

INFORMATIONS DOSSIER

DON'T TAKE THEIR HOPEFUL SMILE AWAY:



BOYCOTT TOURISM IN TURKEY

Thinking of Holidaying in TURKEY? Please think again!

Why you might consider visiting Turkey

Turkey is known for its inexpensive holiday packages and for pleasant weather, beaches, and historical sites dating back thousands of years.

Why you should avoid visiting Turkey

Turkey has become increasingly autocratic, with Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan solidifying his grasp on power following a referendum of questionable legitimacy on presidential powers in 2017. Erdogan has purged the ranks of the country's government, judiciary and military, and Turkey has become the number one prisoner of journalists worldwide. Erdogan's authoritarian regime instrumentalises Islam for its own power purposes and has put immense pressure on women and religious and ethnic minorities such as Alevis and Yezidis, and anti-Semitism and anti-Christian rhetoric are mainstream. Foreign visitors may not feel welcomed with open arms or at least will instantly see a change in attitude once they question the actions of Erdogan and Turkey – doing so can mean risking detention and deportation, or even jail time.

If you do not want to enjoy your vacation time alongside some of the world's most notorious jihadist groups, you should avoid Turkey

**BOYCOTT TOURISM
IN TURKEY**

**BEFORE YOU BUY YOUR TICKET TO TURKEY,
HAVE A LOOK AT THIS ONCE MORE:**

**CHEMICAL WEAPONS USED BY TURKEY AGAINST KURDS!
DURING AKP'S TIME IN OFFICE 422 CHILDREN HAVE
BEEN KILLED BY THE SECURITY FORCES
AND THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE HAVE LOST THEIR
LIVES IN THE WAR AGAINST KURDS.**

6200 BDP (PRO-KURDISH PARTY)
EXECUTIVES IN PRISON SINCE 2009
2.317 KIDS IN PRISON
10000 POLITICAL PRISONERS
17 BDP MAYORS IN PRISON
150 INTELLECTUALS AND ACADEMICS
JAILED IN OCTOBER 2011
42 LAWYERS JAILED IN NOVEMBER 2011
30 KURDISH DEPUTIES SENTENCED
TO 2600 YEARS IN PRISON FOR THEIR SPEECHES
34 KURDISH CIVILIANS KILLED BY BOMBS
DROPPED BY TURKISH WARPLANES IN ROBOSKI!

THE CHOICE IS YOURS BOYCOTT TOURISM IN TURKEY

TURKEY: A PARADISE FOR WHO?

HOLIDAY IN TURKEY?: ASK THE KURDISH CHILDREN IN PRISON
TURKEY: EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS (ECHR) MOST CONVICTED COUNTRY
WELCOME TO TURKEY: WHERE MILLENNARY HISTORY GETS SUBMERGED BY DAMS

DON'T PAY FOR TURKEY'S WAR AGAINST THE KURDS!

Turkey is now a coordination centre for radical Islamic jihadist groups in the Middle East. For years, Turkey has acted as the main passageway for foreign fighters and supplies for the Islamic State (ISIS) and many other jihadist groups in Syria and Iraq. Turkey hosts various jihadist groups within its borders, and these groups maintain a presence in cities throughout Turkey. The Turkish military are openly and directly working alongside various jihadist groups in Syria to fight the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), a key local ally of the Global Coalition Against ISIS.

Your tourist money will be used to fund efforts to terrorise the most dedicated adversaries of ISIS

Turkey has renewed its military and political campaign of denial and oppression against the Kurds. In addition to jailing thousands of Kurdish journalists, majors, party leaders, teachers, artists and women's rights activists, Turkey has unleashed the full might of its military on Kurdish majority areas including Nusaybin, Cizre, and the historic Sur district of Diyarbakir, showing no regard for civilian life. According to the UN, it is possible that up to 1 million civilians were displaced in the state's murderous war on the Kurds in Turkey.

In addition to targeting Kurds within Turkey, the Turkish army regularly attacks Kurdish areas in Iraq and Syria as well – aiming to destroy the very people who are the fiercest opponents of the ISIS, who have bravely resisted and defeated ISIS for years. The resistance of the Kurdish people has significantly weakened ISIS, which threatens the Middle East and Europe, much to the disappointment of Turkey.

