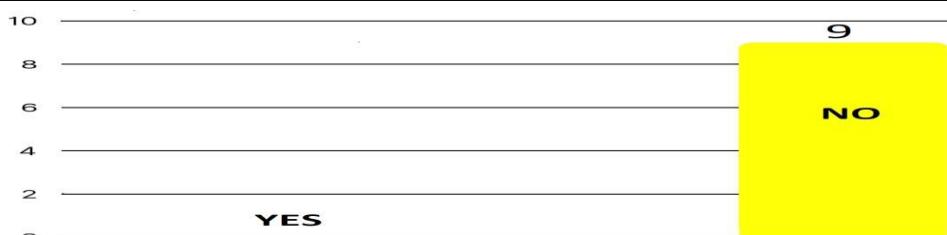
All of the children and adolescents who reported experiencing ill-treatment in this context were female.



ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN MIS TREATED

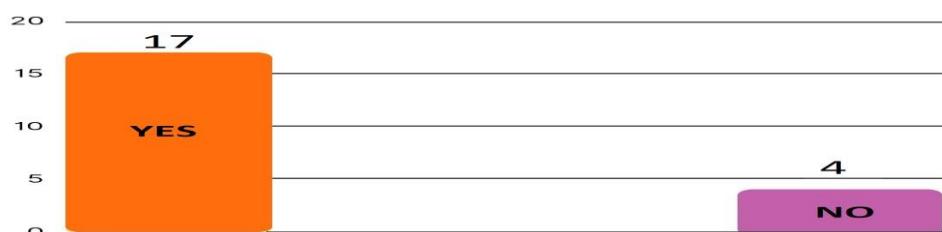
None of the nine children and adolescents who reported experiencing ill-treatment was able to obtain an effective remedy through the justice system.

5.5 İzmir Province Findings & Measurements



ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR THOSE SUBJECT TO ABUSE

Due to the lack of legal recourse, there are no criminal penalties for abuse. For this reason, it has been observed that children and adolescents subjected to abuse have not had access to justice.



AWARENESS OF LEGAL RIGHTS

Seventeen of the children and adolescents stated that they were aware of their legal rights, while four stated that they were not aware of these rights.

All participating children and adolescents stated that they were aware of their legal rights. However, similar to the findings in Diyarbakır, none of the children and adolescents in İzmir who reported experiencing ill-treatment by law enforcement pursued legal recourse.

Data indicate that the majority of reported incidents of violence were directed at boys. From a gender perspective, this may be partly associated with the lower visibility of girls in public spaces. At the same time, firearms have been identified as a prominent means by which violations of the right to life have affected both children and men. The monitoring further showed that children are most frequently exposed to violence and breaches of the right to life predominantly between the ages of 15 and 19. Across almost all cases, access to justice remained limited, with structural challenges, particularly policies of impunity and the absence of effective accountability, appearing to perpetuate the problem.

6. WORKSHOPS

In addition to the monitoring activities, workshops were held in İzmir and Diyarbakır, two provinces with distinct geographical and social characteristics. The workshops aimed to strengthen the rights of children and adolescents, with a particular focus on protecting their right to and access to justice. The primary target group was children and adolescents, with the active participation of the CSOs, academics, universities, bar associations, and local governments as supporting actors. The İzmir workshop took place on 9 March 2025, and the Diyarbakır workshop on 22 March 2025.

6.1 İzmir Workshop

Through online and face-to-face outreach, 50 adults, 32 children, and adolescents were invited to the workshop. The event was attended by 37 adults, 20 children, and adolescents. Sessions were held in two halls: one for children and adolescents, where interactive workshops were carried out, and one for parents and other adults, where experiences were shared on children's rights, human rights, and advocacy practices.

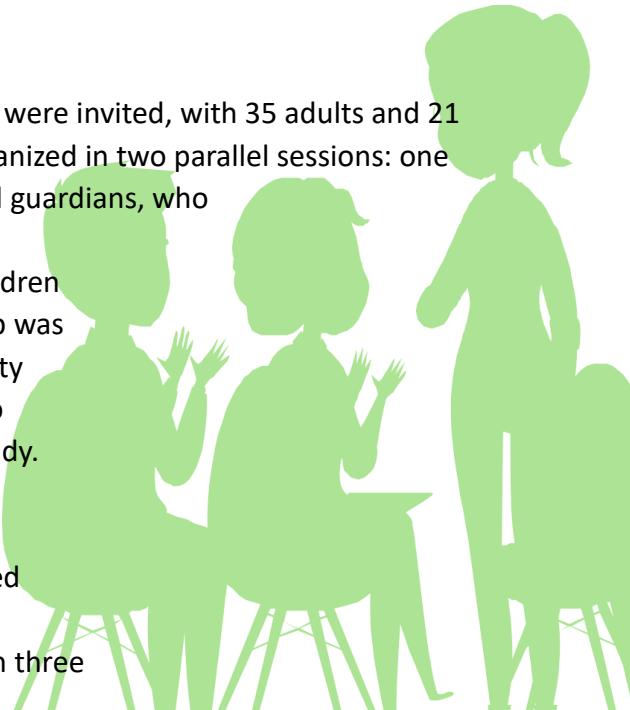
Several institutions contributed to the event's success. Bayraklı Municipality provided the conference hall and supported the involvement of its Municipality Children's Assembly. İzmir Bar Association delivered a presentation on access to justice, while the Everywhere Children Association shared its experience of working with disadvantaged children in the field.

