

# FACT FINDING REPORT ON MALE/STATE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN KURDISTAN



2021 (JANUARY-SEPTEMBER)





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# INTRODUCTION

In Kurdistan geography women put up resistance not only against patriarchy but also against the nation state which is its most organized form and against fascism.

Violence against women is a structural phenomenon that comes into existence as a consequence of hegemonic patriarchal society. The history of violence dates back to very old times. In the course of time, all ideologies in quest of domination have redesigned this historical phenomenon preserving the inequality relationship at all times and keeping violence against women among the fundamental ideological arguments of every period.

Within this social process dominated by strength and authority based on power, the phenomenon of violence has sought to take the female body, will, thought and emotions under control. And on the basis of experience gathered throughout the course of history, the dominating ideology has aspired to construct itself over this underlying mechanism of control. This structural male violence has now become one of the pillars of capitalist modernity and institutionalized itself as a prototype of the oppressor-oppressed relationship.

Violence against women continues to exist as a basic fact of life in Kurdistan, the Middle East, Turkey and ultimately all over the world, with particular characteristics that may vary from region to region but which have the same essence. The crisis of capitalist modernity coupled with the nationalist concerns of nation-states has increased the occurrence and intensity of violence; the way out of this crisis is sought in resorting to fiercer attacks against women's gains and existence. As many women point out, it is as if the dominating circles are taking action in the spirit of the creators of the **"witch hunts"**, of the prosecutors, clergy and power-holders of those times. The most basic indicator of this is the attack on women's gains.

Male violence in our geography is not independent of the current circumstances in the world. Ever since they came to power, the AKP-MHP block has openly stated that it will accept conservative and agreeable women to be representative of women's will in general and it has made an effort to put this into practice in each and every one of its steps. The AKP-MHP block's first reaction in every process where it detects a threat against itself, has been to put women's gains on the target; it has seen violence against women as a way and method of doing away with these threats. And all of these ways and methods endure as a part of femicide today. The actions taken upon the declaration

of the state of emergency in 2016: closing down hundreds of women's institutions, arresting and detaining women activists, firing women by means of decrees, targeting the concept of women emancipatory local government by means of state appointed trustee-mayors, criminalizing co-presidency and pulling out of Istanbul Convention were the implementation of but a few of these policies. While these decisions have affected all women living in Turkey, the geography of Kurdistan received and continues to receive different treatment in terms of women policies as well as policies in almost all spheres in the context of the reality of the ongoing war and the absolute isolation of Mr Öcalan in the prison island of İmralı.

This special policy, which constitutes our main motivation in the writing of this report, is a reflection of the current results of the deepening of the Kurdish problem. The government, which insists on pursuing security policies, has put a plan of social implosion into practice in our geography in addition to the ongoing war. The aim is to have the society collapse, to destroy its politicized vein and construct a people that continues to exist devoid of identity or culture. Along with the absolute isolation in the İmralı Island, the resistance veins of the society, especially the prisons, are being targeted. The "state of exception" applied in the İmralı Island as a monument to lawlessness, has been transformed into a policy applied to the society in general and "exception" as a state tradition has become the basis of all impunity.

The reality of militarism which feeds on patriarchy shrouds itself in a double armor of violence with the backing of the principle of impunity. Violence against women in the Kurdistan geography takes shape within this armor and women resist not only male domination, but also the nation-state, which is the most organized form of male domination, and the conditions of fascism rising on its basis.

As known, Kurdish society has adopted momentous policies that put women's equality into practice and crucial steps have been taken to bring about social transformation under the leadership of women in the wake of lengthy struggles. Today, these achievements are being directly targeted, an attempt to liquidate the leading forces of this struggle is underway as part of a quest to defeat the egalitarian character of the society to the advantage of men. The government, which is carrying out a sweeping implementation of this policy in its entirety, has been employing all available ideological instruments ranging from local governments to all administrative units, from culture to education, from religion to militarist groups in an effort to activate an all-round siege on women and destroy the democratic, ecological, women emancipatory paradigm. Undoubtedly, in the same manner as these attacks are the results of circumstances that have taken shape historically, the same history has also versed us in the legacy of resistance and fighting back. The struggle against these attacks by patriarchy continues non-stop as far as Kurdish women are concerned.

