

Censorship and

Self-censorship

in Turkey:

SEPTEMBER 2016 — DECEMBER 2017



**PLATFORM AGAINST
CENSORSHIP AND
SELF-CENSORSHIP**



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September 2016

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Censorship and Self-Censorship in the State of Emergency

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Foreword

The Susma Platform (Speak Up Platform) was founded in September 2016 under the auspices of P24 Platform for Independent Journalism to document censorship, self-censorship, defamation, moral lynching, and other restrictions on freedom of speech in Turkey; to exercise legal rights to defend those freedoms in such cases, and to provide avenues for solidarity, cooperation, and organization.

SUSMA was founded before the 15 July 2016 failed coup attempt and the subsequent state of emergency declared on 20 July.

At that founding, we were not aware of the terrifying days ahead. We were not aware that thousands of people would be laid off, that hundreds would be banned from public service, that associations and foundations would be shut down, dissenting media would be silenced, hundreds of academicians who had signed a petition for peace would be left unemployed and put on trial, or that those who painted, wrote poems, or worked on the news would find their homes invaded in dawn raids and then taken into custody and placed under arrest. We were not aware that Nobel Prize winner Albert Camus could be labelled a member of a terrorist organization, that publishing houses would be closed down, or that being targeted and lynched by pro-government newspapers or social media could be so easy. And we were not aware that all of this could happen at the drop of a hat.

As of writing, we set the latest number of those expelled from academic employment at 380. This is the result of 30 statutory decrees detailed in the section entitled "cases" below.

In 2016, the Chief Public Prosecutor's Office filed 3,658 confirmed criminal cases against people for defamation of the President of the Turkish Republic. (source: Ministry of Justice)

To repeat, the Susma Platform was founded before this horrendous series of events took place. It was established primarily to create a bond between people and between communities who experience discrimination, censorship, and similar barriers in art, academia, and publishing. And it was designed to give these groups legal support and to enable them to make common cause and to make themselves heard.

SUSMA is now in its fifteenth month of activities, as of the publication of this report. We have been through much. We have documented the scores of

cases that have reached our attention and we have come together with many participants from the worlds of art and the media.

The Susma Platform has organized events in Diyarbakır, İzmir, Eskişehir, Artvin, Ankara, Bursa, and Van, with the aim of building a nation-wide solidarity network, but also to bear witness to the variety of restrictions on freedom of speech that occur particularly in the periphery and away from the central glare. Media, publishers, NGO associations, foundations, writer organization representatives, journalists, literary figures, and artist groups have all attended these events.

The SUSMA team also have had meetings with the Diyarbakır and Antalya bar associations about collaboration in the creation of a legal commission against censorship.

The SUSMA team endeavours to publish texts, interviews, and news that document censorship and its impact. Roundtable meetings are an additional means of combining to combat censorship and self-censorship by bringing together creative names in contemporary art, cinema, theatre, literature, and publishing.

What follows are observations from the last 16 months. The media monitoring, censorship and self-censorship survey is proof and summary of the situation we are all in.

The Susma Platform will continue in its second year to document cases in arts and culture, media, and academia; to shape public opinion, and to provide legal training to an international standard.

In solidarity...

Manifesto

The Susma Platform was established under the umbrella organization of P24 Platform for Independent Journalism in order to help different voices speak out in a coherent manner, to encourage all groups who face discrimination to speak up for their freedom, to help them mobilize and to raise awareness.

SUSMA, through training and documentation and through its workshops, responds to the needs of journalists, writers, publishers, activists, artists, actors, and their representative organisations to speak out against censorship and self-censorship. Through this cooperation, it hopes to resist arbitrary prohibitions and restrictions, and to develop the skills and increase the capacity to fight censorship through the use of law. Its overall aim is to develop Turkish civil society's potential to support and defend freedom of speech.

The penalties for those who refuse to obey arbitrary restrictions and engage in self-censorship have become harsher by the day. Journalists are fired, editors and prominent columnists are blacklisted by mainstream media, art groups and artists are singled out and tarred for their personal beliefs, laid off from their jobs, or are otherwise suppressed. Turkish prisons still hold at least 140 journalists and writers who have been arrested or sentenced simply for expressing their opinion.

All our efforts to increase society's awareness, and reverse restrictive regulations and practices through advocacy and the courts are aimed at encouraging individuals and their networks to make the law work to resist censorship and self-censorship.

SUSMA is intended as a platform where different voices from art and media of Turkey band together to speak up. However, it pays special importance to regional journalists and artists, away from the large urban centres and who thus may feel even more intimidated by their relative isolation. The platform is open to all variety of occupations from all parts of the country, and to the participation of media members, artists, and organisations of different predispositions and ideas. The aim is to be able, through solidarity, to raise a chorus of voices that will be heard at the national level as a response to silence.

Cases

Below is a summary of events that define Turkey's art and culture environment over the last 16 months. The state of emergency declared after 15 July failed coup attempt and the government's subsequent ability to rule through statutory decree (executive decisions that have the force of law) create a picture in which academia, science, and arts & culture areas are most affected by censorship. Kurdish-majority urban centres have experienced over the same 16 months, a form of cultural oppression no less severe than the nadir of the 1990s.

These cases have been compiled using news published on the Susma Platform's website and open sources.

Aslı Erdoğan, Özgür Gündem advisory board member and writer, was arrested on charges of "being a member of a terrorist organization" and with making propaganda.

A large variety newspapers and television channels were banned after the declaration of the state of emergency (listed below).

Various oppositional newspapers such as *Cumhuriyet*, *BirGün*, *Evrensel*, and *Gündem* were designated as "prohibited publications," and banned from prisons. Halk TV's broadcast was stopped. In Gebze Prison, various books most of which from the Aram Publishing House were seized on grounds that there was an ordinance to have them confiscated.

Actor Levent Üzümcü was dismissed from İstanbul Municipal Theatre over his social media posts and statements. Director Ragıp Yavuz was also among those dismissed. Of the 20 actors expelled from İstanbul Municipal Theatre, 13 were reinstated.

Linguist and writer Necmiye Alpay, who went voluntarily to the prosecutor's office to testify as part of the daily Özgür Gündem investigation, was arrested.

Ahmet Altan, a journalist and writer who was remanded in custody as part

of the investigation about 15 July coup attempt and then set free, was remanded for a second time within the same day of his release after an objection by the prosecutor, and was subsequently charged and arrested.

Justice and Development Party (AKP) Group Deputy Chairman and Çanakkale Deputy and himself a lawyer, Bülent Turan targeted Beral Madra, General Art Director of Çanakkale Biennial, declaring her “a coup supporter” based on her social media posts. After Beral Madra's resignation, the biennial team CABININ announced the cancellation of the Çanakkale Biennial.

Distribution of a “coup d'état special issue” of the humour magazine *Leman* was prevented by police.

The 7th International Malatya Film Festival was cancelled by Malatya Municipality without explanation even though preparations for the event were largely complete.

Concert dates by Sila Gençoğlu in Ankara, İstanbul, Bursa, and Kayseri were cancelled after the singer announced that she would not take part in the officially organised Democracy and Martyrs Rally. Despite adverse reaction and being attacked in the media, Sila Gençoğlu stood by her refusal, explaining “I am definitely against coup. However, I prefer not to be part of such a show.”

Actor Levent Üzümcü's play *Anlatılan Senin Hikâyendir* was cancelled by Artvin Çoruh University Rectorate.

Batman Municipality Theatre Office was closed down by the central government appointed trustee who replaced the elected mayor.

Evensel Kültür, one of the longest circulating magazines on Turkish Literature, was closed down by statutory decree in its 25th year. Some 30 other publications including the Kurdish-focused *Tiroj*, Dicle News Agency, *Yüksekova News*, JİNHA, and *Azadiya Welat* were also closed down.

Reha Muhtar, whose column was censored, resigned from *Vatan* newspaper.

Eutelsat, the biggest satellite operator in Europe, dropped Med Nûçe TV's broadcast.

Police conducted a raid on Hayatın Sesi Televizyonu, İMÇ TV and Özgür Radio. Hayatın Sesi Television's YouTube broadcast was stopped. Police entered the studio and editing room of İMÇ TV while it was broadcasting live and censored the channel. Özgür Radio's terrestrial broadcasting was censored as well.

Journalists of Hayatın Sesi TV were denied severance pay.

Seyr-i Mesel Theatre, which is among the 370 associations that were closed down by Ministry of Internal Affairs as part of the state of emergency, was officially shut down and the entrance sealed.

The art fair Contemporary İstanbul was stormed by a group who described themselves as "nationalist conservatives" on its opening day. 20 people who said that they were from National View Foundation, objected to a work by Ali Elmacı being exhibited at the Isabel Croxatto Gallery stand. The group, chanting "Allahuakbar," demanded the removal of a sculpture, dressed in a bathing suit that had Sultan Abdulhamid II painted on it. After the sculpture was temporarily removed, the artist withdrew his work from the fair.

Ege University Communication Studies Community's screening of *Er ist wieder da*, a dramatic comedy which sees Adolf Hitler alive and hoping to make Germany great again, was banned by the dean's office.

A painting by Özgür Korkmazgil on show in the exhibition "Sizi Çok Formszu Gördüm" (I See You're Not in Good Shape) curated by Rahmi Ögdül as part of TÜYAP Art Fair was censored after police intervention. Korkmazgil withdrew all his works from the fair in response.

Cumhuriyet Case: *Cumhuriyet* daily's chief executive Akın Atalay; executive editor Murat Sabuncu; editorial consultant Kadri Gürsel, reader representative Güray Öz; columnist Hakan Kara, executive editor of newspaper's book supplement Turhan Günay; cartoonist Musa Kart; *Cumhuriyet* Foundation executive board members Önder Çelik and Bülent Utku; *Cumhuriyet*

Foundation advisory committee member M. Kemal Güngör; and reporter Ahmet Şık were arrested.

Yeşim Ustaoglu, renown filmmaker and screenwriter, had to cut certain scenes out of her most recent work, *Tereddüt*, to prevent it from being rated as 18+.

Yol TV, whose broadcast was stopped by RTÜK on charges of defaming the president, was closed down.