The workshop activities for children and adolescents were facilitated by child development specialist Sedanur Uğur and coordinated by project experts Zeynep Eda Berfin Tozlu and Erkan Ceylan, under the supervision of project expert Mehmet Tursun.

The İzmir workshop was considered productive in raising awareness about children's rights and enabling children's active participation. Feedback from participants highlighted the value of such initiatives and stressed the importance of maintaining cooperation between academia, local governments, bar associations, and CSOs in promoting children's rights.

6.2 Diyarbakır Workshop

In Diyarbakır, 44 adults and 36 children and adolescents were invited, with 35 adults and 21 children ultimately participating. The workshop was organized in two parallel sessions: one for children and adolescents, and another for adults and guardians, who discussed children's rights, human rights advocacy, and strategies for strengthening solidarity. Participating children also received certificates of participation. The workshop was supported by a wide range of institutions. Dicle University academics, including Prof. Dr. Aziz Yağan, contributed to both the event and securing ethical approval for the study. Additionally, two professors, an associate professor, and a doctor from Dicle University participated in the workshop. Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality provided transportation services, and the Diyarbakır Chamber of Commerce and Industry allocated the venue, along with three



support staff. Diyarbakır and Gaziantep Bar Associations made a presentation on access to justice. In addition, several CSOs, including North Star Foundation, Mesopotamia Foundation, Z Generation Association, Rengarenk Association, ÖzgürLük Yolu Foundation, and SHUDER (Social Services Experts Association), added dynamism to the workshop by sharing their experiences.

The workshop was facilitated by project experts Zeynep Eda Berfin Tozlu and Erkan Ceylan, under the supervision of project expert Mehmet Tursun, with activities for children conducted by child development specialist Sedanur Uğur.

The Diyarbakır workshop proved effective in raising awareness of children's rights and ensuring the meaningful participation of children. In İzmir, participants emphasized the importance of sustaining cooperation among academia, local authorities, bar associations, and CSO actors to advance the overarching objectives of the project.

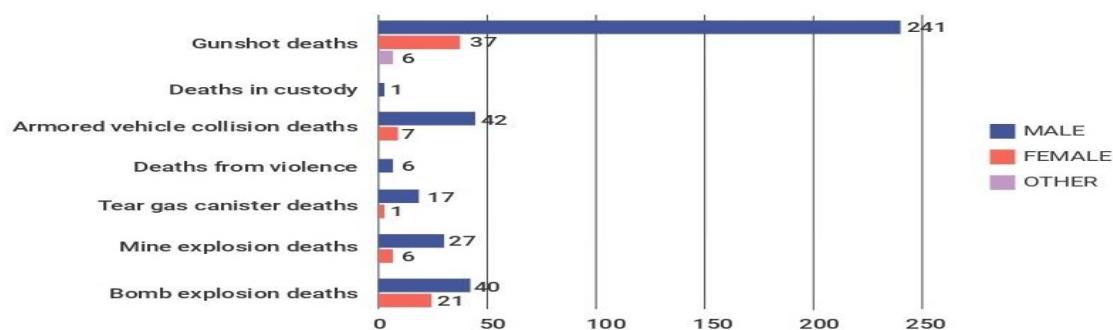
7. MONITORING ACTIVITIES

7.1 Purpose of Monitoring

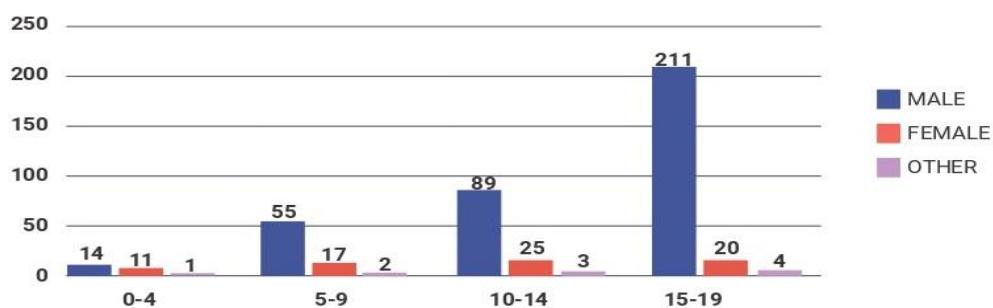
Monitoring activities covered the period from 2007 to 2024. They were carried out through several complementary methods, including the review of reports prepared by the CSOs and bar associations working in the field of human rights, the systematic follow-up of cases by the Baran Tursun Foundation, and a detailed examination of individual incidents. All reports, documents, and publications used in data collection are listed in the references section of this report.

The graphs presented below illustrate the key indicators and measurements generated through these monitoring and observation efforts. They aim to provide an overview of how children's rights are protected both in law and in practice in Türkiye, contributing to the strengthening of children's rights within judicial and non-judicial mechanisms, and supporting evidence-based advocacy in this area.