This report we present here is a part of this culture of resistance which persists despite all the formidable circumstances and it is dedicated to the hard work and conviction of all women in struggle and of Deniz Poyraz who was murdered at the hands of male-state violence.





# MALE VIOLENCE



Male violence is not coincidental, but systematic. A man who resorts to violence is neither abnormal nor does he display a pathological behavior.



Patriarchy has brought into effect, normalized and institutionalized the division of labor between men and women by means of violence. This is why “violence against women” has been one of the main issues of women's struggle. Violence against women is the systematic practice of gender-based violence against women in all spheres of life, inside and outside the home.

One of the most striking features of male violence is that women who are subjected to violence come to normalize violence over time and develop strategies to resign themselves to it. Women most often seek the cause of violence in themselves or elsewhere. Yet, male violence is not random, but systematical. A man who resorts to violence is neither abnormal nor is his behavior pathological.

In the patriarchal system, male violence is a modality of behavior that establishes hegemony and control. Struggle against male violence becomes important in conjunction with legal, social, political and economic arrangements that may come to remake the social norms. For this reason, women waging struggle against violence have been insisting on making legislative arrangements which will ensure gender equality. One of the most important achievements of women's struggle to prevent male violence is the Istanbul Convention, which employs a gender perspective in dealing with male violence and holds the states party to the convention responsible for changing the patriarchal mindset in their societies.

## **ATTACK ON WOMEN'S GAINS AND IMPUNITY POLICIES**

The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, known as the Istanbul Convention, to which Turkey is the first signatory and party, is the most comprehensive convention to date against male violence against women. In Turkey, where violence against women and femicide, which is a widespread consequence of this violence, constitute an important problem, the President decided to withdraw from the convention on March 20, 2021. Aside from the fact that this decision to withdraw from an international convention protecting women's right to distance themselves from violence constitutes a violation of the Constitution, the state has disowned its responsibility to protect women from violence, prevent violence and punish the perpetrators with this decision.

The government's attacks on women's gains and its policies of impunity has fostered and continues to foster male violence against women.

This report, which contains data on violence against women, aims to disclose male violence against women in Kurdistan. It includes the data on women who applied to local sources, women's organizations, rights organizations, political parties, bar associations and trade unions working in the region upon being subjected to violence. Two methods were used to collect data. The first method was to collect the data on women who applied to local organizations in the specified pilot cities. The second was to gather the data from the press coverage about women subjected to violence in the cities of Kurdistan.



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**While collecting data in the process of writing this report we have observed that:**

- The local organizations that work in this field do not in fact keep data on violence against women.
  - Those institutions that keep data do it with a narrowly restricted method.
  - Mixed organizations do not separate the data of female applicants and evaluate them as part of the general data.
  - The data on violence against women does not include the number of women who applied to public (state-linked) institutions after being subjected to violence.
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Within the framework of the method we have specified, we tried to collect all the data that could be reached through organizations. The aim of this report is to reveal male violence being experienced in the region in all its dimensions, rather than gather "many numbers". We do not treat violence against women in terms of numbers, but rather as a structural phenomenon, as a result of the hegemonic male-dominated society.

We have observed that there were no civil society organizations engaged in independent work on/with women in most of the cities specified within the scope of the report, and since the women's solidarity centers affiliated to local governments were closed by state-appointed trustees, we requested data from mixed organizations, trade unions and political parties. The biggest limitation of this study is the absence of organizations that carry out specific work on/with women and produce policies in this field.