Posters of *Huzursuzluk*, a novel by Zülfü Livaneli, were not allowed in metro stations under the state of emergency.

Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, run by central government appointed administrators, changed the regulations of Diyarbakır City Theatre, and then annulled the contracts of thirty-one artists, in effect shutting down the theatre.

Amed Art Gallery in Diyarbakır was closed down by administrators.

The İstanbul Kurdish Institute, which is one of the first institutions to research Kurdish language, culture, and literature, was closed down by statutory decree.

Birlik Theatre in Ankara was prosecuted after staging *Üç Kuruşluk Diktatör* (The Three Penny Dictator) by Muzaffer İzgü.

All branches of the Mezopotamya Cultural Centre, except for its İstanbul headquarters and Bahar Cultural Centre in Batman, were ordered closed.

Batman Yılmaz Güney Cinema Hall became unusable after a fire whose causes were unknown.

Sara Aktaş, an activist with Tevgera Jinên Azad (TJA, Free Women's Platform) was arrested in Diyarbakır as part of political round-up. The Public Prosecutor's Office interrogated Aktaş about poems she had written on grounds they were "inciting hatred and hostility."

After the ban on Ankara University Political Science Faculty's (also known as *Mülkiye*) traditional *Cow Festival*, the end-of-the-year festival of Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University was also banned under state of emergency regulations.

The State Theatre in the city of Van first turned down Nupelda Theatre Group's letter of application to use its stage on the grounds that there was an investigation regarding the play *Mala Dinan*, and then refused to lend the stage on the grounds that the letter had not been submitted on time.

The humour magazine *Gırgır* was closed down by its parent company after publishing a cartoon about the prophet Moses.

One of the most established faculties of Turkey, the Ankara University Faculty of Language, History and Geography's Department of Theatre was effectively closed down after staff were summarily dismissed. Expelled academicians include Elif Çongur, Beliz Güçbilmez, Süreyya Karacabey, Şamil Yılmaz, and Ceren Özcan.

The Müjdat Gezen Arts Centre in İstanbul was the victim of an arson attack. One week before the incident, Akit TV's presenter Ahmet Kezer had targeted Müjdat Gezen with a stream of invective: "Now he claims to be teaching art in a place called Müjdat Gezen Arts Centre. Show us a bit of leg! What do you think will happen to the kids you send there!"

Kırmızı Kedi Publishers were attacked by two people wearing balaclavas. Attackers shouted, "Sabahattin Önkibar should watch his steps" referring to the book Önkibar had written, *Devlet Bahçeli ve MHP İçin Her Şey* (Everything for Devlet Bahçeli and [his party] the NAP) and ran away.

İzmir Yenikapı Theater, the Antakya and İzmir Ayışığı Arts Centres were closed and officially sealed by statutory decree.

Aram Serhad, a Kurdish musician who performed at the concert the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) organized for Rojava in Elazığ in 2015, was detained for alleged "terrorist organization propaganda." Serhad was released from prison after 41 days.

Composer, pianist, and singer Selen Gülün announced that the Turkish Cultural Office of Turkey withdrew support for her concert in Japan after she shared “Diyarbakır’da Geçmektedir,” Ümit Kıvanç’s article published on *Gazete Duvar*, on her Twitter account.

Nobel Literature laureate Orhan Pamuk confirmed to SUSMA that *Hürriyet* newspaper refused to publish an interview in which he said that he would vote “no” at the constitutional referendum, brought forward by the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP).

A TV show by folk musician Sabahat Akkiraz for state broadcaster TRT was banned due to the allegations she participated in the “no” campaign for the referendum.

One of the honorary guests of İstanbul Film Festival, Ian McKellen said “as an openly gay man,” but his words were not translated into Turkish at the opening ceremony.

Bilgi University Culture and Opinion Club’s conference titled *Dünden Bugüne Kürtçe Tiyatro (Kurdish Theatre: Yesterday and Today)* was not allowed by Bilgi University. The event was taken over by Boğaziçi University.

Director Kazım Öz, whose movie *Zer* was competing in the İstanbul Film Festival, drew attention to scenes censored by the Ministry of Culture by showing a blackened screen.

The feet of three women statues, located in the garden of Taşbaşı Cultural Centre in Ordu, were broken. The statue had previously been vandalized as well.

The statue Özgür Olmak (Being Free), located in Nilüfer district of Bursa and made by Vietnamese artist Van Hoang Huynh, was attacked for the third time. Its head was ripped off after having been previously vandalized with paint.

Twitter released its Transparency Report covering the second half of 2016. According to the report, Turkey heads the list of countries most frequently requesting accounts to be closed down.

Turkey correspondent for *Die Welt* daily Deniz Yücel was formally arrested after being remanded in custody for 14 days as part of an investigation into a news story compiled from the leaked e-mail account of Berat Albayrak -President Tayyip Erdogan's son-in-law and Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Among the charges levelled against him were news and commentary which raised questions over responsibility for the 15 July coup attempt and news about the (lethal) basement raids that took place during the curfew imposed on the south-eastern city of Cizre.

Nûda Culture Centre and Feqiyê Teyran Culture Centre in Van were closed down through statutory decree.

The mayors of Mersin's Anamur District and of Kayseri's Develi District refused to allow Mahsun Kırmızıgül's latest movie *Vezir Parmağı* to be screened at movie theatres in their districts.

Writer Pelin Buzluk was dismissed from her job at Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources. Buzluk said that the reason for her dismissal was that she was among the writers who signed a petition supporting dismissed academicians.

Cable TV provider Digitürk excluded the movie *NO*, the Oscar nominated Chilean film which tells of the defeat of the Pinochet regime in a referendum, from its view-on-demand platform as part of the then trend of demonizing the very word "no," due to the approaching constitutional referendum brought forward by the ruling party.

Documentary director Kazım Kızıl and six others in his team were detained while trying to film the "No, we won" demonstration in İzmir protesting the legitimacy of the constitutional referendum. Mr. Kızıl was released after three months.

An investigation was launched into those who shared photos and videos of demonstrations protesting the legitimacy of the referendum result in Adana on charges of "inciting people to hatred and hostility" and "defamation."

Of the 11 people detained in a police raid on the İstanbul İdil Cultural Centre, 7 were arrested, including members of the leftist folk music group, Grup Yorum.

The magazine *1453 İstanbul Kültür ve Sanat* published by the İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality was closed down because of an image of a yawning cat behind the words “Erdo-Gone! Inshallah, Mashallah” and employees of the magazine were placed under investigation.

The book *Kadın ve Aile İlmihali* (The Woman and Family Catechism) distributed by Justice and Development Party (AKP) Şahinbey Municipality in Gaziantep described television, magazines, and newspapers as “narcotics.”

The Ministry of Education began blocking access to a large number of news websites as part of its “safe internet” application. The news websites were blocked in other institutions operating under the ministry’s auspices.

BirGün newspaper columnist Enver Aysever, who was put on trial at the İstanbul 2nd Penal Court of First Instance for allegedly insulting Grand National Assembly of Turkey in one of his articles, was fined YTL 10,620.

Access to world’s biggest internet encyclopaedia, Wikipedia (in all versions and in all languages) has been blocked in Turkey on grounds that “Wikipedia refuses to remove content that supports terrorism” and that the US-based foundation has not opened a representation office in Turkey.

The İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality, organiser of the World Cities Expo, took Wikipedia founder Jimmy Wales off its guest list.

News website *sendika.org* was censored repeatedly throughout the year. At the time of this report’s preparation, it was blocked for the 62nd time, and was hence using the address <http://sendika62.org>.

Legal proceedings were opened against *Vice News* reporter Jake Hanrahan, who was temporarily detained in Diyarbakır while making a documentary about the curfew. Cameraman Philip Pendlebury, translator Mohamed

İsmael Rasool, and driver Abdullah Direkçi were also detained. Rasool was released after four months. The crew was charged with “working on behalf of a terrorist organization” and “making propaganda on behalf of a terrorist organization.”

Human-headed lion statues in front of Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality were removed.

İzmir State Opera and Ballet conductor İbrahim Yazıcı and Bursa District State Symphony Orchestra violinist Filiz Özsoy were banned from state employment by statutory decree.

Pianist Dengin Ceyhan was detained and arrested on account of her social media posts.

Ali Rıza Tığ, the owner of Zonguldak newspaper *Pusulâ*, was beaten at a café by Harun Demir, a AKP Zonguldak district administrative board member. Demir was reportedly reacting to a news story about troubles affecting his family business.

The Board of Protecting Minors from Obscene Publications deemed March 2017 issue of *Elle* magazine to be “obscene.”

A film scheduled to be shown in the 16th İf Independent Films Festival in İstanbul, *Son Şinitzel* (The Last Schnitzel), a short film which tells the story of the desires of the imaginary 47th president of the Great Turkish State, could not be screened on grounds that the film had not received an operating license.

The statue depicting the Greek goddess Demeter and her daughter Persephone in the Torbalı district of İzmir was removed and a monument of Ottoman Sultan's seal put in its place.

Avesta Publishing's storage depot in İskenderpaşa neighbourhood of Diyarbakır's Sur district was set on fire by person or persons unknown.

The 40-year old Belge Publishing House was raided by police and 2,000 books were seized.

Kastamonu University Senate decision to change the name of the Cide Rifat Ilgaz Vocational High School to Cide Vocational High School was revoked after adverse reaction.

Tunceli Governorship announced that 17th Munzur Culture and Nature Festival could not take place under the state of emergency.

The names Albert Camus and Spinoza were found in Free Journalists Society's co-chair Nevin Erdemir's notebook and cited as "members of a terrorist organization" in the indictment filed against her.

75 books from Aram Publishing, which produces books in Turkish and Kurdish, were banned.

A lawsuit was filed against academicians who signed the declaration "We won't take part in this crime" protesting the blockade of cities in the southeast.

ETHA and ANF reporter Arzu Demir's book *Savaşta Barışta Özgürlükte Aşkta Dağın Kadın Hali* (The Condition of Womanized Mountains, in War and in Peace, in Freedom and in Love) was banned. Another book by Ms. Demir, *Devrimin Rojava Hali* (The Revolution's State of Rojava) had previously been banned.