War budget for 2018 increased by 41%

The AKP government approved a 41% increase in the defense budget over the period of just one year, setting the defense and security budget for 2018 at 92.7 billion Turkish Liras. This budget clearly represents the desire to perpetuate existing conflicts and initiate new ones over the next year



Erdogan needs more money for his war

It is obvious that the tourism revenue is needed as a main component of the funding for the increase of military and paramilitary (e.g. ISIS, al-Qaida, and other jihadist groups) budget. Tourism is one of the largest sources of income for Turkey, as Turkey currently ranks as the world's number six tourist destination, attracting

more than 30 million tourists annually. Turkey's current tourism revenue was estimated at over \$25 billion last year, and, per Erdogan's plan, is forecast to increase to \$86 billion. Money spent on holidays in Turkey will be put toward the defense budget, turned into missiles, tear gas, tanks, and snipers.

Your tourist money will not be used to build a better Turkey, it will be used to fund Turkey's war machine and help Turkey's jihadist allies – it will be used to fan the flames of war in the Middle East and make the refugee crisis even worse.

Turkey is aggressively waging a military campaign to destabilise Syria and strengthen jihadist groups whose aims are not limited to the Middle East. Turkey's recent attacks and invasion against Afrin, canton of the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria, part of the sovereign state of Syria, are an aggression violating international law.

Your hard-earned money should not go to contribute Erdogan's strategy of ethnic cleansing against children, women, men! Do not spend your holiday in Turkey!

International Solidarity Platform and Platform for Afrin

The case for boycotting tourism in Turkey



Throughout the years there have been many campaigns aimed at boycotting tourism in this or that country.

The call to holidaymakers to think twice when it comes to choose where to holiday is more urgent than ever today, and Turkey is certainly one of the worst destinations as far as “ethical” tourism is concerned.

In 2017 according to figures released by the Turkish Statistic Institute, tourism expenditure was 5,137 million dollars, compare to 5,019 million dollars in 2016.

Last year alone, tourism agencies accounted for an income of \$28 billion USD and subsequently Turkey's military budget was raised to \$11.5 billion USD in 2017. This year bookings have already gone up 50%, and simultaneously military expenditure was increased in accordance with that.

To put it bluntly: the more tourists enjoy Turkey’s beaches, the more Kurds will die.

Turkish military and government waging a dirty war against Kurds and all oppositional groups

Before choosing Turkey as their destination holidaymakers should consider a few facts, if they care about making the world a better place by putting humanity first.

The Turkish state has been waging a war against a third of its population, namely the Kurds. Thousands of Kurdish people have been forced to flee their houses, forcibly evicted in the ‘90s (when the war reached its peak) when the army burned more than 4,000 of their villages.



In the 2000’s the war reached a new level: after rejecting all proposals and invitations to find a negotiated political solution made by the Kurdish liberation movement, the Turkish state engaged in an all-out attack.

In its frantic efforts to abolish any kind of opposition and dissent the Turkish state and the ruling AKP (Justice and Development Party) led by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan have ended up jailing and

putting on trial tens of thousands of people. This meant that the policy now pursued by the Turkish state was one of “total suppression”, or genocide. Not just Kurds: whether trade unionists, academics, journalists, writers, singers, politicians, civil society organisations, nobody escapes the AKP crushing machine.

But there is more to this genocide being carried out by the AKP party and his leader Erdogan.

If Kurds must be exterminated, their existence denied, then every trace of Kurdishness must be erased. Therefore, culture and history become targets of this war machine.

Places you may have wanted to visit but you won't be able to.

Turkey has become a “safe heaven” for jihadists.



There is no doubt that holidaying in Turkey carries some serious risks. The war waged by Turkey's military and government in the three parts of Kurdistan (Turkish, Iraqi and Syrian) is under everyone's eye, which is why Kurdish organizations have called on tourists not to opt for Turkey as their holiday destination.

The presence of members of the Islamic State (as proved by the English newspaper *The Guardian*) in Turkish holiday resort centres clearly turns even “protected” holiday spots in to not so safe sites. Turkey has become a “safe heaven” for jihadists and their families and the fact that Islamic State members and their families are to be found in holiday resort centres clearly puts western tourists at risk.