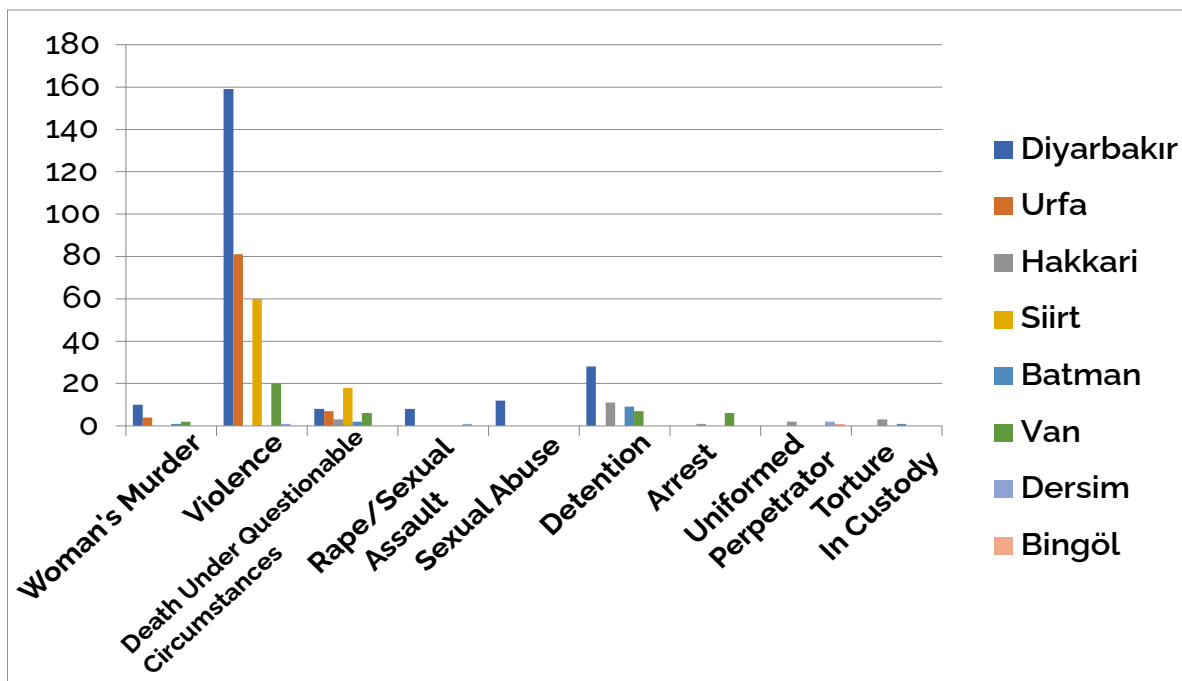
**According to this report covering the first 9 months of 2021; 64 women lost their lives in Kurdistan<sup>1</sup> as a result of male violence. Of those who lost their lives; 17 were killed by unidentified perpetrators and 47 of the deaths took place under questionable circumstances. 321 women were subjected to violence by any authority in their lives (father, spouse, lover, brother, unknown man, relative). Although women applied by stating that they were exposed to either physical violence, psychological violence, economic violence, social violence, digital violence or persistent stalking, we observed that all types of violence fed one another. 9 women stated that they were raped and 12 women were subjected to sexual abuse.**

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<sup>1</sup> The provinces where we collect data on violence against women within the scope of the report; Diyarbakir, Urfa, Hakkari, Siirt, Batman, Van, Dersim, Bingol, Sirnak.

Women who applied to local resources as a result of the violence they experienced stated that they are systematically exposed to violence and that they are hesitant to complain because of the fear that no action will be taken upon their complaint, the perpetrator will not be duly punished and hence the violence they suffer will increase incrementally. Again, according to the information conveyed by local organizations, women conceal violence and refrain from filing complaints about sexual abuse and rape because of the pressure and accusations they will have to face and the absence of legal action against the perpetrators.

The data in the press<sup>2</sup> were compiled from local and national newspapers, news sites and agencies. According to the compiled press data;



In Kurdistan<sup>3</sup>, 59 women lost their lives as a result of male violence. While 37 women died suspiciously, 22 women were killed one of the men in their lives. 15 women were forced into prostitution, 8 women were raped, 4 women were sexually abused. As we mentioned at the beginning, these only include the data of women who have applied to an institution.