Abdülhakim Bağış, one of the actors of Yenikapı Theater that staged a play in İzmir to commemorate the Roboskî massacre was placed under probation after a day of detention.

Zehra Doğan, an editor with Jin News Agency, was arrested. Doğan, who is also a painter had posted on social media depictions of the curfew and security operations in Nusaybin, which were produced as evidence of propaganda on behalf of a (proscribed) organisation.

The governor of İstanbul cancelled Beşiktaş Municipality's 4-day long May festival, organized for the commemoration of Atatürk Youth and Sports Day.

Hacı Asım Akgül, the trustee appointed to Çatak Municipality of Van, changed the name of a park dedicated to the slain human rights lawyer Tahir Elçi to the “Martyr GK Ali Ogün Park” after a village guard killed in an alleged PKK ambush.

The statue of Kurdish singer Şivan Perwer in Siverek District of Urfa was vandalized by person or persons unknown.

New York City University academician Yasemin Yılmaz’s presentation on “press freedom” for Koç University was cancelled on grounds of “political sensitivity.”

Silivri Prison refused to allow accession of Fehim Taştekin’s book *Rojava’da Kürtlerin Zamanı* (the Time of the Kurds in Rojava) and Murat Türk’s book *Köprüdeki Düşman* (Enemy on the Bridge) despite the lack of a formal ban.

Pride buttons, which had been available in Turkey since the beginning of June, were removed from circulation.

Those detained for unspecified reasons after a police raid on the İdil Cultural Centre were reported to have been tortured to the accompaniment of the Ottoman Military March.

Avesta Publishing House, Aram Publications, and the İsmail Beşikçi Foundation Publications had their application to take part in the 9th Kadıköy Book Days refused.

The 25th Musa Anter & Free Press Martyrs Journalism Awards ceremony was banned by Beyoğlu District Governorate under the state of emergency.

Şûjin, a news website staffed by women employees was blocked, along with *Rojeva Media*, and *dihaber*.

Melih Gürler, a cartoonist under detention at the Samsun Bafra Type T Closed Prison, wrote a letter to head of the People’s Democratic Party (HDP),

Selahattin Demirtaş –now in Edirne Prison-- for which he was sentenced to 10 months for “insulting the minister of justice.”

A statue of 12-year-old Uğur Kaymaz, who in 2004 had been shot and killed along with his father Ahmet Kaymaz, in Mardin Kızıltepe, was removed by the government-appointed trustee.

Lütfü Oflaz, a dissident voice in *Star* newspaper resigned after the paper refused to publish his column.

The 1st International Ovacık Art Days, which had been planned to take place in Tunceli Ovacık, was cancelled under the state of emergency.

A detention order was issued for director Mustafa Altıoklar for social media posts.

Hasip Yanlıç, a Kurdish language teacher and writer, was detained. During the search of his house, *Delila* a book by eminent journalist Hasan Cemal was seized along with five other books.

The Ministry of Education-produced *Social Sciences Student Workbook* for seventh graders was removed from the classroom “as a matter of great urgency” after it was realized that the books contained a chapter about government censorship of the press.

Schaubühne Berlin, revoked their decision to stage *Richard III* at the 21st İstanbul Theatre Festival, citing security concerns arising from arbitrary and random arrests in Turkey.

A group of 10 attacked journalist Sabahattin Önkibar at the Kırmızı Kedi Publishers’ stall during the 36th TÜYAP Book Fair while he was signing his book about politician Meral Akşener entitled *Asena*.

The People’s Democracy Party (HDP) Hopa District Co-President Cemil Aksu, better known for his writing on ecology, was detained for his social media postings.

Directors of the 12th Contemporary İstanbul art fair ordered the removal of work by the Iranian artist Niloufer Banisadr for its “provocative elements.” The work depicted women with hijab and bare backs and midriff juxtaposed to show photos of Atatürk.

The “national film competition” category was removed from International Antalya Film Festival which was organized by Antalya Metropolitan Municipality.

RTÜK had an emergency meeting to remove Rûdaw TV from the Türksat satellite. The board also ruled to remove K24 and Waar stations.

Mahrem: Gizli Belgelerde Türkiye'nin Sırları (Confidential: Turkey's Secrets Through Secret Documents) by Barış Pehlivan and Barış Terkoğlu was banned from sale by court order following an application by Justice and Development Party (AKP) Kahramanmaraş deputy, Celalettin Güvenç.

The trustee appointed to Diyarbakır's Lice Municipality changed the names of the parks that were named after Ceylan Önkol and Medeni Yıldırım (young people who died through alleged actions of security forces). After the appointment of a trustee, Yenişehir Municipality changed a Kurdish signboard into Turkish of a park named after the prominent Kurdish writer Mehmed Uzun.

The dean of the Language, History, and Geography Faculty of Ankara University ruled that musical instruments would not be allowed on campus without an “entry pass.” When a theatre student asked why musical instruments were not allowed on campus, İhsan Çiçek answered: “People played instruments and danced the *halay* on the day the district governor was killed. What if someone plays Kurdish songs and provokes people? I can't be sure about it.”

Sabah newspaper published the photos of prominent writers and personalities in the performing arts including Mustafa Altıoklar, Bülent Emrah Parlak, Cem Mumcu, Şehrazat, Levent Üzümcü, and Ceren Moray under the headline “Enemies of Turkey.”

Cumhuriyet Case: Güray Öz, Musa Kart, Bülent Utku, Hakan Kara, Önder Çelik, Kemal Güngör, and Turhan Günay were discharged. The other defendants are still under arrest.

Distributors digitally removed scenes depicting nudity from *Blade Runner 2049*, the sequel to the cult science-fiction film *Blade Runner*, for its showing in Turkey.

Çağdaş Erdoğan, featured as among “Ones to Watch” by the *British Journal of Photography*, was arrested for alleged “membership of a terrorist organization.”

Painter and painting teacher Fatoş İrven was detained in Diyarbakır airport on her way to Istanbul due to a lawsuit that had been filed in 2013.

Chairman of Anadolu Kültür Osman Kavala, a businessman known for his civil society activities was detained and charged with “attempting to remove the government of the Turkish Republic” and “attempting to abolish the constitutional order.”

“Muslim anti-capitalist” writer İhsan Eliaçık was surrounded and subjected to insults at the entrance to Kayseri Book Fair. After an appeal by Eliaçık's publisher, Tekin Publishing House and the Turkey Publishers Association, Ayrıntı, İletişim, Metis, Doğu, Günışığı, On8, Doğan and other publishers withdrew from the fair.

A group attacked the *Kapı Çalana Açılır* (Doors Open to Those Who Knock) exhibition in the Abdülmecid Efendi Mansion curated from the Ömer Koç Collection. The protesters shouted, “Is this secularism?” and tried to destroy the artworks.

Having been attacked in Kayseri Book Fair, İhsan Eliaçık's invitation as guest of honour to the Trakya Book Fair was withdrawn by the fair administration.

At the 27th Art Fair in Istanbul, the TÜYAP administration removed Mustafa Özel's nude paintings which had been targeted on social media. The works were replaced after an age limit (18+) was put into effect.

German LGBTI Film Days, about to take place for the first time in Ankara, was banned due to "certain social sensitivities."

The Governor of Ankara announced that LGBTT and LGBTI organizations' activities such as film screenings, theatrical performances, panels, talks, and exhibitions were to be banned indefinitely as of 18 November.

In Ankara, the Middle East Technical University administration cut off electricity in the cafeteria of the 3rd Dormitory to prevent a screening of the film *Pride*.

The governor of Kocaeli issued a decision to seal off the Körfez Community Centre citing the social and cultural workshops held for children over the summer.

The Susma Platform's screening of *Zer* at the Cinevan movie theatre on 24 November was cancelled at the last minute along with the post-screening discussion with director Kazım Öz, after Van Municipality refused permission for the film to be shown.

State broadcaster, TRT, cut a live broadcast of the leader of the opposition Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu as he tried to accuse President Erdoğan's family and inner circle with transferring money abroad.

Nâzım Hikmet's book *Yaşamak Güzel Şey Be Kardeşim* (Life's Good, Brother) was discovered to have remained censored after its first 1963 publication when reprinted by Yapı Kredi Publishing in 2002.

Ali Savcı, the producer of a biographical film about President Tayyip Erdoğan called *Reis* (The Chief) as well as the director of *Uyanış* (The Awakening), which tells the story of the 15 July coup attempt, was detained and faces charges carrying a sentence of 22.5 years.

A planned screening was prevented of the documentary *Sûr: Ax û Welat* (Sur: the Land and the Country) at the Şişli Cemal Candaş

City Cultural Centre in İstanbul as part of the 2nd anniversary of the curfew in the Sûr neighbourhood of Diyarbakır.

The Audiobook Library opened by Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality to provide disabled children with material in their mother tongue was closed down. Those who worked at the department were fired, and access to its resources prevented.

The Ş. Elî Temel Culture and Arts Center in Mardin's Kızıltepe district, which bears the name of Kurdish musician Ali Temel, was closed by the trustee mayor appointed by the government.

Ertuğrul Mavioğlu and Çayan Demirel, who directed the documentary *Bakur/ Kuzey* (North) which was barred from being screened at the 34th İstanbul Film Festival in 2015 due to the lack of a registration document and subsequently displayed in many cities, are facing a lawsuit opened by the Prosecutor's Office of Batman province on charges of "terror propaganda" two years after the documentary's release.

The statue of Hayrettin Karaca, the founding chairman of The Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion, for Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitats (TEMA), one of Turkey's leading association in the area of protecting the environment, has been vandalized by unidentified assailants. The statue, located in Yalova province in Western Turkey, was attacked twice before in the past and partly destroyed as a result.

The Chief Public Prosecutor's Office of İstanbul has opened an investigation into TÜYAP Fair and Exhibition Center on the grounds that it hosted the meetings of the Turkish Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists (TUSKON), a business association alleged to be linked with the Gülen organization, from 2014 to the coup attempt on July 15, 2016.

CNR Expo Fair Center barred the publishing house Siyah Beyaz Yayınevi from participating to their book fairs.