It is also to be noted that police harassment (which can turn nasty) is something quite common and targets tourists in areas such as the Kurdish historical sites and cities.

It is not a coincidence that in 2016 the old borough of Sur, one of the ancient historical sites of what is considered the capital of North Kurdistan, Amed (Diyarbakir), had been besieged by “security” forces and eventually destroyed.

Sur: erasing history and co-existence experiences



In Sur, people have been living for 7 thousand years. From 2007, Sur has been highly organized both socially and politically with different structures having been set up to deliver more democracy and women's emancipation.

When the AKP launched its unilateral war against the Kurdish people in 2015, it began by attacking Sur and committing crimes against humanity.

Thousands of houses were destroyed and thousands of people were forced to leave. Reminiscent of the civil war in the 90s, these crimes were documented in the February 2017 report of the UN Human Rights Committee.

Last March in Paris, the International People's Tribunal heard from witnesses how Sur was bombed and destroyed by the Turkish State, how people were burned alive and how hundreds of civilians could not be rescued as police and security forces didn't allow the wounded to be reached and helped.

Hasankeyf: 12 thousand years of history under water

Hasankeyf is Batman's 12-thousand-year-old city, which will be flooded by the Ilisu Dam. In the name of "progress" as happened to another historic jewel, Zeugma, Hasankeyf will soon not exist.



The site has a unique history closely interwoven with the Euphrates river, and to a great extent it is richer even than Ephesus, Troy and Cappadocia. Furthermore, Hasankeyf fulfilled 9 of the 10 UNESCO criteria. Yet UNESCO said nothing against the destruction of the important historical site.

The Ilisu Dam project means that 80,000 people will have their houses destroyed and will be forced to resettle in another area, in houses built by TOKI (Governmental Mass Housing Administration). The AKP Government only see Ilisu as one of the strategic tools for economic growth in the building sector.

Cities under siege

Between 16 August 2015 and 5 February 2016 there has been 58 officially confirmed, open-ended and round-the-clock [all daylong] curfews in at least 19 districts of 7 cities in Southeastern Turkey. These cities are as follow; Diyarbakır (32 times), Şırnak (7 times) ve Mardin (11 times), Hakkâri (4 times), Muş (1 time), Elazığ (1 time) and Batman (2 times). It is estimated that, according to the 2014 population census, at least 1 million 377 thousand residents have been affected by these curfews and fundamental rights of these people such as Right to Life and Right to Health are explicitly violated.



According to the data of the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey (HRFT), since 16 August 2015 (which is the date of first declared curfew) until 5 February 2016 at least 224 civilians (42 children, 31 women, 30 people over the age 60) lost their lives in regions and in periods of time where curfews were officially declared.

Expanding the war zone

Not happy with the repression within Turkey, the AKP and Erdogan have been constantly trying to destroy any achievements made by Kurds in other parts of Kurdistan, in particular South Kurdistan (Iraqi Kurdistan) and West Kurdistan (Rojava).



Furthermore, in order to destroy the Rojava model, Turkey has directly financed and trained members of the Islamic State in its various manifestations, being it al-Qaida, al-Nusra, Free Syrian Army and the many names the gangs have taken along the years.

It has been well proved the collusion between the Turkish MIT (Intelligence), the Turkish AKP government and the Islamic State gangs, whose members - in their thousands - have been allowed (and indeed helped) to pass through Turkey to reach Syria (in some cases they actually travelled on Turkish passports). Likewise, it has been proved that Turkey has trained and provided the Islamic State gangs with weapons and logistics.

It has also to be underlined that President Erdogan is carrying out a comprehensive attempt to remake the Turkish Armed Forces along lines more amenable to himself. As well as reinstating hundreds of officers with clear Islamist leanings, to serve the purpose of remaking the Turkish Armed Forces, SADAT Defence Consultancy was created, founded in 2012 by former Brigadier-General Adnan Tanriverdi (appointed in late 2016 as chief military adviser to the President).

The most recent evidence of this collusion and collaboration being the invasion of Afrin by the Turkish army together with Islamic mercenary gangs. The invasion of Afrin has meant the displacement of over 300 thousand people, forced out of their houses that were plundered by gangs. Afrin was then literally hijacked and an illegal, criminal-ridden council was established, allegedly to run the city.