<sup>2</sup> It contains the data reflected on Bianet and Jinnews.

<sup>3</sup> The provinces where we collected data from the press within the scope of the report are as follows: Adıyaman, Ağrı, Diyarbakır, Batman, Bingöl, Bitlis, Dersim, Elazığ, Erzurum, Hakkari, Iğdır, Kars, Malatya, Mardin, Siirt, Şırnak, Urfa, Van.

	Women Murdered	Rape/Sexual Assault	Death Under Questionable Circumstances Death	Forcing Into Prostitution	Violence	Sexual Abuse	Uniformed Violence
Adiyaman					3		
Ağrı	1				1		
Diyarbakır	7		7		5	1	
Batman		1	1	6	1		
Bingöl	1						1
Bitlis			1				
Dersim		2	1		2		
Elazığ	2				1		
Erzurum		1			1		
Hakkari		1					1
Iğdır	1						
Kars			1		3		
Malatya	2		2			1	
Mardin	4	1	5		5		
Siirt		1	5				
Şırnak		1	2		1		1
Urfa	3	1	7		3	2	
Van	2		3	6	4		
	22	9	36	12	30	4	3

We are aware that the data from local organizations and the press is only a portion of the real actual data. The most striking fact in the data we collected is that women have been driven to suicide by the men in their lives in recent years. Women are being murdered under the cover of suicide. These cover ups are unearthed through the struggle waged by women's organizations and perpetrators are punished. Unfortunately, the male-dominated judiciary most often protects the perpetrators.

As we mentioned earlier, the aim here is to expose all the dimensions of the violence experienced in the region rather than come up with a numerical figure, to reveal that power feeds and triggers male violence, and to shed light on uniformed violence used as a method of special warfare.





# UNIFORMED VIOLENCE

Although there have been sexual attacks against many women in the course of war since the 90s, the perpetrators of those crimes were not punished and remained on duty.

A phenomenon that is as valid as death in conflict and war zones is the climaxing of violence against women and the war also being waged through special policies against women. Sexual abuse, rape, violence, abduction of women and separation of girls from their families still endure as some of the oldest war tactics.

In the Kurdistan region even though governments have changed, this “ancient tactique of warfare” has remained intact and its practice has continued in different forms and methods. Although many women have been sexually assaulted during the war since the 90s, the perpetrators of the crimes were not punished and continued remain on duty. According to the data obtained by the Legal Aid Office Against Sexual Abuse and Rape in Detention, which publishes annual statistical reports only on sexual assaults that women in custody are subjected to, 105 women were subjected to sexual abuse and 544 women have been subjected to sexual assaults between 1997 and 2020. According to the data, 4 women committed suicide after being raped, one woman was killed as a result of torture, a 14-year-old girl was killed by her relatives after being raped to “cleanse their honor” and a woman died in December 1999 as a result of the long-term effects of torture. The number of sexual abuse and rape cases in unregistered custody is 24, and the number of sexual abuse cases through the press is 1. 11 women miscarried as a result of torture. 17 women were tortured together with their children between 3.5 and 10 years of age, 7 women became pregnant after being raped, 5 women were subjected to forced virginity control. According to these data, 389 of the perpetrators were police officers, 125 were gendarmerie and soldiers, 33 were special team members, 22 were village guards and 66 correction officers.

Of the 75 women who applied to the Bureau in 2020, 45 were Kurds. The of perpetrators of the crimes were distributed as follows:

Police	: 49
Gendarmerie/Soldier	: 15
Special Team	: 3
Village Guard	: 1
Correction Officer	: 19
Watchman	: 1
Other Public Officials	: 30
ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria)	: 1

Undoubtedly, these numbers are much lower than the real ones. There are thousands of women who have experienced this violence, but they are being silenced, their voices are being stifled. And these data only cover detentions and arrests, which is a form of state violence.

The motivation behind this wartime violence which patriarchy imposes on women, is the existence of a state of impunity accompanied by the phenomenon of a lust for conquest. Likewise, since the 90s, no uniformed perpetrators of violence have been punished for their crimes and they have gotten away with what they did.