A play by Duygu Şahlar, *Bişey Anlatıcam Eee? Kurtulduk mu?* (I'll Tell You Something So What? Are We Saved?) was banned from theaters by the district governorships of Bodrum, Datça, Marmaris and Fethiye in Muğla province. The play by Şahlar, a pre-school teacher dismissed from her job in Hatay province by decree, was based on the stories of public workers who have been arrested under the State of Emergency.

The Film Festival "Which Human Rights", which was planned to be organized between 13-17 December 2017 in Istanbul, Van and Diyarbakır provinces, was barred from being held in Diyarbakır following the city's Governor's Office's refusal of granting an authorization.

A number of books sent to a detainee at the Diyarbakır High Security Prison, Mahsum Koyun, were seized on the grounds that "they could cause encrypted and uncontrolled communication and harm the institution's security". The books included classics such as *Robinson Crusoe*, *Tom Sawyer*, *The Little Prince*, *Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves*, Turkish author Namık Kemal Dinç's *Kanatların Gölgesinde & Şengal Dile Gelirse* (Under the Shadow of the Wings & If Shengal Speaks) as well as Noam Chomsky's *Optimism Over Despair* and C. Wright Mills' *The Power Elite*.

The screening of *Kuir Kısalar* – a selection of 10 LGBTI+-themed short movies – and the film discussion were banned on December 29, 2017, by the district governorship of Beyoğlu in Istanbul on the grounds of "ensuring public wellbeing". The screening, initially planned to take place on November 25, 2017, at Pera Museum's Auditorium under the partnership of British Council and KuirFest, had been postponed to January 12, 2018, after being considered "against constitutional order and public morality".

List Of Arrested Journalists

This following list has been compiled from www.expressioninterrupted.com/tr/, a website that monitors legal process affecting those investigated and prosecuted for offences involving freedom of speech (as of 31 December 2017). The name is given followed where appropriate by affiliation.

Abdulkadir Turay

Abdullah Kaya

Abdullah Kılıç

Abdullah Özyurt

Abdulvahap İş

Ahmet Altan

Ahmet Feyzullah Özyurt

Ahmet Memiş

Ahmet Metin Sekizkardeş

Ahmet Şık

Ahmet Turan Alkan

Ahmet Yavaş

Akın Atalay

Alaattin Güner

Ali Ahmet Böken

Ali Aşık

Ali Babür Boysal

Ali Bulaç

Ali Ünal

Ali Yüce

Arafat Dayan

Aslı Ceren Aslan

Ayhan Demir

Ayşe Nazlı Ilıcak

Ayşenur Parıldak

Aytekin Gezici

Aziz İstegün

Bayram Kaya

Behram Kılıç

Beytullah Özdemir

Burak Ekici

Burçin Dokgöz

Cemal Azmi Kalyoncu

Ceren Taşkın

Cuma Kaya

Cuma Ulus

Cüneyt Seza Özkan

Çağdaş Erdoğan

Deniz Yücel

Emin Demir

Emre Soncan

Ercan Gün

Erdal Süsem

Erdal Şen

Erdoğan Alayamut

Erol Yüksel

Erol Zavar

Fahrettin Kılıç

Faruk Akkan

Ferhat Çiftçi

Fevzi Yazıcı

Gökçe Fırat Çulhaoğlu

Gurbet Çakar

Gültekin Avcı

Habip Güler

Hakan Aksel

Hakan Ergün

Hakan Taşdelen

Halil İbrahim Mert

Hamit Dilbahar

Hamza Günerigök

Hanım Büşra Erdal

Hasan Duman

Hatice Duman

Havva Cuştan

Hayati Yıldız

Hidayet Karaca

Hüseyin Aydın

Hüseyin Turan

İbrahim Balta

İbrahim Kareyeğen

İdris Okur

İdris Sayılğan

İsmail Efe

İsmail Ersan

İsminaz Temel

Kamuran Sunbat

Kemal Demir

Kemal Özer

Kenan Karavil

Mehmet Ali Ay

Mehmet Altan

Mehmet Baransu

Mehmet Dener

Mehmet Güleş

Mehmet Gündem

Mehmet Kuru

Mehmet Özdemir

Meltem Oktay

Mikail Barut

Miktat Algül

Mizgin Çay

Muhammet Taşçılar

Muhsin Pilgir

Murat Avcioğlu

Murat Çapan

Murat Dağdeviren

Murat Sabuncu

Mustafa Erkan Acar

Mustafa Gök

Mustafa Ünal

Mutlu Çölgeçen

Mutlu Özay

Mümtazer Türköne

Nadir Yücel

Nedim Türfent

Nizamettin İzgi

Nuh Gönültaş

Nur Ener

Nuri Durna

Nuri Yeşil

Nurullah Kaya

Oğuz Usluer

Osman Yakut

Ömer Oruç

Özcan Keser

Özkan Erdoğan

Rabia Özkaya

Ramazan Alkan

Resul Cengiz

Sadık Demir

Sait Gürkan Tuzlu

Salih Erbekler

Sami Tunca

Semiha Mete

Serhat Şeftali

Serkan Aydemir

Serkan Erdoğan

Seyid Kılıç

Seyithan Akyüz

Şahabettin Demir

Şahin Alpay

Şeref Yılmaz

Şerife Oruç

Tahsin Kürklü

Togay Okay

Tuncer Çetinkaya

Ufuk Şanlı

Ünal Tanık

Vahit Yazgan

Yakup Çetin

Yakup Şimşek

Yalçın Güler

Yasir Kaya

Yener Dönmez

Yetkin Yıldız

Yılmaz Kahraman

Zafer Özsoy

Zehra Doğan

Ziya Ataman

Closed Media Organs

Bugün TV

Can Erzincan TV

Dünya TV

Hira TV

İrmak TV

Kanal 124

Kanaltürk

MC TV

Mehtap TV

Merkür TV

Samanyolu News

Samanyolu TV

SRT TV

Tuna Shopping TV

Yumurcak TV

İMC TV

Hayatın Sesi TV

Özgür Gün TV

Van TV

Van Genç TV

TV 10

Jiyan TV

Azadi TV

Denge TV

Mezopotamya TV

Med Nuçe TV

Birlik Media TV

Bariş TV

Adana Media Newspaper

Akdeniz Türk Newspaper

Şuhut'un Sesi Newspaper

Kurtuluş Newspaper

Lider Newspaper

İscehisar Newspaper

Durum Newspaper

Türkeli Newspaper

Antalya Newspaper

Yerel Bakış Newspaper

Nazar Newspaper

Batman Newspaper

Batman Postası

Batman Doğuş Newspaper

Bingöl Olay Newspaper

İrade Newspaper

İskenderun Olay Newspaper

Ekonomi Newspaper

Ege'de Son Söz Newspaper

Demokrat Gebze Newspaper

Kocaeli Manşet Newspaper

Bizim Kocaeli Newspaper

Haber Kütahya Newspaper

Gediz Newspaper

Zafer Newspaper

Hisar Newspaper

Turgutlu Havadis Newspaper

Milas Feza Newspaper

Türkiye'de Yeni Yıldız Newspaper

Hakikat Newspaper

Urfa News Agency

Ajans 11

Yeni Emek Newspaper

Banaz Postası

Son Nokta Newspaper

Merkür Haber

Millet Newspaper

Bugün Newspaper

Meydan Newspaper

Özgür Düşünce Newspaper

Taraf Newspaper

Yarına Bakış Newspaper

Yeni Hayat Newspaper

Zaman Newspaper

Today's Zaman

Özgür Gündem

Azadiya Welat

Batman Çağdaş Newspaper

Cizre Postası Newspaper

Güney Express Newspaper

İdil Haber Newspaper

Kızıltepe'nin Sesi Newspaper

Prestij Haber Newspaper

Urfanatik Newspaper

Yüksekova News

Akademik Araştırmalar Magazine

Aksiyon Magazine

Asya Pasifik Magazine

Bisiklet Çocuk Magazine

Diyalog Magazine

Avrasya Magazine

Ekolife Magazine

Ekoloji Magazine

Fountain Magazine

Gonca Magazine

Gül Yaprağı Magazine

Nokta Magazine

Sızıntı Magazine

Yağmur Magazine

Yeni Ümit Magazine

Zirve Magazine

Evrensel Kültür Magazine

Özgürlük Dünyası Magazine

Tiroj Magazine

Aksaray Mavi Radio

Aktüel Radio

Berfin Radio

Burç Radio

Cihan Radio

Dünya Radio

Esra Radio

Haber Radio Ege

Herkül Radio

Jest Radio

Kanaltürk Radio

Radio 59

Radio Aile Rehberi

Radio Bamteli

Radio Cihan

Radio Fıkh

Radio Küre

Radio Mehtap

Radio Nur

Radio Şemşik

Samanyolu Haber

Umut Radio

Yağmur Radio

Rengin Radio

Özgür Radio

Ses Radio

Radio Karacadağ

Özgür Güneş Radio

Patnos FM

Dünya Radio

Altın Burç Publishing

Burak Press Distribution

Define Publishing

Dolunay Eğitim Publishing
Distribution

Giresun Press Distribution

Gonca Publishing House

Gül Yurdu Publishing

GYV Publishing

Işık Akademi Publishing

Işık Özel Eğitim Publishing

İklim Press, Publishing
& Marketing

Kaydırak Publishing

Kaynak Publishing

Kervan Press & Publishing

Kuşak Publishing

Muştu Publishing

Nil Publishing

Rehber Publishing

Sürat Publishing, Advertisement
& Education Tools

Sütun Publishing

Şahdamar Publishing

Ufuk Press, Publishing, News
Agency & Marketing

Ufuk Publishing

Waşanxaneyə Nil Publishing

Yay Press Distribution

Yeni Akademi Publishing

Yitik Hazine Publishing

Zambak Press, Publishing,
Education & Tourism

Cihan News Agency

Muhabir News Agency

SEM News Agency

Dicle News Agency

Jin News Agency

Express Newspaper, Adana

Türkiye Manşet, Çorum

Dağyeli Newspaper, Hatay

Akis Newspaper, Kütahya

İpekyolu Newspaper, Ordu

Son Dakika Newspaper, İzmir

Yedigün Newspaper, Ankara

Haberexen Magazine, Samsun

Batman FM

Dokuz8 News

Kurultay News

Yol TV

Channel On4

Channel 124

Yürüyüş Magazine

İpekyolu Van Newspaper

İBB Kültür Magazine

Dihaber Agency

Şujin Publishing

Rojeva Media

Diyarbakir and Southeast Region:

Arts and Culture in Kurdish Districts Test The State of Emergency

Vecdi Erbay

With the 20 July 2016 declaration of state of emergency, the use of statutory decrees (in which executive fiat acquires the status of law) have become a fact of life. The damage this has done in the arena of arts and culture has been considerable with the greatest impact felt in municipalities formerly under the control of the (DHP affiliated) Democratic Regions Party. These DBP municipalities had a policy of multilingualism, and gave emphasis to women's issues as well as arts and culture. However, with the replacement of elected officials by government appointed trustees armed with the power to rule through statutory decrees, scheduled shows, and facilities were either closed down or rendered useless after staff were dismissed. Some of the facilities were repurposed as extra-curricular Koran schools.

