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4.5. Persons perceived to be opposing the SDF/YPG

COMMON ANALYSIS | Last update: December 2025

This profile refers to different groups perceived by the SDF/YPG as opposing them. It includes political opponents, such as those supporting the Transitional Government, as well as persons associated with Türkiye and/or the SNA.

Refer to 4.6. Persons with perceived links to ISIL for the situation of those individuals.

For the situation of members of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)/YPG and persons perceived to be collaborating with the SDF/YPG, refer to 4.9.2. Kurds.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI reports and query: COI Update, 5.; Country Focus July 2025, 2.3.; Country Focus March 2025, 4.3.; Security 2024, 1.4.3.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Acts to which persons perceived to be opposing the SDF/YPG could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution, such as torture, arbitrary arrest, detention, and physical assault. Reports describe physical assaults against women during some of the SDF-conducted raids. Instances of violence against media professionals by the SDF (see also 4.7. Journalists and other media professionals) and arrests and detention of civilians criticising the SDF and/or expressing support for the Transitional Government, have also been reported. Also, civilians and the Syrian National Army (SNA) personnel have been arrested after returning to their homes in SDF territory after having been displaced before.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for persons perceived to be opposing the SDF/YPG to face persecution should take into account risk-impacting circumstances, such as:

- **Home area and regional specifics:** individuals originating from SDF-controlled areas who lived temporarily in SNA-controlled areas are at higher risk.

- **Publicly expressing criticism:** publicly expressing opposition or criticism against the SDF heightens the risk. It includes, e.g., reporting on sensitive topics exposing SDF conduct, and expressing public support to the Transitional Government.

- **Being known to the SDF/YPG:** knowledge by the SDF/YPG of a prior involvement with Turkish-backed forces, and/or the fact of having been arrested by the SDF/YPG in the past, heightens the risk.

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Where well-founded fear of persecution is substantiated for an applicant under this profile, this is highly likely to be for reasons of **(imputed) political opinion**, as opposing the SDF/YPG is perceived as a political opinion.

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