

4.4. Members of and persons perceived to be collaborating with the SDF and YPG

Following the fall of the Assad regime in December 2024, this document has been reviewed and updated. Please consult '[Interim Country Guidance: Syria \(2025\)](#)'

COMMON ANALYSIS

Last update: February 2023

This profile refers to members of the SDF and the YPG, as well as to other individuals perceived to be collaborating with them.

See also the profile [4.10.2. Kurds](#).

COI summary

The COI summary focuses on targeting of such individuals by the SNA and by ISIL.

Targeting by the SNA

[Main COI reference: [Targeting 2022](#), 4, pp. 53-57]

In areas under their control, the SNA reportedly perpetrated torture, sexual violence, looting and arbitrary detention. During the year 2021, SNA members were reportedly responsible for arbitrary arrests resulting in alleged cases of extrajudicial killings, incommunicado detention as well as looting and seizure of properties.

An Afrin-based human rights organisation reported 14 arrests of civilians at the beginning of April 2022 on charges of having previously dealt with the AANES.

Cases were reported of persons accused of activities for the YPG and having fulfilled military service for AANES and being arrested or sentenced to imprisonment. There were numerous reports in 2021 and 2022 of men being tortured by SNA and having consequently died because of alleged activities for the YPG or the PKK. There were also reports about the arrests of nine persons on the basis of SDF-affiliation. Confiscation of property and looting affecting the local population living in SNA-held territories, among which 800 houses which belonged to residents affiliated to AANES, were also reported.

As a result of Turkish military activities along the Turkish-Syrian border in 2021 and 2022 civilian casualties were allegedly made. Some of them were targeted attacks on AANES-linked individuals and SDF commanders.

[Main COI reference: [Targeting 2022](#), 4.2, pp. 56-58]

Over the course of the reference period, ISIL carried out kidnappings and assassinations targeting SDF members and collaborators, persons working for the AANES, tribal leaders as well as civilians, predominantly in the countryside of Deir Ez-Zor governorate. USDOS also reported that during the first three months of 2022, ISIL targeted persons affiliated with SDF and the AANES. ISIL also targeted other civilians, such as teachers and civil servants accused of links with the SDF.

In an ISIL coordinated attack on the SDF and US-led Coalition controlled Ghweiran/Al-Sina prison in Hasaka city in 2022 and ensuing clashes, at least 181 people were reportedly killed, among them 50 police, SDF members and prison guards.

Conclusions and guidance

Do the acts qualify as persecution under Article 9 QD?

Acts reported to be committed against individuals under this profile are of such severe nature that they amount to persecution (e.g. arbitrary arrest, abduction, killing).



What is the level of risk of persecution (well-founded fear)?

For members of and persons perceived to be collaborating with SDF/YPG in areas where the SNA operates, well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated.

In Kurdish-controlled areas that were previously under the ISIL control, the threat posed by ISIL to individuals under this profile has decreased compared to previous years. Nevertheless, ISIL continues to be capable of attacks in those areas and members of and persons perceived to be collaborating with the SDF/YPG are viewed by ISIL as a priority target. The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for the applicant to face persecution should take into account risk-impacting circumstances, such as: regional specifics (areas where ISIL continues to operate), visibility of the applicant, position within the community, nature of activities undertaken by the individual, public expression of support for SDF/YPG or condemnation of ISIL's actions, etc.



Are the reasons for persecution falling within Article 10 QD (nexus)?

Available information indicates that persecution of this profile is highly likely to be for reasons of (imputed) political opinion. In the case of persecution by SNA, it may also be for reasons of race/nationality.



Exclusion considerations could be relevant to this profile (see the chapter [8. Exclusion](#)).