## THE IMPUNITY OF PERPETRATORS OF UNIFORMED VIOLENCE

This historical principle of impunity still exists in Kurdistan today. In the murder of Ipek Er, which is well known to the public, Musa Orhan, who, by raping Ipek Er drove her to suicide, was released pending trial and is still being tried. While there has been no criminal sanction against Musa Orhan so far, lawsuits have been filed against people who have criticized him and they have been fined. In this way, the patriarchal-state mindset is trying to acquit Musa Orhan in the eyes of the society, thereby inculcating the society with the idea that they should condone rape.

Today, this mindset continues to legitimize uniformed violence by using all the means available to the state and capitalist modernity, and it does its best to exonerate it. The main goal of this mentality, which is being protected by the judiciary, is to detach women from the struggle in Kurdistan, to break their will, to alienate them, and as a result, to try to mastermind social chaos through women and children.



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**Some of the publicly known crimes directly committed by uniformed personnel and that we were told about are as follows;**

- It is known that there are government officials such as soldiers, police, guards and village guards who hang around in front of schools in civilian clothes and try to make acquaintance of young women.

- Uniformed personnel especially target young women in an attempt to seduce them with promises of "love, fondness and marriage".

- Young women are persistently stalked by means of their social media accounts. Upon positive response to requests to chat, they are coerced into relationships with threats that the chats will be "shared with the family" unless they don't.

- Photos of sexual acts are taken and young women blackmailed into continuing the relationship with threats that these photos will be shared with their families.

- Women are forced into prostitution with threats using recorded dialogues and photos.

- Women who say they will file complaints are reminded of the example of Musa Orhan saying "I have images in my hand, I will disgrace you, and nothing will happen to me", hence making sure that they give up the idea of filing complaints.

- In cases where young girls fail to come home or are abducted, the families who apply to the police station are told to "go home, she will come back", their complaints are not registered. The police press the families not to file complaints but to go ahead with what is known as "litigation" in the society, which foresees the "marriage" of the two parties in return for money.

- The sector of opening venues for prostitution under the guise of "daily house rental" has been particularly encouraged in recent years, advertisements for these houses are seen everywhere in all cities of Kurdistan and these houses are deliberately left uninspected by security forces.

- In public areas such as cafes, parks and bus stops men leave pieces of paper with phone numbers on tables or try to give them to young women.

- No action is taken against evident drug dealers, drugs are sold openly in front of schools and in cafes, using and selling drugs is encouraged.
  - Spouses, children, relatives and neighbors of women who take part in organized struggle are pushed to testify and file complaints against them in an attempt to criminalize the women.
  - In cases where perpetrators are uniformed personnel, women are much more scared of filing complaints, and they are forced to keep silent because police turn them away at the police stations and refuse to accept and register their complaints.
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These and similar practices continue to be committed as illegal war crimes. In addition to crimes committed in plain sight, a process which tries to channel the Kurdish people to a social collapse, which attempts to destroy the norms and rules politically constructed by the society through women and children is being operated. While women are subjected to judicial harassment for participating in March 8 and organizing events on November 25 on the one hand, on the other uniformed personnel who commit crimes directly against women are not even brought to justice, let alone punished.

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**Although there are many examples of this, we will cite here some events that took place in 2021;**

- In Hakkari-Çukurca, a prostitution gang, among whom were village guards and specialized sergeants, put women with whom they established friendships to sleep with stun pills, and forced them into prostitution after taking their pornographic photos<sup>4</sup>.
- A woman named Merve A. (18) died suspiciously on January 31, in the central Ulubağ District of Bingöl, in a hostel that was rented daily. Although it was alleged that she committed suicide, Merve called her aunt before she died and told her that she had eloped with a sergeant and was going to Manisa. The family unable to reach Merve by phone, called the police and reported her missing, but the police did not inform the family even though her information was already in the security records after having registered her entry in the hostel.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://artigercek.com/haberler/cukurca-ve-hakkari-de-fuhus-ve-santaj-cetesi-iddiasi-savcilik-sorusturma-baslatti>

● Aslan Karakaş, a 34-year-old village guard in Diyarbakır's Bismil district, shot his 17-year-old relative Emine Karakaş with a gun on February 4, 2021, when she refused to marry him. Emine Karakaş passed away on June 23. Dozens of guns were seized in the search conducted in the perpetrator's house, and he was released after taking statements from his family members. Aslan Karakaş, who was not detained for nearly two months, was later released after his statement was taken.