The DBP controlled 102 municipalities at the declaration of the state of emergency. Trustees were appointed to 94 of these districts, 3 of which are metropolitan municipalities. Some 94 mayors were arrested, 70 of which are still in prison. Despite the passage of months, many of these mayors have yet to appear in court.

DBP municipalities' approach and contributions in the field of culture are summarised as follows:

A central principle of DBP municipalities was to protect and nurture cultural variety so municipalities under their control bore the aspirations of Kurds whose own culture had been a victim of annihilation as well as those of other peoples of the region (Assyrians, Armenians, Mihelmis). Arts and culture became a priority. In contrast to a state tradition centred around a monolithic language and culture, local governments were determined not to compromise their commitment to cultural richness and diversity.

The municipalities which had come under DBP control were far from possessing the technical infrastructure or mentality to implement this ambitious project. Indeed, they inherited state structures designed to actively frustrate any such intention and intentionally to deprive the municipalities in the region of the facilities they sought. So, it is no exaggeration to say that DBP municipalities' work in this regard was revolutionary.

Starting with Diyarbakır, municipalities under DBP control began to organize arts and cultural activities. The Amed Arts and Culture Festival, Amed Film Days, Van Arts and Culture Festival, Munzur Nature and Culture Festival, Şırnak Berxbir (Sheepshearing) Festival, the Muş-Varto Girê Koxê (Koğ Hill) Festival, the Batman Arts and Culture Festival, and the Yılmaz Güney Film Days all became the start of a tradition. In addition to a scheduled calendar of events, DBP municipalities also opened arts and culture centres to nurture different ethnic cultures and languages.

Some of the cultural centres that operated under the municipalities are as follows: Van Metropolitan Municipality Nuda Cultural Centre, Diyarbakır Kayapınar Municipality Cigerxwîn Culture and Youth Centre, Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality Aram Tigran Conservatory, Şırnak Cizre Municipality Berîvan Cultural Centre, Batman Municipality Yılmaz Güney Movie Hall, Batman Municipality Bahar Arts and Culture Centre, Ağrı Municipality Sema Arts and Culture Centre, Mardin Nusaybin Mîtanî Cultural Centre.

Art training workshops created a local dynamic which was responsible for producing seminal work that would set the arts and culture agenda in these cities for the years ahead. Hundreds of artists, literary personalities, and academicians were brought together with local people. Cinema days, film festivals and literature days were a response to popular needs and demands. Language protection and development branch offices were established so that it became possible to develop and use more widely the very languages of the region that had once been targeted for assimilation. Municipal theatres that were being established paid attention to folk drama so that work on both local theatre could gather pace but also so that the more established classics could be staged in the languages of the region.

For instance, hundreds of performances of the Kurdish comedy *Mala Dinan û Mala Extiyaran* (The House of the Mad and Elderly) and director Haldun Dormen's *Çirokek Zivistanê* (A Winter Tale) were staged in Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality City. The ambition to staging theatre festivals in many places became a reality.

After the imposition of centrally appointed trustees (administrators)

The above is a brief summary of the period of DBP local governance. Once the (elected) municipalities were placed under appointed trusteeship,

the situation was turned on its head. Trustees that were appointed to municipalities as governors and district governors intervened in social fields as well as arts and culture. Festivals were cancelled, theatres and art institutions were rendered void of purpose, Kurdish park names were changed, statues were destroyed or removed.

It is possible to list some of the more striking examples which provoked local reaction:

The trustee who was appointed to Diyarbakir Centre Sur Municipality on 16 September 2016 reassigned actors who worked in Diyarbakir Metropolitan Municipality City Theatre to become security staff. Actors who asked for retirement on 21 November were laid off without their pension despite 27-year-long service. On 6 January 2017, actors who work at Diyarbakir Metropolitan Municipality City Theatre were fired and their contracts not renewed.

On 30 September, the government appointed trustee Şevket Ertuğ Aksoy Eylül abolished the Batman Municipality City Theatre Directorate.

Arts and culture foundations in DBP municipalities-run all had their own theatre groups. With the coming of trustee, actors were laid off and theatres left empty.

Television stations and newspapers closed down

On 28 September, a great number of radio and television channels that broadcasted in the region were closed down through statutory decree. It remains striking that most of the closed down channels were broadcasting in Kurdish. Conventional wisdom held that these radio and TV channels were closed not because of their independent broadcasting principles, but because of the language they used:

Gün TV and Radio news stations broadcasting in Kurdish and Turkish.

Jiyan TV started as a Kurdish-Turkish channel, but then switched to broadcasting in Zaza (a Kurdish dialect) only. Jiyan TV was the only television channel to use Zaza, which is considered to be an endangered language.

Azadî TV, a Kurdish-Turkish news channel based in Diyarbakır.

Van TV based in Van, broadcasting in Kurdish and Turkish, noteworthy for its shows about the region's cultural heritage.

Zarok TV was the only kids' channel broadcasting in Kurdish. Adverse reaction when it was closed down through a statutory decree was so great that it was allowed to broadcast again.

Associations closed down

Many associations were closed through a statutory decree issued on 22 November 2016:

KURDÎ- DER, which had given Kurdish lessons to thousands of people for some 10 years.

Dicle Fırat Arts and Culture Association in Diyarbakır with its own theatre and music group.

The Free Journalists Society, closed through the statutory decree, was an organisation that closely tracked and tried to solve the problems of journalists working in the region.

Kindergartens opened by DBP municipalities were also affected by the intervention of trustees. In Diyarbakır, kindergartens opened by DBP municipalities, where English, Kurdish, and Turkish were spoken, were not closed down. However, many educators were laid off, the curriculum was changed, and instruction became heavily weighted in favour of Turkish.

Cancelled festivals

Trustees appointed to municipalities through the state of emergency and by statutory decrees cancelled festivals which came to be part of the local tradition:

The International Malatya Film Festival, for which preparations were all

but complete was cancelled at the last minute by the municipality on 1 October 2016.

On 17 July 2017, 17th Munzur Culture and Nature Festival was cancelled by Tunceli Municipality citing the state of emergency.

On 22 July, The First International Ovacık Art Days, which was planned by TKP Ovacık Municipality led by Fatih Mehmet Maçoğlu, was cancelled when Tunceli Governor placed conditions that the festival be only one day long and held indoors.

Traditional festivals in Batman, Şırnak, and Varto were not held after trustees were appointed to run the municipalities.

In Diyarbakır, artists who were laid off by new municipal trustees organised their own theatre and music festivals. Costs and venues were met by a collective solidarity.

No tolerance for statues

Statues that had been built by DBP municipalities were removed without the need of any statutory decree, simply by trustees' initiatives:

On 11 January 2016, two statues of lumasi (Babylon-style human headed beasts) in front of the Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality and the Roboskî Memorial in Rojava Park were removed by trustees.

On 25 February 2017, Ahmet Adanur, the trustee appointed to Şırnak Cizre Municipality as district governor, ordered the demolition of a memorial in the city centre to veteran Kurdish politician, Orhan Doğan.

On 12 May in Siverek District of Urfa, the statue of Kurdish singer Şivan Perwer, which had been put on the boulevard in 2009, was vandalized.

On 11 June, the Peace Sculpture on Uğur Kaymaz Boulevard in Mardin's Kızıltepe District was bulldozed in a midnight operation overseen by police and armoured vehicles. A clock tower was put in its place.

On 28 June, in Ağrı -Doğubeyazıt, the monument to the seventeenth century man of letters, Ehmedê Xanî was demolished by municipality workers. The trustee announced that "it was damaged by accident." Even though it was declared that the memorial would be repaired and restored to its place, months passed without this happening.

Park names were changed

On 19 May, Hacı Asım Akgül, the trustee appointed to Çatak Municipality of Van changed the name of "Tahir Elçi Park" into "Martyr GK Ali Ogün Park."

On 14 July 2017, the name of Parkorman, in which Cegerxwîn Cultural Centre was also located, was changed into "15 July Martyrs Park" by Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality trustee Cumali Atilla.

On September 29, the park named after Ceylan Önkol was closed down by Lice Municipality trustee Sinan Başak.

On October 2, Diyarbakır Yenişehir Municipality trustee Serdar Kartal changed the name of the park named after Kurdish writer Mehmed Uzun, nine days prior to the tenth anniversary of Uzun's death. After much popular reaction, the park's name was restored, but the statue of Mehmed Uzun was not replaced.

Books and paintings are crime elements

On 1 March 2016, Mustafa Kılıç, the trustee of Diyarbakır Kayapınar Municipality, displayed books he had collected from Cegerxwîn Cultural Centre's library to the press, claiming that children were being educated in Marxism, Zoroastrianism, and sex.

On 11 May 2017, the Poet Niyazi Sönmez Library, which the DBP Gürpınar Municipality had been recycled and rescued from a bus destined for scrap, was closed down by the trustee. The trustee alleged the library had been used to make propaganda for a terrorist organisation.