7.2 Classification of Cases & Measurements

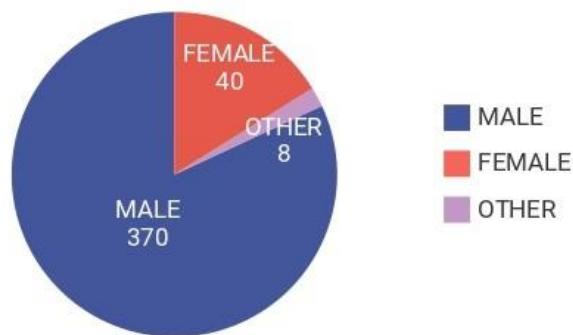


Following the monitoring, breaches of the right to life were classified into categories including deaths resulting from firearms, deaths in custody, incidents involving armored vehicle collisions, physical violence, tear gas canisters, mine explosions, and bomb attacks. The data shows that the highest number of deaths occurred as a result of firearms.



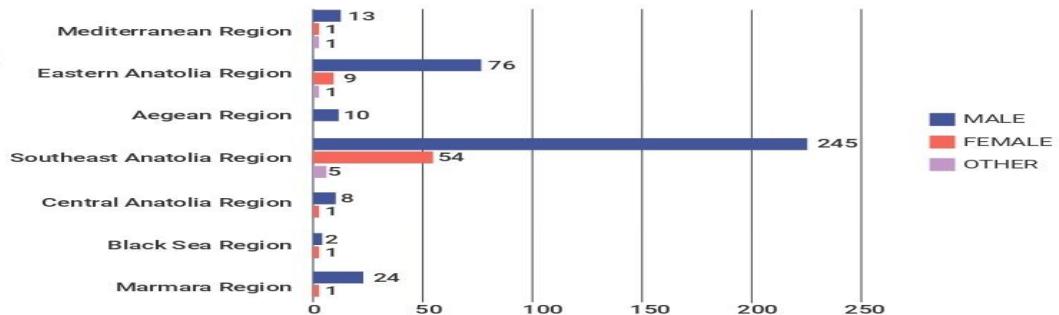
DISTRIBUTION OF RIGHT TO LIFE VIOLATIONS BY AGE GROUP

The distribution of right to life violations by age group was determined as 0-4, 5-9, 10-14, and 15-19. The highest rate of right to life violations was observed in the 15-19 age group.



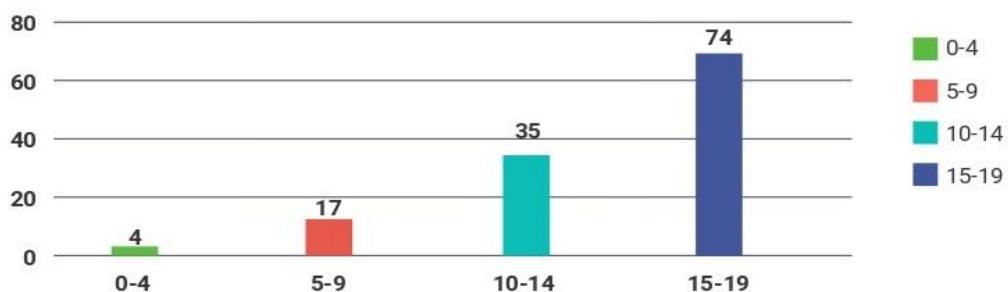
DISTRIBUTION OF RIGHT TO LIFE VIOLATIONS BY GENDER

According to monitoring, 370 of those subjected to right to life violations were male and 74 were female. The gender of 8 individuals is unknown. When examining the distribution of violations by gender, the majority were male.



VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHT TO LIFE DISTRIBUTION BY REGION

The monitoring documented a total of 583 cases of breaches of the right to life. Of these, 304 occurred in the Southeastern Anatolia Region. More than half of the recorded violations took place in provinces with distinct geographical and political characteristics, many of which are home to a significant Kurdish population.



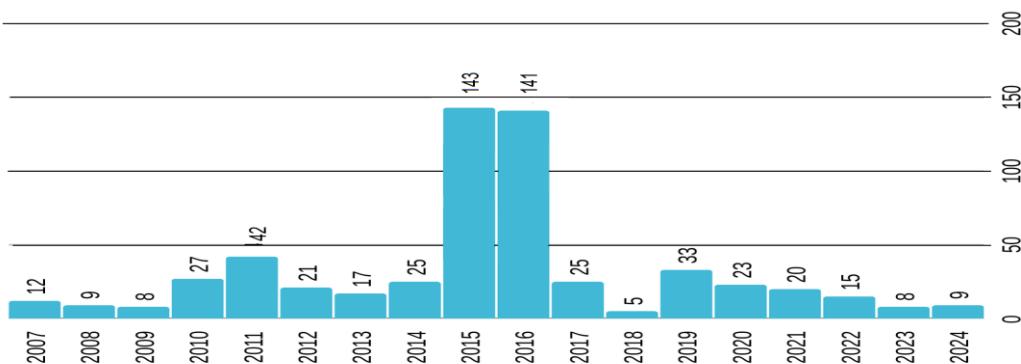
DISTRIBUTION OF CASES BY AGE

The monitoring found that children and adolescents most frequently exposed to violence and ill-treatment were in the 15-19 age group



DIS TRIBUTION OF CASES B Y GENDER

In the category of ill-treatment and violence, 70 of the documented cases involved males and 12 involved females, while the gender of 48 individuals could not be identified.