● In the Eğil district of Diyarbakır, chief village guard and former JITEM confessor Murat İpek seriously injured Aleyna Avcı (21) with a firearm.

● The police officer named Enes T., who works in the Riot Forces Branch of the Hakkari Provincial Security Directorate, raped a female officer named G.A.Ü. working in a different department. There was an attempt to cover up the crime of rape by having the perpetrator, who incidentally went unpunished, marry the woman.

● Village guards H.B. and R.C. who sexually abused a woman in a neighborhood of the Savur district of Mardin were taken into custody upon the woman's complaint, and after their statements at the gendarmerie, they were released upon the instructions of the prosecutor's office.

● On July 11, Kader Y. died a dubious death in the village of Suçatı (Kerran) in Karlıova, Bingöl where she came from Istanbul for a holiday. It was alleged that Kader Y., who lived in Istanbul with her husband and children and came to the village of Suçatı in Karlıova for a holiday with her two children, committed suicide with a village guard's gun.

● In the Kozluk district of Batman, Zeynep Sevim was subjected to torture and threats by her husband and her brother, who was a specialized sergeant. The sergeant raided Sevim's house and threatened her saying, "We came here to shed blood, we are the state," and he was released.

● On May 20, 2021, two specialized sergeants put their guns to the head of a woman named Fidan Yıldırım, whom they claimed to be a suicide bomber, and attempted to beat her in Dersim. They had to let her go when the people on the site reacted and an investigation was launched against them but they went unpunished.



- On 3 August 2021, it was reported that a military person sexually abused a 16-year-old boy at a swimming pool facility in Dersim Center. He was not punished.

- 15 female students were sexually abused by their teacher in Diyarbakir's Dicle district. The mayor of Dicle, the district director of national education and the district prosecutor's office put pressure on the families to withdraw their complaints.

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Perpetrators in uniform are placed out of the bounds of law. They are exempted from many crimes that are defined as crimes in the constitution and that have criminal sanctions, and they are not punished even if they commit them.

**On the other hand, women who raise their voices against these crimes and wage women's struggle are regularly detained, arrested, and punished. Within the year 2021;**

- 1- Former HDP Bağlar district co-chair Arzu Karaman was sentenced to 9 years in prison for "being a member of a terrorist organization".

- 2- HDP Central Organizing Commission Co-spokesperson Özlem Gündüz was sentenced to 6 years in prison for struggling "so that women will not be murdered" and "to have women engage in democratic politics".

- 3- The board of judges sentenced Sur Municipality Co-Mayor Filiz Buluttekın to 7 years and 6 months in prison for alleged "membership in a terrorist organization".

- 4- DTK Council Member Jiyan Taş was sentenced to 6 years and 3 months in prison on the charge of "membership in a terrorist organization" on grounds of her activities.

- 5- On February 14, 2021, 8 people, including HDP Co-Mayor of Batman's Bekirhan town Gülistan Sönük and Kozluk Municipality Council member Şükran Çotak, were detained in Batman.

- 6- 3 HDP executives, including HDP Kars Provincial Co-Chair Sevda Subaşı, who were detained on February 12, were arrested.

- 7- During the house raids carried out in the early hours of morning on February 27, 14 people, including 79-year-old Meryem Soylu and 71-year-old Peace Mother Hatun Aslan, were detained and arrested.

**8-** Berivan Ado was detained in a house raid carried out by the gendarmerie in the Kızıltepe district of Mardin on 27 February.