On March 12, journalist and painter Zehra Doğan was convicted to two years, nine months and 22 days for a painting and two news items she had made, of “making propaganda for a terrorist organization.”

In conclusion

It is indisputable that the state of emergency state, the use of statutory decrees and the actions carried out by state-appointed trustees have damaged the arts and culture activities of a region comprising the southeast of Turkey.

Over the course of the year, no arts and culture establishment formed under the auspices of the region's DBP municipalities was unaffected.

As mentioned above, these establishments were either closed down or allowed to function through changes in curriculum and language in a way that veered sharply from their founding principles. Press reports suggest some of these institutions have been converted to give religious education.

The focus of the state, through statutory decrees and actions by trustees particularly on language and names valued by local people has put “official amnesia” and assimilation politics back on the agenda. Time will tell, of course, if the state's efforts will pay off. However, even should the winds change, it will be no easy task for those who return to run the municipalities in the same spirit as the DBP. Destruction caused by the state is not easily undone.

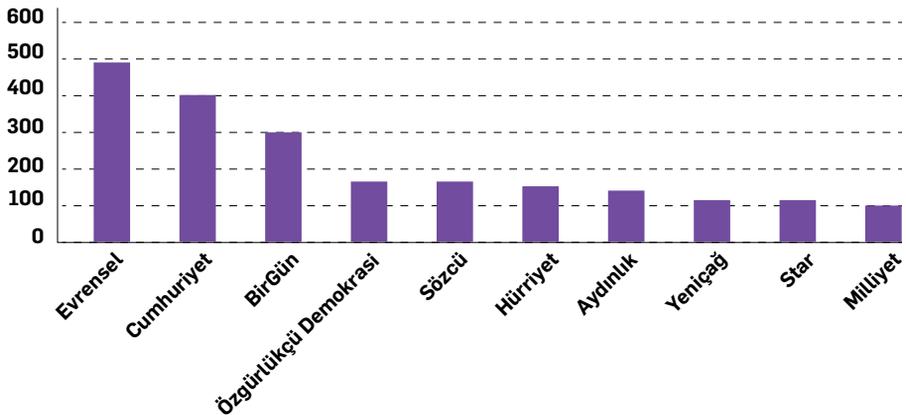
Another problem the year brought to light was the insufficient number of arts and culture organizations independent of municipalities. Once those municipalities came under trusteeship, the paucity of alternative theatres, cinemas, and galleries became all too apparent. It is a hopeful and positive sign for the future that such alternative establishments are being formed, mostly through the efforts of the arts community itself. It is at times like these that art shows its true colours.

Media Monitoring¹

The following words and expressions (in the Turkish original) were monitored in both the printed and internet media between September 2016 and September 2017 to see how many times they occur:

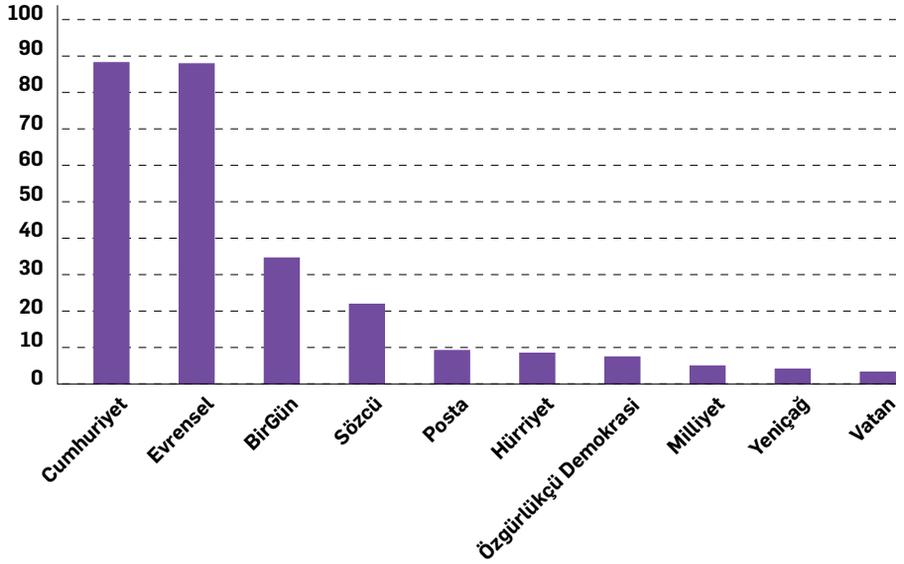
“Censorship”, “website blocked”, “books seized”, “defence in Kurdish”, “freedom of speech”, “decision to collect”, “decision to close down”, “name is changed”, “programme cancelled”, “under pressure”, “defamation of president”, “Academics for peace”, “signed for peace”, “pointed as target”, “tck [Turkish criminal code] 301”, “for peace / we want peace”, “filmmakers for peace”, “writers for peace”, “dissident media”, “journalism is not a crime”, “journalist in prison”

“Censorship” (top 10 newspapers according to frequency)

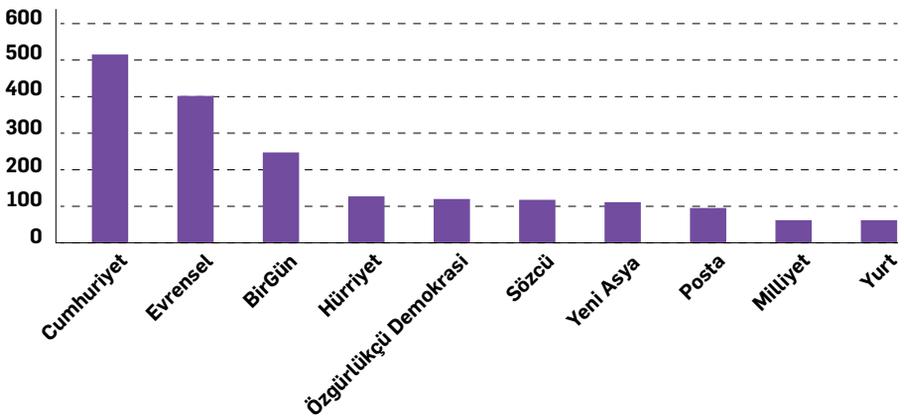


¹ Data collected in collaboration with the Media Monitoring Centre.

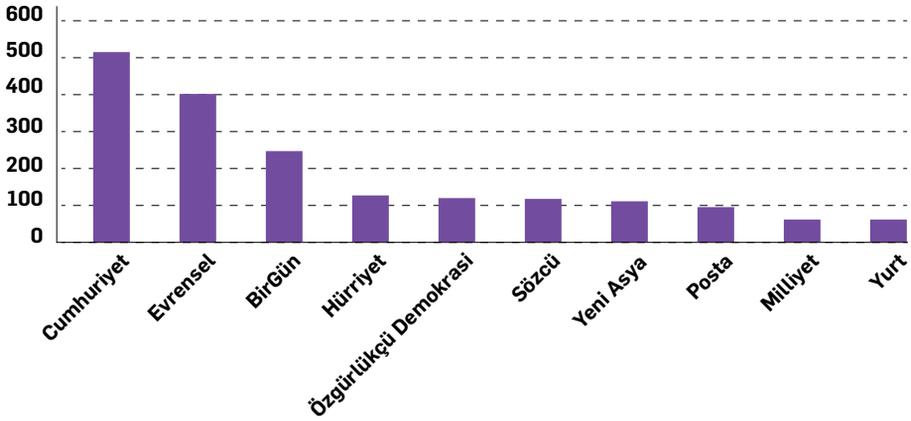
“Journalism is not a crime” (top 10 newspapers according to frequency)



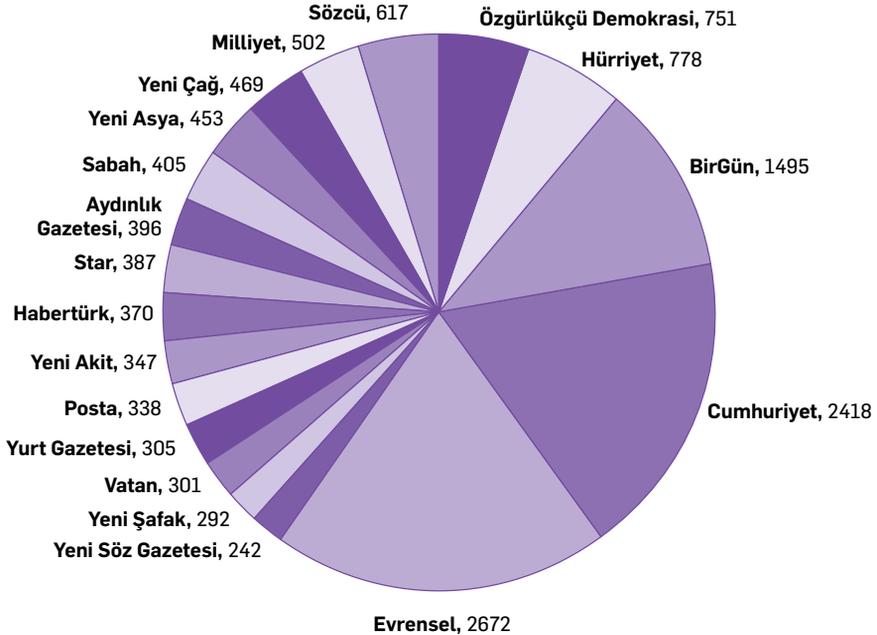
“Journalists in prison” (top 10 newspapers according to frequency)