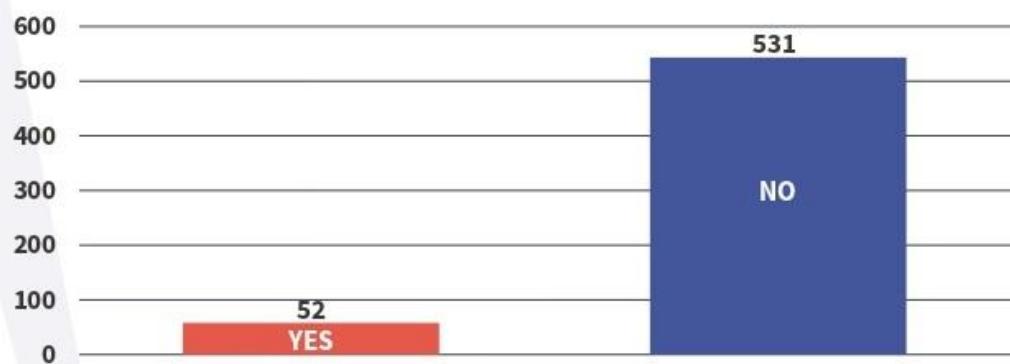
DIS TRIBUTION OF CASES B Y YEAR

According to the monitoring conducted between 2007 and 2024, the highest incidence of violence and ill- treatment was recorded in 2015 and 2016



TARGET AUDIENCE ACCESS T O JUSTICE ISSUE

Of the 578 cases monitored, 578 involved barriers to access to justice.



TARGET AUDIENCE'S REQUEST FOR LEGAL SUPPORT

When the legal support requests of victims of abuse and violence were examined, it was observed that only 52 out of 583 cases requested it.



RETALIATIONS AGAINST THE TARGET AUDIENCE

In 20 of the 583 cases recorded during the monitoring process, it was determined that retaliatory lawsuits were filed in response to the victims' or their families' pursuit of justice.

7.3 Distribution of Cases By Province / Number of Cases Reached

Provinces Monitored: 35

Cases Monitored: 583

Diyarbakır- Nr of Cases Monitored: 99

Batman- Nr of Cases Monitored: 83

Van- Nr of Cases Monitored: 53

Şırnak- Nr of Cases Monitored: 73

Hakkari Nr of Cases Monitored: 53

Mardin- Nr of Cases Monitored: 42

Gaziantep - Nr of Cases Monitored: 39

Şanlıurfa- Nr of Cases Monitored: 19

İstanbul - Nr of Cases Monitored: 23

Ağrı- Nr of Cases Monitored: 13

Elazığ- Nr of Cases Monitored: 2

Bitlis - Nr of Cases Monitored: 2

Mersin - Nr of Cases Monitored: 1

Hatay - Nr of Cases Monitored: 1

Kocaeli - Nr of Cases Monitored: 1

Bingöl - Nr of Cases Monitored: 4

Muş - Nr of Cases Monitored: 2

Tunceli- Nr of Cases Monitored: 1

Siirt - Nr of Cases Monitored: 6

Aydın- Nr of Cases Monitored: 3

Malatya - Nr of Cases Monitored: 1

Sakarya - Nr of Cases Monitored: 1

Antalya- Nr of Cases Monitored: 1

Muğla - Nr of Cases Monitored: 2

Kütahya- Nr of Cases Monitored: 1

Zonguldak - Nr of Cases Monitored: 1

Erzurum - Nr of Cases Monitored: 5

Karabük - Nr of Cases Monitored: 2

İzmir - Nr of Cases Monitored: 12

Adana - Nr of Cases Monitored: 17

Balıkesir - Nr of Cases Monitored: 1

Samsun - Nr of Cases Monitored: 4

Bitlis- Nr of Cases Monitored: 4

Bursa- Nr of Cases Monitored: 2

Ankara - Nr of Cases Monitored: 7

Bursa- Nr of Cases Monitored: 2

Ankara - Nr of Cases Monitored: 7

8. ONLINE & FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEWS

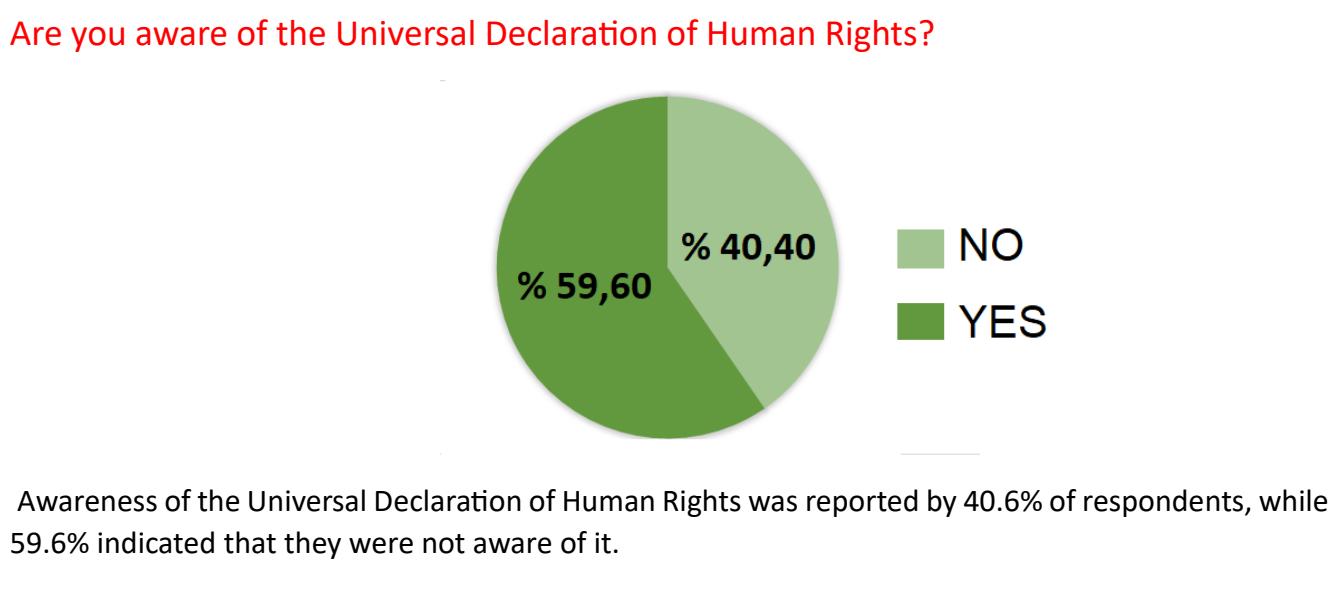
This section has been prepared by the Baran Tursun Foundation within the framework of the ACAR Project, Civil Society Cooperation Programme. The study forms part of the Foundation's efforts to generate evidence, support evidence-based advocacy, and raise awareness on the different dimensions of violence and discrimination against children and adolescents in Türkiye.

