

# TURKEY (26 risks)

## LABOUR RIGHTS (10)

### Discrimination & Gender (4)

- While women enjoy the same rights as men by law, societal and official discrimination are widespread. Women face discrimination in employment. [Source: Bundesregierung, 14. Bericht der Bundesregierung über ihre Menschenrechtspolitik, 2020](#)
- There are strong signals that persistent discrimination, impunity for violence, and lack of legal recognition and protection for LGBT people in Turkey remains a problem. [Source: DW](#)
- In recent years, the state of religious freedom in Turkey has worsened. The Turkish government has indiscriminately designated those affiliated with Muhammed Fethullah Gülen (Gülen movement) as part of a terrorist organization. Government officials also engage in anti-Semitism in the form of public statements and comments made on social media platforms, while progovernment newspapers and media outlets propagated hate speech directed against both Christians and Jews. [Source: Bundesregierung, 14. Bericht der Bundesregierung über ihre Menschenrechtspolitik, 2020](#)
- Women are economically and socially disadvantaged. Non-Sunni and non-Islamic religions have no legally secured status. [Source: Bundesregierung, 14. Bericht der Bundesregierung über ihre Menschenrechtspolitik, 2020](#)

### Freedom of Association (3)

- According to the ITUC Global Rights Index, this country is one of the world's ten most difficult countries for workers concerning trade union rights. [Source: ITUC Global Rights Index, 2020](#)
- Turkey scores a 5 on the ITUC Global Rights Index (scale 1-5) for freedom of association and workers' rights, which stands for no guarantee of rights. Countries with the rating of 5 are the worst countries in the world to work in. While the legislation may spell out certain rights, workers have effectively no access to these rights and are therefore exposed to autocratic regimes and unfair labour practices. In 2019, this resulted in discrimination and dismissal of trade union employees. Trade union leaders were arrested and prosecuted. [Source: ITUC Global Rights Index, 2020](#)
- According to the ITUC Global Rights Index, MENA countries receive a score of 4.5 (a score of 5 means there are no workers' rights). 94 percent of the countries violated the right to strike and the right to collective bargaining. All 18 countries excluded workers from the right to form and join a union. 83 percent of countries in the Middle East and North Africa denied workers access to justice. All 18 countries obstructed the registration of trade unions. 44 percent of countries arrested, and detained workers were subjected to violent attacks. 83 percent of countries in the Middle East and North Africa restricted freedom of speech and assembly. [Source: ITUC Global Rights Index, 2020](#)

### Forced Labour (1)

- More than a million Syrian refugees are in Turkey without documents. This makes them vulnerable to exploitation and human trafficking. Syrian refugees (including children) are forced to beg on the streets, work in restaurants, textile factories, markets, in shops, blacksmith shops and agriculture in Turkey. [Source: US Department of State](#)

## Child Labour (1)

- Thousands of Syrian children who fled to Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Turkey due to the war, are working. They often work in agriculture, the construction sector or in small shops. Almost 60% of the children interviewed by Terre des Hommes indicated that they work more than 7 hours per day, and a third of the children works 7 days per week. In this way, they try to provide for their families, or are themselves breadwinners. Many are exposed to pesticides, toxic chemicals, heavy loads and exhausting hours. [Source: UNICEF 2017](#)

## Wage & Remuneration (1)

- Syrian refugees in Turkey do not earn the same salaries as Turkish employees and are paid far below the minimum wage. As a result, children have to work in order to support their family in terms of food. [Source: ILO 2020](#)

## HUMAN RIGHTS (8)

### Government influence (6)

- Turkey is considered to be "not free" according to the Freedom House Country List. This means that there is an oppressive regime, with regard to political rights and civil liberties. [Source: Bundes-regierung, 14. Bericht der Bundesregierung über ihre Menschenrechtspolitik, 2020](#)
- Turkey's press freedom is poor: it is becoming increasingly difficult for journalists to work freely, they are imprisoned or have their property taken away. There is no guarantee of a fair trial. Maintaining the independence of the press is made more difficult by the Turkish government. Also, a new law seems to restrict freedom of expression on social media. [Source: Human Rights Watch 2020](#)
- Turkey is ranked 154 out of 180 countries in the World Press Freedom Index with a score of 50.02 on a scale from 0 (best possible score) and 100 (worst possible score). This means that press freedom is limited. [Source: Reporters Without Borders, 2020 World Press Freedom Index, 2020,](#)
- Turkey is ranked 107th out of 128 countries in the Rule of Law Index with a score of 0.43 on a scale from 0 (worst possible score) and 1 (best possible score). This means that this country performs poorly in the areas of corruption, openness of government and enforcement of regulations around rights, order, security, civil and criminal law. [Source: World Justice Project, Rule of Law Index, 2020](#)
- Despite some positive developments, Turkey is moving further and further away from European values, especially in the area of the rule of law, independent judiciary and human rights. Nevertheless, the EU wants to move forward with Turkey's entry into the Customs Union. The German government is trying to strengthen Turkish civil society and political foundations through financial support and cooperation. [Source: Deutscher Bundestag, hib - Heute im Bundestag \(hib 19/28604\),](#)
- The number of journalists jailed globally because of their work hit a new high in 2020 as governments cracked down on coverage of COVID-19 or tried to suppress reporting on political unrest. [Source: CPJ, Record number of journalists jailed worldwide, 2020](#)