**9-** In Mardin, women were fined 3,150 TL each on grounds of participation in the activities of the 25 November International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

**10-** The first hearing of former HDP Siirt Member of Parliament Hatice Kocaman, who was on trial with allegations of "membership in an armed terrorist organization" was held at the 9th Heavy Penal Court in Diyarbakır. The court decided to arrest Kocaman after taking her statement.

**11-** Perihan Karaman was detained in a house raid in the Alipaşa District of Van.

**12-** An investigation was launched against Şükran Akboğa, 59, living in Diyarbakır, on the grounds that she shared a photo of PKK Leader Abdullah Öcalan on her social media account, although she is illiterate.

**13-** The hearing of the case brought against TJA Spokesperson Ayşe Gökkan on the allegation of "membership in a terrorist organization" was held at the Diyarbakır 9th High Criminal Court, and a warrant was issued for her arrest.

**14-** HDP Sur District Co-chair Hatun Yıldız was sentenced to 6 years and 3 months in prison.

**15-** Varto Municipality Co-Mayor Ülkü Karaaslan, who was replaced by a state appointed trustee, was sentenced to 2 years and 3 months.

**16-** The 5-year prison sentence given to TJA activist Gülcihan Şimşek, was increased by half to 7 years and 6 months on the grounds that her "personality is prone to criminal offense". The court did not reduce the sentence.

**17-** Tevgera Jinên Azad (TJA) activist Beritan Önen was arrested in Diyarbakır after she was taken into custody during a night raid on her house.

**18-** HDP PM member Halide Türkoğlu was sentenced to 6 years and 3 months in prison for her membership in KJA and KURDÎ DER, which were closed by decree.

**19-** HDP Diyarbakır Provincial Co-chair Hülya Alökmen Uyanık was sentenced to 10 years and 6 months in prison for "membership in a terrorist organization" and the court issued an arrest warrant for her.

**20-** 26 women were detained in Diyarbakır, 11 of them were arrested.

**21-** In the operation carried out in the center and districts of Mardin, 7 people, including 72-year-old Meles Gültekin, were detained.

**22-** On 19 May, 15 people, including MEBYA-DER Co-chair Gülistan Öner, were detained in Van. 6 of them were arrested.

**23-** Peace Mother Fatma Turan was sentenced to 10 months and 25 days in prison on charges of "inciting the public to hatred and enmity" and "praising the crime and the criminal".

**24-** Dilşa Kocakaya, residing in Diyarbakır's Yenışehir district, was detained in a house raid on 8 June.

**25-** On 11 June, within the scope of an investigation carried out by the Hakkari Chief Public Prosecutor's Office Sipan Turan, former Provincial Co-chair of the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), Central District Co-chair Sinem Seven, Spokesperson of Hakkari Women's Assembly Zeynep Kaya and Şemdinli District Co-chair Sozdar Atilla were detained in early morning house raids carried out in the city center and Şemdinli district.

**26-** During morning house raids carried out in Mardin and its districts on 6 July, 29 people, including the Peace Mothers, were detained. 2 women were arrested.

**27-** On 14 July, gendarmerie raided a house in Karşıyaka Neighborhood of İpekyolu district of Van in the morning of 12 July and Meral Abi was detained.

**28-** On 16 July, HDP Tusba District Co-Chair Hanım Akkus was detained.

**29-** Egil Municipality Co-Mayor Gülistan Ensarioğlu, who was dismissed and replaced by a state appointed trustee, was sentenced to 6 years and 3 months in prison.

**30-** Former HDP Midyat District Co-chair Filiz Işık was sentenced to 6 years, 10 months and 15 days in prison.

**31-** On August 11, HDP Muş Provincial Co-Chair Belma Nergiz was detained and later arrested.

**32-** Six people, including Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) Provincial Organization executive Evliya Alkan, were detained in the house raids carried out by gendarmes in the Delezi village of Yüksekova district of Hakkari on 19 August.



**33-** A citizen named Melek Başkale was detained during a house raid in the Eyyübiye district of Urfa on 24 August and was later arrested.