The research is based on statistical data obtained from online and face-to-face interviews conducted to assess whether children are subjected to ill-treatment, discrimination, and institutional violence in social life and in settings where they are deprived of their liberty.

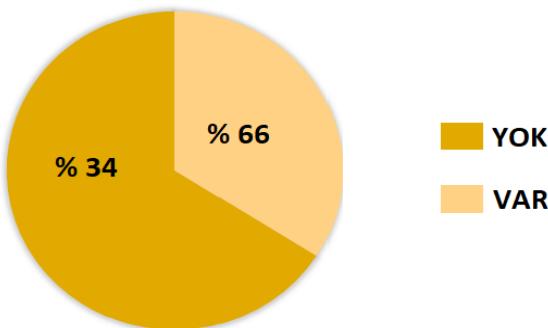
In total, 400 forms were distributed, of which 141 were returned fully completed..

Scope: The primary target group of the survey was children. Supporting participants included parents, adults, CSOs, bar associations, local authorities, academia, and human rights defenders. The main purpose of the form was to measure the participants' level of knowledge and awareness regarding child rights violations.

8.1 Feedback and Evaluations & Measurements

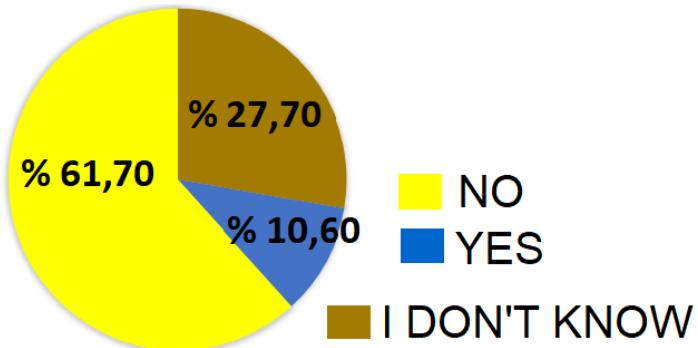


Are you aware of the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child?



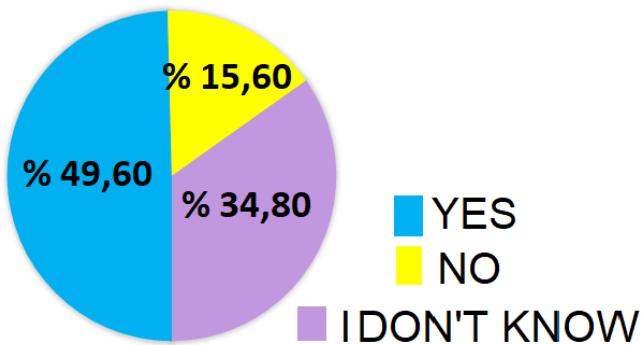
Awareness of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child was reported by 34% of respondents, while 66% stated that they were not aware of it.

Are the prevention, identification, reporting, referral to the competent authority, investigation, treatment, and remediation of child maltreatment cases sufficient in Türkiye?



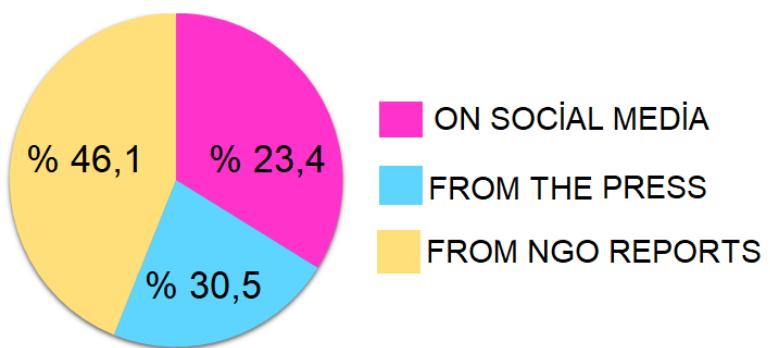
Only 10.6% of the respondents considered the prevention and monitoring of child maltreatment to be sufficient, while 61.7% said they regarded it as inadequate. A further 27.7% stated that they had no opinion on the matter.