## Conflicts & Security (2)

- This country is marked as a 'high risk' country for terrorist attacks on the Aon Terrorism Risk Map. It is considered as level 4 on a 1-5 scale. [Source: Aon, Terrorism risk map, 2020](#)
- The score of Turkey on the Global Peace Index is 2.843 out of 5, which means it scores low in the areas of (inter)national conflict, societal security, and militarization. Tensions between Turkey and Iraq have increased after Turkey launched Operations Claw-Eagle and Claw-Tiger, a joint air and ground cross-border assault into the Independent Kurdistan Region (IKR), in northern Iraq. The campaign set out to target military positions associated with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), a Kurdish political movement that Turkey classifies as a terrorist organisation. [Source: Global Peace Index 2021: Measuring Peace in a Complex World,](#)

## ENVIRONMENT (5)

### Biodiversity (1)

- Industrial pollution, Construction of dams and power plants, the use of pesticides, excessive grazing and forest fires have a very negative influence on the Turkish flora and fauna. In practice, international treaties on the area of nature protection and biodiversity are not properly complied with. Turkish forests are under heavy pressure by illegal logging, illegal construction and livestock farming. Also forest fires are intentionally started to use the land for construction and tourism. [Source: Environmental Justice Atlas, 2017](#)

### Water use (1)

- Turkey faces moderate to severe freshwater scarcity in the spring-summer period. [Source: Science Advances, Four billion people facing severe water scarcity, 2016](#)

### Air pollution (1)

- According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), this country suffers excessive air pollution. The annual average PM2.5 level here is higher than 35 ug/m<sup>3</sup>, which the WHO describes as the first intermediate target for countries. At this level, there is a 15% greater risk of long-term mortality than at the recommended maximum annual average of 10 ug/m<sup>3</sup>. This means your employees in these countries (depending on the precise work location) are likely to be exposed to air pollution, with illness and premature death as possible consequences. [Source: WHO, Ambient \(outdoor\) air quality and health, 2018](#)

### Soil & groundwater contamination (1)

- Water sources and rivers in Turkey are becoming polluted by urbanisation, industrialisation, and the use of chemicals in agriculture. [Source: RVO, MVO in Turkije, 2020](#)

### Environment & waste (1)

- Urbanization in Turkey has led to uncontrolled waste dumping. Due to inadequate infrastructure for disposal of industrial waste (half of it, dangerous waste) and only one available incinerator for dangerous waste, the majority is disposed of by municipalities. This creates severe pollution (through, among others, toxic substances or heavy metals) of garbage dumps and other dumpsites. Furthermore, the import of plastic waste from the UK is

increasing according to the Guardian. Turkey recycles just 1% of its domestic waste, sending the rest to landfill. [Source: RVO, MVO in Turkije, 2020](#)

## **FAIR BUSINESS PRACTICES (3)**

### **Corruption (2)**

- According to the Corruption Perceptions Index, the corruption score of Turkey is 40, on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean). This means that the risk of corruption in Turkey is high. [Source: Transparency International, Corruption Perceptions Index 2020, 2021](#)
- Corruption may occur regularly in governmental organizations and business partners, for instance paying bribes, reducing import charges or falsifying official documents. Especially in customs corruption plays a role, but also labour inspectors are supposedly easily bribed. Additionally, when competing for public tenders you may be confronted with corruption. [Source: RVO, MVO in Turkije, 2020](#)

### **Taxation (1)**

- According to OECD, Turkey is only partially compliant with the international standard of transparency and exchange of information for tax purposes. This means that Turkey could be seen as a 'tax haven'. [Source: OECD 2020](#)