**34-** Jinnews reporter Beritan Canözer was detained in a raid on her home.

**35-** In the indictment prepared by the Hakkari Chief Public Prosecutor's Office against 4 women politicians, the struggle of women against violence was targeted. In the indictment, the press meeting organized by the HDP Provincial Organization in Hakkari on 25 November 2020, within the scope of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Solidarity, was also deemed a "crime".

**36-** March 18: Tevgera Jinên Azad (TJA) activist Gift Yayık and HDP Youth Assembly member Berfin Can, who left the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) Cizre district building, were stopped and detained by the police.

**37-** July 16: During the house raid in Turgut Özal Neighborhood of Şırnak's İdil district, 8 months pregnant Hatice Baykara (28) was beaten by the police with a buttstock on her waist.

**38-** TJA activist Zelal Bilgin was sentenced to 9 years in prison on grounds of her activities related to women's struggle.

**39-** TJA spokesperson Ayşe Gökkan was sentenced to 30 years in prison on grounds of her work related to women's struggle and was sentenced to 30 years in prison.

While men who commit crimes against women shroud themselves in an armor of impunity, women who fight against this violence and work in various institutions and organizations are constantly subjected to judicial harassment, efforts to prevent violence against women in Kurdistan are declared a "crime" by the members of the judiciary here. In Mardin and Hakkari, women who made statements within the scope of the 25 November Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women were fined directly on the grounds of this event, and action was taken against them. In Mardin, each woman was fined 3 thousand 150 TL, and in the indictment prepared against 4 women in Hakkari, the press release organized by the Hakkari HDP Provincial Organization on 25 November 2020, within the scope of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Solidarity, was declared to be a "crime".

# CONCLUSION

The current government commits war crimes against women, especially young women, in the provinces of Kurdistan. The perpetrators of these war crimes are directly encouraged and are not punished in any way.

The historically constructed male-dominated mindset continues to slaughter and cut women off of life. This massacre is experienced not only on a physical level, but also on intellectual and emotional levels. Women are punished and ignored due to their identity, culture and political preferences as well as being in danger physically. Women who stand against these policies, struggle and defend an equal and free society are exposed to judicial harassment by the state and become the target of all kinds of dirty policies. The deepened conditions of isolation in the prison island of İmralı are used as a means of legitimizing unlawfulness and impunity, and all state crimes against Kurdish and Kurdish women are whitewashed under the name of struggle against "terrorism".

In this context, in Kurdistan male violence experienced at two levels. On the one hand is the oppression of male domination, which is directly practiced by men and provoked by politics and on the other hand is the reality of the nation-state added onto this dominant mindset. The current government commits war crimes against women, especially young women, in the provinces of Kurdistan. The perpetrators of these war crimes are directly encouraged and not punished in any way. Uniformed personnel attempting to deceive women, especially through social media, try to exploit their bodies, labor and identities with promises of "love, affection and marriage". This has reached such a level that many people living in the cities of Kurdistan are aware of this situation; all these dirty policies have increased day by day and have spread so widely that they have become common knowledge for all segments of the society. Despite this, no steps are taken to stop or prevent this situation, and Kurdish women who expose the situation are tried to be intimidated.

We are familiar with and know from history this organized male-state mind, which does not tolerate any organized force that resists it. Women whose bodies were exposed naked, women who were subjected to sexual abuse and rape in custody, women who were forced to migrate because of war, women on the walls of whose bedrooms immoral words were written, women murdered in party buildings, women driven to suicide... All these do not come about merely as consequences of male dominance but also as results of the policies of conquest of this dominating mindset. As Kurdish women, we will not give up the fight for women's liberation against these attacks, and we will continue to practice self-defense in all spheres of life, just as we did not bow to these policies yesterday and convinced the society in gender equality.



***Jin***

***Jiyan***

***Azadî***





## FACT FINDING REPORT ON MALE/STATE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN KURDISTAN

2021 (JANUARY-SEPTEMBER)