Are there any risk factors in improving, strengthening, and advocacy activities for children's rights?



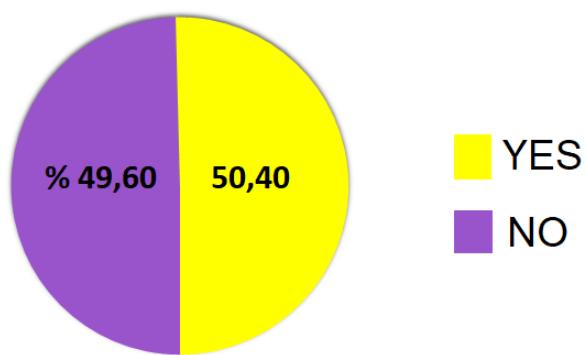
When asked whether advocacy activities against human rights violations were considered risky, 49.6% respondents answered "yes". A further 15.6% stated that they did not perceive any risk, while 34.8% responded that they were unsure.

How do you stay informed about law enforcement violations?



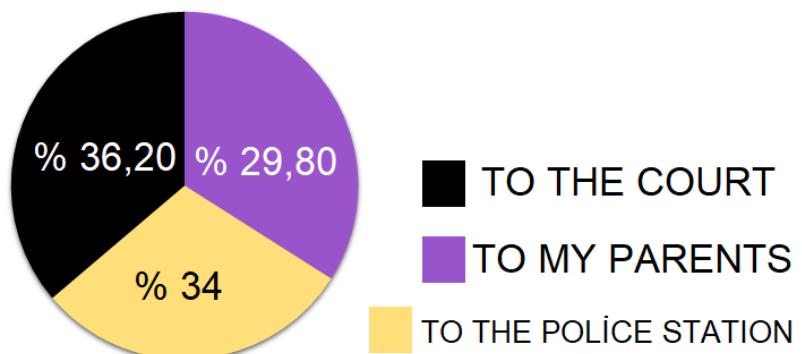
When asked how they obtained information about human rights violations involving law enforcement, 46.1% respondents cited CSOs as their main source. A further 30.6% received information through social media, while 23.4 % relied on the press.

Have you ever been subjected to mistreatment by law enforcement?



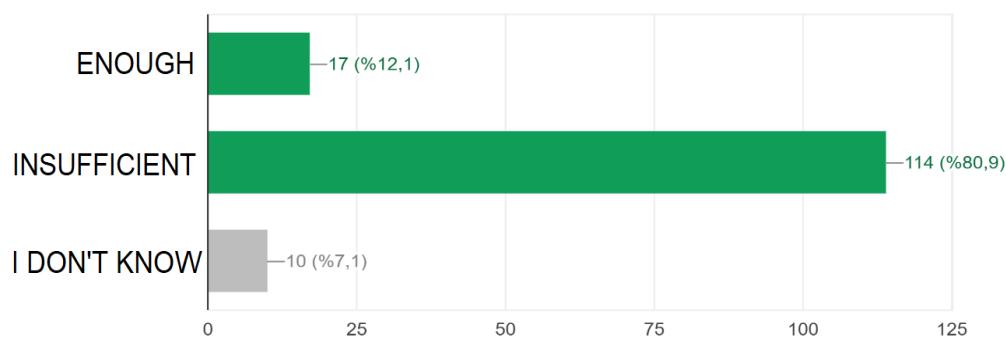
A total of 49.6% of the respondents reported having previously been subjected to ill-treatment by law enforcement, while 50.4% stated that they had not.

Where do you first contact if you experience a violation of your rights?



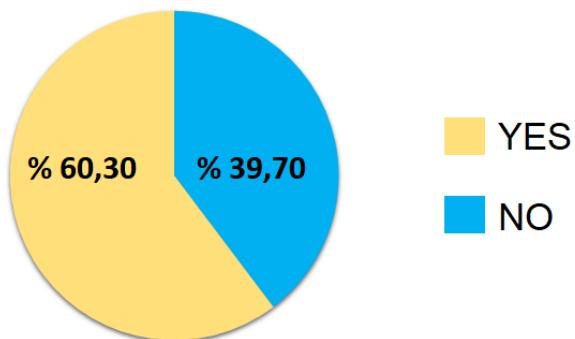
When asked where they would turn in the event of a human rights violation, 36.2% of respondents said they would apply to the courts, 34% indicated they would go to the police station, and 29.8% stated that they would turn to a parent.

Are social and legal regulations regarding child protection and well-being in Türkiye sufficient?



When asked about the adequacy of social and legal regulations, 12.1% of the respondents considered them sufficient, 80.9% regarded them as insufficient, and 7.1% that they did not know.

Would you like to volunteer for UNICEF activities aimed at improving and strengthening child protection systems in Türkiye?



A total of 60.3% of the respondents stated that they would like to participate voluntarily in UNICEF activities, while 39.7% indicated that they would not.

9. FINDINGS

The findings obtained within the scope of this study demonstrate that structural shortcomings persist in the protection of the rights of children and adolescents in Türkiye, and that serious problems in implementation continue. The findings are summarized under thematic areas as follows:

- Deficiency of Prevention and Protection Mechanisms

The existing measures and policies for the prevention, identification, reporting, investigation, treatment, monitoring and redress of ill-treatment of children have proven insufficient. Significant gaps remain in ensuring children's protection from violence, their access to justice, and the safeguarding of their right to life.