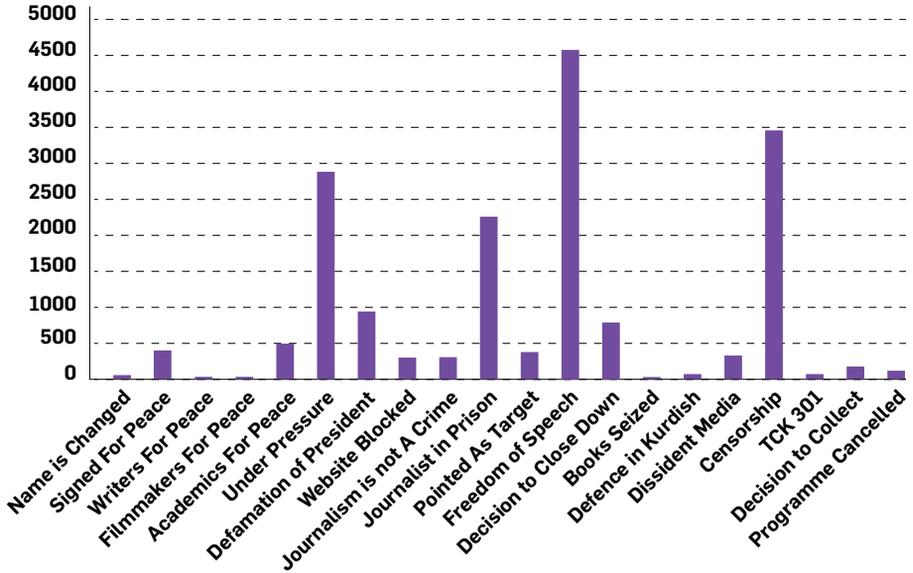
“Defamation of president” (top 10 newspapers according to frequency)



Most frequent news per top 20 newspapers



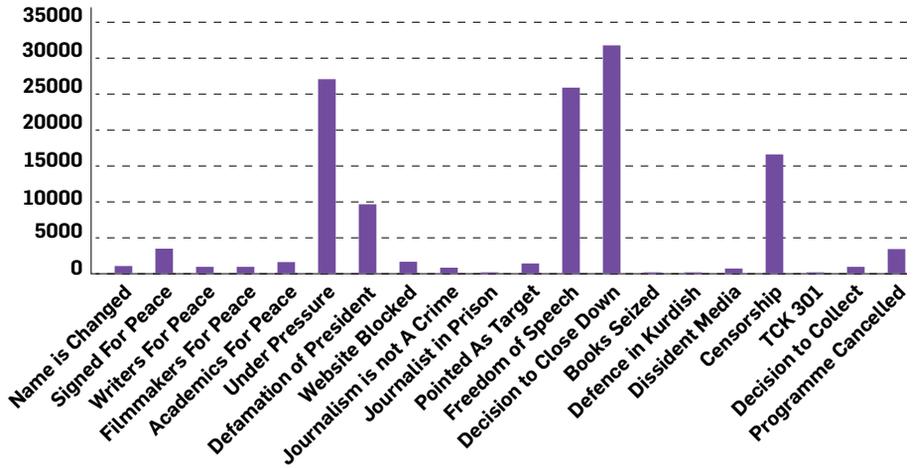
Numbers of news stories in national press



Data from 45 national newspapers distributed throughout the whole of Turkey

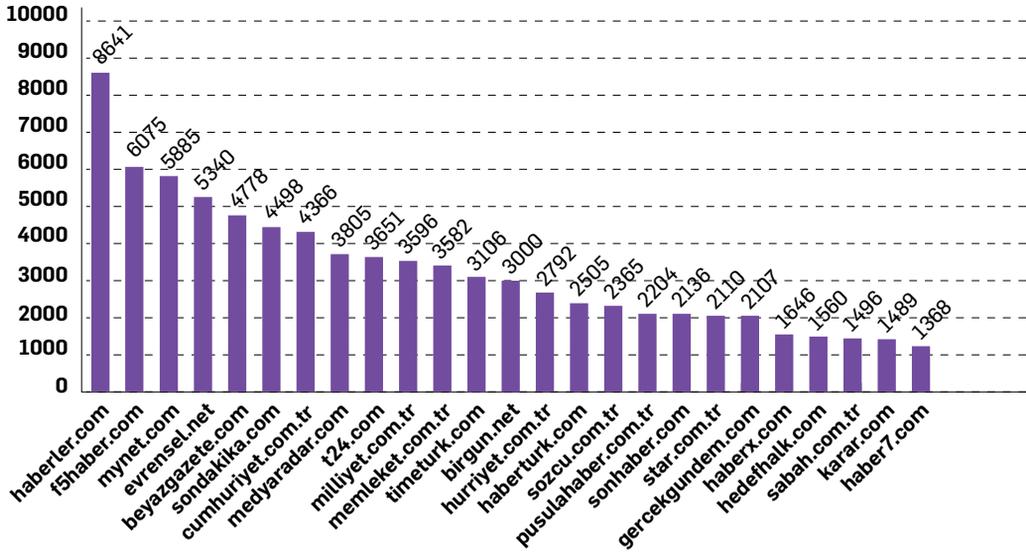
On internet media “Censorship” is used 16,457 times, “Freedom of speec h” is used 25,869 times, “Decision to close down” is used 31,917 times, “Academics for peace” is used 2200 times, and “under pressure” is used 27,056 times.

Concepts that have been made news the most news on internet media



in 80 prominent websites

Internet media / Platforms that make the most news (Top 50)



What has Susma Platform Done?

SUSMA Meetings

The Susma Platform has organized a variety of events in Diyarbakır, İzmir, Eskişehir, Artvin, Ankara, Bursa, and Van in order to build a solidarity network and to provide witness through the monitoring of restrictions on freedom of speech in more remote parts of the country. Representatives from media, publishing houses, NGOs, foundations and writers' organisation representatives and journalist, writer, and artist groups typically attended these events.

The SUSMA team also have had meetings with Diyarbakır and Antalya bar associations about collaboration in the formation of anti-censorship commissions.

Diyarbakır: The first meeting of the Susma Platform was held last year on 10 December Human Rights Day in Diyarbakır, which is one of the predominantly Kurdish cities most affected by the state of emergency. The meeting discussed the importance of creating a practical reflex to censorship, bans, and cases of closure, the necessity of creating physical spaces to replace the arts and culture units of various municipalities in the region that had been closed down, ways of pursuing cases where the legal procedures were vague or unknown, and alternative ways to realize various activities being planned for the near future.

İzmir: Fikret İlkiz of the İstanbul Bar Association addressed a meeting that took place in İzmir Art Centre Auditorium on 4 March 2017 on the subject of Freedom of Speech During a State of Emergency. İlkiz detailed cases of freedom of speech violations in Turkey and answered participants' questions.

Eskişehir: For its third meeting, the Susma Platform joined with CSOs active in the city, arts institutions, unions, associations, academicians who were expelled from universities and students on 1 April 2017. In the section entitled *What did they do during the state of emergency?* C. Hakkı Zariç, editor of *Evrensel Kültür* magazine; Berfin Emektar, an actor from the Amed City Theatre; and Cavit Nacitarhan, Evrensel press and publishing executive editor, spoke about violations they had experienced in their own organizations during the state of emergency and of their response.

Ankara: The meeting was held on 6 May 2017 with the participation of CSOs in Ankara, representatives of shuttered associations, journalists, artists, and lawyers and addressed by journalist Selda Güneysu, writer and academician Prof. Aksu Bora, and writer Pelin Buzluk, who had been expelled from her civil service job through statutory decree.

The meeting drew attention to the increase in manipulation and self-censorship in the country's capital where the oppressive atmosphere was even more pronounced, everywhere from parliament, ministries, cultural spheres, and the press.

Referring to the research project *Being a Woman in Hard Times* which examined women's lives during conflicts, Aksu Bora reminded that the audience that 20% of those forced out of public service through statutory decrees before the referendum were women and that 11 associations closed down were women's associations. She also pointed out that the majority of these associations were in Kurdish regions, and had been spaces where women could feel themselves at ease. That women and children were affected most by the emergency state thus came back onto the agenda.

Also discussed was that existing forms of solidarity had become outdated and one of the reasons for this was that different oppositional groups were cut off from one another and too structured around their own needs. The meeting stressed the importance of self-criticism and confrontation so that different sectors could forge relations with one another and that this necessitated the creation of new organisational spaces, new ways of self-expression, and the development of a common language.

Bursa: Ezel Akay, a prominent name in Turkish cinema, was guest speaker of an event titled *Freedom of Speech for Artists and NGOs under the State of Emergency* held on 1 July 2017 in Bursa. Akay commented on artistic censorship as a director, screenwriter, and writer, and shared his thoughts and suggestions on grappling with censorship.

Artvin: SUSMA met in Artvin on 16 November with associations active in the field of environment and in arts as well as with journalists to discuss the problems the city was experiencing with freedom of expression.

The World of Art and Culture Meet Round The Table

Roundtable Meetings are another method by which the Susma team endeavours to fight censorship. We come together with creative figures in contemporary art, cinema, theatre, literature, and publishing with the aim of producing articles, interviews, and news about the impact and variety of censorship and to document cases of censorship and self-censorship.

Contemporary art: Curator Fulya Erdemci, art writer-critic Süreyya Evren, and artists Yasemin Özcan, Zeyno Pekünlü, and Ahmet Doğu İpek participated at a meeting where the view emerged that contemporary art, by its nature and in comparison with other arts, was at once removed from political developments and thus, despite everything, remained highly productive.

The meeting brought to the fore that, though perhaps not named as such, there existed in the world of the contemporary art a network and an effort to unite in the face of the political agenda and violations of freedom of speech, as illustrated by a set of examples ranging from the January 19 Process (the reaction to the 2007 assassination of the Armenian editor and journalist Hrant Dink) and the Arts Workers Association initiative to the Black Tape platform and the Orange Tent of the Gezi Park protests.

Among the points raised was that restricted freedom of speech was one of the most difficult elements to overcome while trying to get organised and the underlying reason for why problems were not discussed openly. There was a need for change in the culture of criticism and discussion.

The hope was also emphasized that we should see this process we are experiencing not as a regression but as an incubation period to find new paths and tools. It was also highlighted that archiving and documentation of what had happened were crucial to understanding today and create strategies in the future.

Theatre: The theatre roundtable, attended by **Mert Firat**, **Iraz Yöntem**, **Ebru Nihan Celkan**, and **Mirza Metin**, underlined that censorship and self-censorship are spawned through intimidation, and targeted attacks. These attacks were meant to be a warning to others against the criticism of sacred cows. However, the resulting "state of anxiety and fear" could be stood on its head and it was no coincidence that artists were more productive during periods of oppression which raised communal and collective consciousness.

In the municipal theatres, neither those who were expelled nor those who did the expelling knew the reason for the purges other than that there were orders that had to be followed. The result was institutional disintegration. Though there was no channel for theatrical personnel expelled from municipal theatres in Batman or Diyarbakır to reverse the decisions, it was imperative to turn the solidarity created by adverse fate into something sustainable.

Among the points raised was the Actors Union had contacted actors thrown out of state and municipal theatres, and those which had been shut down, but that those working as state employees had poor awareness of organisational identity. There was a gap with the previous generation which had failed to pass on their own indefatigable sense of deep-rooted struggle against these kinds of violations.

Cinema: The roundtable devoted to censorship in cinema brought together **Serkan Çakarer** (producer of *Karpuz Kabuğundan Gemiler Yapmak*, *Kırık Midyeler*, *Pandora'nın Kutusu*, and *Araf*); **Özcan Alper** (director of *Sonbahar*, *Gelecek Uzun Sürer*, and *Rüzgârın Hatıraları*); **Volkan Sümbül** (scriptwriter for television and cinema- *Mutlu Aile Defteri* and *Nadide Hayat*); **Berke Başı** (documentary maker: *Bağlar*), cinematographer **Melis Birder**, and **Tülin Özen** (actress- *Meleğin Düşüşü*, *Vicdan*, *Bal*, *Yük*, and *Abluka*).

The roundtable emphasized that Turkish cinema had never possessed an adequate legal basis or infrastructure, and that had the process it was now experiencing established anything, it was the need for a fresh industry-wide model of film-making. Professional organisations were an essential element of solidarity, of communal purpose or just as important, for staying informed, and that the greatest problems were caused by creative people being kept out of the loop. The meeting concluded that the reason there was no sustained reaction to the myriad forms of censorship --films denied operating licences, or blacklisted filmmakers unable to use Ministry of Culture support funds, or through changes in festival regulations-- was the sectoral incoherence and thus unable to organise and act in unison to pursue common cause.

Literature: The literature roundtable invited executive editor of *Cumhuriyet Kitap* (the book review for *Cumhuriyet* newspaper) **Turhan Günay**, who had stood trial in the notorious case affecting his newspaper and who had regained his freedom after 9 months of imprisonment. Also invited

were writer Aslı Tohumcu; editor and academician **Yalçın Armağan**; Sel Publishing executive editor **İrfan Sancı**; editor, literature historian, and academician **Sevengül Sönmez**; Dipnot Publishing editorial coordinator and academician **Utku Özmakas**; *Cumhuriyet Kitap* editor **Eray Ak**; and Siren Publishing executive editor **Sanem Sirer**. The discussion emphasized that the underlying reason for contemporary book censorship was a much wider culture of censorship in Turkey. The point was made that the current state of emergency in which writers were arrested and publishing houses shut down required not just ideological discussion but financial collaboration.

Moreover:

SUSMA organized a film screening in support of the Second Amed Film Festival, which faced problems both with finances and finding a venue in its home city after a trustee had been appointed to Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality. Between 22-25 December and as part of the festival organised under the banner "Cinema without Borders," THE Susma Platform presented before of full houses at İstanbul Depo the documentary *Bağlar* by Berke Baş and Melis Birder. The film follows the basketball team from Diyarbakır's Bağlar Municipality over the course of three years and tells, according to the filmmakers, "the story of a side-lined generation struggling to define hope and success in a conflict-ridden city."

SUSMA initiated a judicial process to stop the blocking of internet access to the Wikipedia website in Turkey.

The New Normal: Censorship

Censorship and Self-censorship Research

Over the last decade, there has been a substantial rise in censorship and self-censorship.

Current practices cast a shadow over freedom of expression and have a negative impact on the output of writers and artists.

The worlds of media and art engage to an overwhelming extent in self-censorship.

The Susma Platform, founded under the auspices of P24 Platform for Independent Journalism, conducted research as part of its first-year activities, to determine how common the practice of censorship and self-censorship was among journalists, publishers, writers, and artists in Turkey. According to the preliminary findings, current practices cast a shadow on freedom of expression and have a negative impact on the output of writers and artists.

Indeed, **91%** of participants think that censorship has shown an enormous increase in the last ten years compared to the previous decade, while **93%** feels that self-censorship has increased the same way.

“Lawsuits make self-censorships unavoidable.”

Of the survey participants, 93% are not happy about the current freedom of expression practices in Turkey, while **88%** express that they are not satisfied with the present state of artistic freedom. Some 91% of participants think that media self-censor to a large degree, while **77%** believe that artists self-censor to a large degree.

Of the survey participants, **67%** express that they have already experienced censorship, **83%** say that they think about the possibility of being censored while working on an artwork or writing, and **62%** report that the possibility of censorship affects how they work.

The rate of participants who say that they never self-censor while working on an artwork or writing is **29%**. Some **58%** of participants report that they self-censor from time to time. Of those surveyed, **45%** think that it is not possible to engage in art production in Turkey without self-censoring, while **54%** feel that it's impossible to write without self-censoring. Some **46%**

state that they will be fired if they don't self-censor; **47%** state that they won't be able to find work unless they self-censor. In addition, **69%** of the participants emphasise that legal action against journalists, academicians, writers, and artists, as well as court-imposed punishments make self-censorship unavoidable. According to **75%** of the participants, almost anyone who produces art get censored, and according to **77%**, nearly all writers get censored in some way.

“News is not neutral and balanced.”

Among participants, **94%** think that media in Turkey are not guided in their general approach to news by the public's right to obtain information. Some **97%** state that news is neither neutral or balanced, and **95%** think that media do not act fairly in reflecting the different opinions and diversity of opinion in the community.

On the other hand, **71%** state that artists also have a responsibility when it comes to the proliferation of censorship and self-censorship. Some **70%** of participants underline that artists in Turkey are unable to draw up their own ethical lines.

At the same time, **83%** of the participants think that it is possible to stand up to censorship if everyone acts in unison, and **62%** believes that no one will have to self-censor if everyone acts in unison.

#SUSMA for Awareness

Susma Platform undertook its self-censorship research on a sample of 186 people of whom **47%** were male, **50%** female and **3%** who did not identify with the gender binary.

Of participants, **47%** hold solely an associate's or a bachelor's degree while a further **46%** have a master's degree/doctorate; Of those participating, **31%** work in literature and publishing, **25%** in the media sector, **22%** in art, **13%** in academia, and **9%** work with NGOs.

Susma Platform was established to help different voices speak out in a well-organised fashion and to encourage all groups who face discrimination to speak up for their freedom, to help mobilise and raise awareness.

#SUSMA Against censorship

45%: *It's not possible to take produce in art without self-censorship.*

54%: *It's not possible to write without self-censorship.*

67%: *I have already been censored.*

77%: *Artists mostly self-censor.*

83%: *We can stand against censorship if we act together.*

Legal Expert Interpretation

Ferat Çağıl

In hardly any other country in the world are the words “rights,” “justice,” or “law” uttered as frequently as they are in Turkey. Law has always been the most effective tool with which those who hold power intimidate “the others” who don’t. When “justice for me alone” becomes the typical attitude rather than “justice for all,” neither the “others” who suffer legal injustice can join forces, nor can they overcome injustice. The legal system and its application have, therefore, been a leading topic of debate.

The Turkish Republic has for over 90 years been struggling to varying degrees with the pains of transforming into a nation state from the remnants of the Ottoman Empire, all the while grappling with the particularities of the Kurdish issue. At the same time, it has undergone a series of lengthy “states of emergency” that occur as the result of military coups, or sectarian disputes, or social clashes of various dimensions.

With the notable exception of martial law periods in the aftermaths of previous military coups in Turkey, a nationwide State of Emergency (OHAL being the Turkish abbreviation) was declared on July 20, 2016 for the first time ever in the country’s history following in the wake of the failed coup attempt of July 15, 2016. This has been extended for yet another three months, for the fifth time in a row, after Parliament passed a new resolution on October 17, 2017. And it seems this will continue until the state of emergency has become entirely routine.

The authority to issue emergency statutory decrees (decisions with the force of law) granted to the Cabinet by the Constitution is ordinarily limited to matters that are required by the exigencies of OHAL and limited by its duration. However, this has been turned by the Cabinet itself into a tool to introduce amendments to major laws, dismiss people from their professions, and even issue regulations regarding TV matchmaking shows or the use of winter tires.

The Constitutional Court rejected the main opposition party’s application seeking the annulment of the first two emergency statutory decrees issued by the government by reason of a clause in Article 148 of the Constitution, which reads, “[...] no action shall be brought before the Constitutional Court alleging unconstitutionality as to the form or substance of decrees having

the force of law issued during a state of emergency, martial law or in time of war," in contrast to a previous ruling it had rendered in 1990.

The SUSMA (Speak Up) Platform against censorship and self-censorship was initiated shortly after the declaration of state of emergency. Its aim has been to "support those in Turkey whose freedom of expression are under threat and who value the news, the arts, literature and the right to information; in short, anyone who cares about freedom of expression, in their fight against incidents of censorship, self-censorship, restrictions on freedom of expression, isolation, smear campaigns and emotional lynching faced by groups and individuals active in the spheres of arts and media."

Following the declaration of the state of emergency, the general focus of attention has been on rights violations. However, the Susma Platform has not reduced the pace of its work, and by continuing its functions under OHAL conditions, it has lent considerable momentum to efforts against censorship.

In order to establish networks to this end, many institutions and persons have been contacted and have participated in the platform. Additionally, there have been visits by the platform and its lawyers to numerous cities to exchange knowledge and experience between journalists, authors, academics and artists, and to focus in particular on ways to offset the legal setbacks during OHAL or identify which authorities to apply to on issues that come with the Susma Platform's ambit. The SUSMA team of lawyers filed for a lifting of the current ban in Turkey on access to the online encyclopedia Wikipedia, and when this was rejected, filed an appeal to the Constitutional Court where the case is still pending.

For the past year, SUSMA has endeavored to become a platform through which different voices in Turkey from arts and media can demand in unison the right to freedom of expression. Its efforts to achieve this objective are listed in its first annual activity report even as work has begun on a fresh set of activities for the new calendar year.

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