Anti-foreign and anti-western attitude showed by Turkish President Erdogan

As we have seen above, many jihadists enjoyed protection in Turkey and this exposes western tourists to further risk as they would be considered possible targets.



Furthermore, the anti-foreign and anti-western attitude shown by Turkish President Erdogan and its government is reflected in the general public. It's not a coincidence that more and more racist and violent anti-west and anti-foreign attitudes and attacks have been reported by tourists who have had to suffer verbal and physical abuse. You will be holidaying in Turkey and you will be considered a foreigner and a westerner, therefore you could be considered a target not only by jihadists but also by racist ultra-nationalist Turks.

These are but some of the reasons why holidaymakers should think twice before choosing Turkey as their fun and leisure destination.

Armed economy

To go deeply into why holidaying in Turkey actually means helping this war-orientated mindset, we could analyse the presence of the army in the economy, especially in the tourism and services sector.



After the May 27, 1960 coup, a Special Law was enacted at the proposition of the military-civilian government. This “Constituent Assembly” created the Armed Forces Trust and Pension Fund (*Ordu Yardimlasma Kurumu*), commonly referred to as OYAK. This pension fund was created in order to provide “supplementary social services” for its members, who are mainly members of the Armed Forces.

Along the years OYAK has grown into one of the largest, and among the most profitable, business enterprises in Turkey.

The armed forces have invested in diverse sectors, including industry, finance, and services, amongst others. The military acts as a powerful economic actor through OYAK, which has a peculiar organizational form that blurs the distinction between the civilian and military domains with regards to “its legal status, its administrative structure, and its activities”.

It has been observed that OYAK has not been subjected to scrutiny by the EU. The implication seems to be that OYAK’s partnership with the AXA group and Renault, as well as the fact that 15 percent of Turkey’s defence industry imports are from Germany has spared OYAK from the EU.

In recent years OYAK has created a special service company called OYAK Tourism Meeting & Incentive Services which offers an extensive range of incentive, conference and meeting services.

In the leaflet presenting the company we can read: We offer you assistance, and help in locating and choosing hotels, venues, restaurants and organizing your events throughout TURKEY.

TOKI or the AKP neoliberal urban tool

Toki (Toplu Konut İdaresi Başkanlığı - Public Housing Development Administration) was founded in 1984 and appears to have become the major urban design/intervention tool of neo-liberal, profit-oriented policies of the AKP government. This meant dramatic changes to the heritage of the cities in Turkey and Kurdistan (as seen in the case of Hasankeyf).

TOKI soon became the authorized organization in the field of housing and land production in AKP’s cities.



Only the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality has allocated public lands and plots to various urban projects, mainly through their sale to urban transformation projects, damaging the autonomous morphological structure of the city, destroying the city's unique textures and memories by making more than 3,900 plan modifications in four years, following 2005.

It is important to note that governmental mass housing projects in their majority did not target the low-income groups, rather they supplied housing for the middle and high-income groups.

Walls to isolate Kurdistan



As part of the AKP “security” policy, Turkey is being literally surrounded by walls. TOKI has been commissioned to build those walls.

The first wall (Turkey-Iran) has been more than half completed (144 km, 90 miles in total) and will be finished by next spring.

Ankara is “securing” its frontiers from smuggling, illegal immigration and militant infiltration. So the official version goes.

President Erdogan had said in 2017 that Turkey would build walls along its border with Iraq and part of the border with Iran similar to the nearly completed one on its longest border, with Syria.

The wall along the 911 km border with Syria had almost been finished, with only 25-30 km left to go.

It is clear that the walls being built have the real aim of isolating Kurdistan even more.

The agency is also playing a leading role in government efforts to rebuild parts Kurdistan which have been destroyed by the attacks carried out by the army and security forces.

TOKI is building 25,000 housing units in the region’s worst-hit areas, including those that suffered from the sieges by the State.

TOKI is expected to build between 60,000 and 65,000 housing units in Turkey in 2018, after having built 65,000 and 60,000 in 2016 and 2017 respectively, and around 820,000 since 2003.