- Police Violence and Violations of the Right to Life

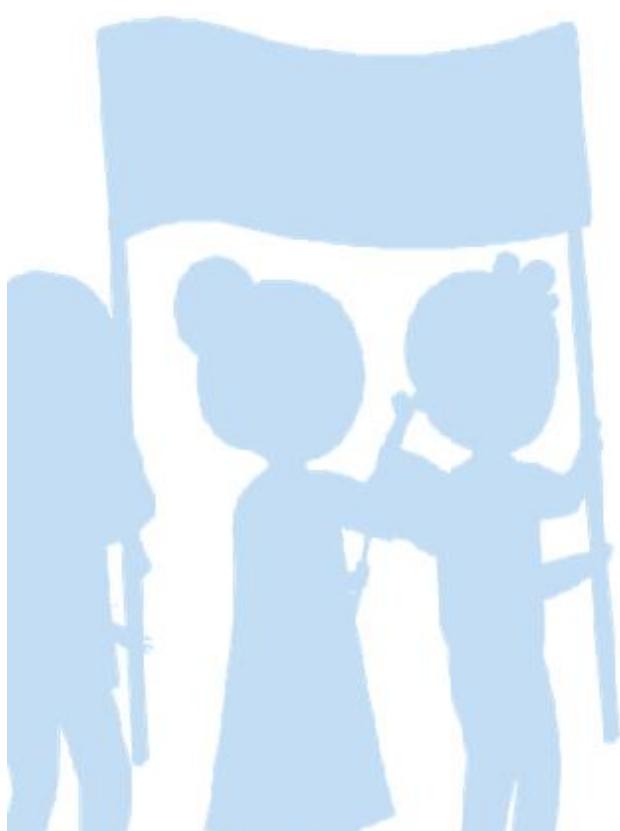
It has been observed that children who do not pose a threat and who are not in a position to escape from law enforcement have been subjected to the disproportionate use of force, in some cases resulting in violations of the right to life. Monitoring data indicate that 304 out of 452 cases of violations of the right to life were concentrated in Diyarbakır and surrounding provinces. These findings demonstrate marked differences in the geographical distribution of violations.

- **Impunity and Accountability Challenges**

In cases of police violence and violations of the right to life, accountability has been limited. Effective and impartial investigations have often not been conducted, and perpetrators have, in some instances, continued in their duties or even been promoted. This situation reinforces a culture of impunity and exacerbates the erosion of public trust in the justice system.

- **Obstacles and Retaliation in the Pursuit of Justice**

It has been observed that in the follow-up of fatal cases, high-risk factors are present, that pressure is exerted on the families of victims, and that those in pursuit of justice are subjected to retaliatory lawsuits in which they are placed in the position of defendants. This situation severely impedes victims' access to justice.



- **Challenges in Independent Monitoring and Evidence Collection**

Limited access to independent and reliable sources on rights violations complicates monitoring and reporting processes. In most cases, evidence is collected or produced by law enforcement personnel, and investigation files are prepared accordingly, thereby undermining the independence of investigations.

- **Civil Society and Public Awareness**

It has been found that the advocacy capacity of CSOs in relation to child rights violations is weak, and that families and the wider public have limited knowledge of international norms and standards. This situation constrains effective societal response and solidarity in the face of rights violations.

- **Child Participation and Access to Justice**

The legislation supporting children's participation in decision-making processes does not comply with international standards. Mechanisms to enable children to learn about their rights and understand the justice system are insufficient. The inadequacy of social services and support mechanisms further exacerbates barriers to children's access to justice.

- **Weaknesses in the Juvenile Justice System**

Regulations relating to juvenile justice are not aligned with international norms and standards. Shortcomings exist, particularly in the protection of children's rights and their effective participation in justice processes.

The findings demonstrate that serious structural problems persist in Türkiye regarding the protection of children's rights and their access to justice. Cases of violence and ill-treatment against children continue as a result of the inadequacy of effective prevention and protection mechanisms. The prevalence of impunity within judicial processes weakens accountability of law enforcement and leads to an erosion of public trust.

In light of the international treaties to which Türkiye is a party and its constitutional obligations at the national level, this situation underscores the urgent need to strengthen protection mechanisms and to implement child- focused and rights-based policies.

10. OUTCOMES & AND LEARNING

The monitoring activities and project interventions have generated significant outcomes for both the target groups and stakeholders. Data on the rights of children and adolescents were disaggregated by sex, age, type of incident, province, and region, which allowed for a clearer understanding of trends and patterns in violations.

Through the project, children and adolescents gained access to statistical information on incidents of violence, ill-treatment, and violations of the right to life involving law enforcement officials, while also increasing their knowledge of the overall objectives of the ACAR Project, the role of the Baran Tursun Foundation within the project, and the support provided by the EU and UNICEF.

The promotion of child and adolescent participation in project activities created a strong and positive perception of the Baran Tursun Foundation. Participants and stakeholders became aware of the Foundation's capacity in case monitoring, evidence collection, and the development of a reliable database on child rights.

Finally, the project strengthened the recognition of the Baran Tursun Foundation's principles of inclusiveness, impartiality, and equal distance towards all children and stakeholders

The participation of children and adolescents in decision-making will only become effective by establishing children's desks, children's councils and children's workshops at the local level.



11. RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study underline the urgent need to strengthen protection mechanisms for children and adolescents in line with international human rights standards. The following recommendations are proposed:

- Legal regulations should be adopted to ensure the effective participation of children in the decision-making process on matters that affect their lives.
- Child-friendly places should be widely available. All places such as parks, hospitals, courthouses, and museums should be made accessible to children and suitable for their rights.
- Structures such as school councils, youth councils, and child advisory boards for children and adolescents should be established and supported at the local level.
- Informative seminars and workshops should be organized for children and adolescents to know their rights and understand the legal processes, and awareness-raising activities should be carried out sustainably and frequently.
- Special justice centers for children should be established, and juvenile courts should be strengthened in line with international norms and standards.
- Children's advisory committees should be established to ensure the representation of children in public policy and justice processes.
- Law and practices should be brought into line with international norms and standards to protect, develop, and improve the fundamental rights of children.
- Strengthening legal support mechanisms is essential. Joint efforts should be undertaken with bar associations and NGOs to ensure that children and adolescents subjected to ill-treatment by law enforcement officers receive legal support.
- Informative programs on human rights and legal support mechanisms should be implemented regularly in schools.
- Oversight mechanisms must be increased, and audits must be conducted independently and objectively. Independent oversight mechanisms must be strengthened to prevent abusive practices by law enforcement.
- Psychosocial support mechanisms should be developed for children and adolescents who are subjected to maltreatment.
- All children should be granted equal rights regardless of differences such as gender, language, religion, disability, or ethnic origin.
- The mental well-being of the victims should be monitored through social workers, psychologists, and guidance counselors.
- Educational workshops should be conducted in schools and community centers for children to educate them about their rights, responsibilities, and ways to protect themselves against violence.
- Data collection and evidence generation activities in children's rights studies require more support to ensure they are continuous and sustainable.
- Statistics on the treatment of children and adolescents by law enforcement officers should be regularly collected and made publicly available.
- Independent monitoring mechanisms for child and adolescent rights should be strengthened, and cooperation should be established with NGOs, Bar Associations, local governments, and academia.

12. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that significant challenges persist in ensuring the protection of the rights of children and adolescents in Türkiye. In particular, the disproportionate use of force by law enforcement officials continues to give rise to risks of violence, ill-treatment, and violations of the right to life. The limited number of convictions and the active involvement of law enforcement officers in the collection of evidence and in investigation processes underline the need to strengthen accountability.

The involvement of special protection mechanisms in cases involving law enforcement officials has made it more difficult for victims to access justice and has contributed to a loss of public trust. The current situation regarding children's rights reaffirms, in light of the CRC, the recommendations of United Nations treaty bodies, as well as the ECHR and the case law of the European Court of Human Rights, the importance of the State party's responsibility to fulfil its international obligations.

The study also revealed that children and adolescents are exposed to ill-treatment both in community settings and in contexts where they are deprived of their liberty, that existing complaint mechanisms are not effectively implemented, and that the prevailing perception of impunity undermines their access to justice. The small-scale surveys conducted in Diyarbakır and İzmir illustrated how these problems are experienced locally and highlighted the need for more comprehensive research at the national level.

This report constitutes an important resource for policymakers, legal practitioners, CSOs, and other stakeholders. It presents concrete recommendations aimed at strengthening the framework for protecting children and advancing their rights. The findings highlight the pressing need for more effective monitoring and reporting mechanisms to address violations related to law enforcement. In this regard, reinforcing access to legal assistance, expanding awareness-raising initiatives, and supporting the independent oversight of law enforcement officials are critical steps to ensure the protection of children's and adolescents' rights and to strengthen accountability.

The study also revealed that children and adolescents are exposed to ill-treatment both in community settings and in contexts where they are deprived of their liberty, that existing complaint mechanisms are not effectively implemented, and that the prevailing perception of impunity undermines their access to justice.



13. REFERENCES

Reports for Monitoring Activities

- Baran Tursun Foundation Right to Life Violations Database https://barantursunvakfi.org/Cocuklar_Ergenler/
- Human Rights Association, 2014 Human Rights Violations Report
- Human Rights Association, 2015 Human Rights Violations Report
- Human Rights Association, 2016 Human Rights Violations Report
- Diyarbakır Bar Association, 2022, Report on Children's Rights Violations Due to Mines and Conflict-War Residue
- Human Rights Foundation of Türkiye 2021, Annual Human Rights Report

International Instruments

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 10 on Children's Rights in Juvenile Justice.
- UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Concluding Observations on Türkiye, CRC/C/TUR/CO/4-5 (2023).
- United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT).
- UN Committee against Torture, Concluding Observations on Türkiye, CAT/C/TUR/CO/5 (2024).
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).
- UN Human Rights Committee, Concluding Observations on Türkiye, CCPR/C/TUR/CO/2 (2024).

Regional Instruments

- European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).
- Council of Europe Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT).
- Council of Europe Guidelines on Child-Friendly Justice (2010)

National Framework

- Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye.
- Law on Internal Security No. 6638 (2015).

10 Fundamental Rights

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has summarized the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 10 fundamental rights.

- The right to equality...
- The right to health...
- The right to education...
- The right to play and leisure...
- The right to freedom of expression...
- The right to protection from violence...
- The right to protection during war and flight...
- The right to protection against exploitation...



NOTES: